

PSAT/NMSQT 2018
Frequent Questions and Answers

1. Which grade levels qualify for the state PSAT/NMSQT funding?

In 2018, Indiana will pay for both grade 10 and 11 students to take the PSAT/NMSQT.

Note that the majority of students that take the PSAT/NMSQT nationally are in grade 10 or younger. Other states are also supporting and encouraging the taking of the PSAT/NMSQT in Grade 10 for the following reasons:

- Students and their parents receive an earlier and better gauge of their post---secondary preparation;
- Students have time to adjust junior and senior high school schedules based on individual student data;
- Schools may use **AP Potential™** to identify students who may benefit from classes that help prepare students for and participate in Advanced Placement. College Board research shows strong correlations between students' PSAT/NMSQT scores and AP Exam results. PSAT/NMSQT scores can help to identify additional students who may be ready for the rigor of AP and pre---AP coursework;
- Students and parents have access to a variety of college, career and SAT preparation tools that have benefit throughout high school; and
- The **Question Analysis** report allows schools to take a closer, detailed look at students' academic skills by providing a snapshot of student performance on each PSAT/NMSQT test question. Presented online, the report may be downloaded and easily shared with administrators and faculty at your school beginning in December (following the October PSAT/NMSQT administration).
- The impact of early PSAT practice on SAT scores is significant.

2. Are all grade 10 and 11 students supposed to take the PSAT/NMSQT?

No, however there is funding is available for every grade 10 and 11 student in an accredited high school in Indiana to take the PSAT/NMSQT. The tools and reports provided after taking the PSAT/NMSQT are valuable. The use of these tools and reports is a way to bring more students into the college and career planning process.

3. Isn't the PSAT/NMSQT just for those going to college?

The PSAT/NMSQT is not just for college---bound students. It also provides extensive (free) information to students about their career choices and provides teachers with information on ways to help the student do better in English and math classes. Deciding who, in grade 10, is college-bound and who is not – is really not something that schools want to do without parent and student input.

4. Aren't PSAT scores correlated just to 11th graders?

No. The student and educator score reports for the PSAT/NMSQT provide scores by grade level. Grade 11 test takers are provided with percentiles, means and other scores of other grade 11 test takers. Grade 10 test takers are provided with percentile, means and other scores.

5. What advantages does the PSAT/NMSQT provide to students?

- **Preparation for the SAT®.** The PSAT/NMSQT measures the same skills and has the same format, directions and question types. On average, students who take the PSAT/NMSQT earn higher scores on the SAT than those who do not.
- **Improve their Skills.** Students are provided with detailed information on their performance along with resources to help them build their content knowledge and skills. Students can use Official SAT Practice via Khan Academy to receive personalized practice in Reading, Writing and Math.
- **Plan for College and Careers.** The PSAT/NMSQT provides students with access to Big Futures and Road Trip to Careers to help them with their college/career planning process.
- **Receive Information from Colleges.** The **Student Search Service®** can provide each test taker with FREE information about admissions and financial aid from colleges, universities, and scholarship programs.

6. What advantages does administration of the PSAT/NMSQT provide to educators?

- **Build a College-Going Culture.** Taking the PSAT/NMSQT gives students the opportunity to start thinking about college and career options. College and career planning tools available are available for all test takers (see above).
- **Increase Access to AP® Courses.** The AP Potential™ tool allows schools to identify additional students who may be ready for AP courses that may not have otherwise been determined.
- **Identify Strengths and Weaknesses.** The **Instructional Planning and Question Analysis** reports provide district and building staff with data that can inform instructional practice connected to Indiana Learning Standards.
- **Collect and Utilize Valuable Data.** Ability to analyze data by demographics, sub scores, and other attributes. Reports are available by grade level and by cohort. Interactive reports, as well as, data files (.csv and .txt formats) are provided to all districts/schools.
- **Prepares Students for the SAT, including the SAT essay.** Official SAT Practice via Khan Academy provides students with personalized practice for the SAT in Reading, Writing and Math. Teachers can use Official SAT Practice to identify student strengths and weaknesses by academic skill areas. New coaching tools will allow teachers to identify common areas in need of improvement for a class/group of students and monitor student progress.

7. Should grade 11 students still be encouraged to take the PSAT/NMSQT?

Yes, we definitely want to encourage as many grade 11 students as possible to take the PSAT in grade 11 since that is the only grade they can qualify for the National Merit Scholarships. It also provides extra preparation for the SAT® and entrance to scholarship competitions.

8. Can students from Home Schools take the PSAT? Who pays if they do?

Home schooled students need to be able to take the PSAT in a public or non-public accredited school, as it can only be administered under College Board required conditions. Students who are enrolled in a home school but taking the PSAT at an accredited school must pay for the PSAT themselves (most often by providing a check for the cost of the PSAT, \$16, to the school). The home school students must use a special code on the PSAT test booklet to ensure that the accredited school does not receive an invoice for their tests. The state of Indiana only pays for students in grades 10 and 11 enrolled in public or accredited non-public schools in Indiana.