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Why Students in the Class of 2017 Should Not Take the New SAT Exam

By [Daniel Ascher](#), M.Ed.

A [recent article](#) on Forbes.com provides three good reasons for high school students in the class of 2017 *not* to take the "new" SAT exam, which the College Board will begin administering in March 2016.

There are actually many reasons for students not to take the "new" SAT when it is first introduced, but here are several key ones:

- There are very few practice resources available to help students prepare for the new SAT. The College Board has, to date, released only one practice PSAT, and no practice SATs geared toward the new exam. It will take time for the library of available test preparation resources to grow to the point where it is adequate for students. On the other, hand there are plenty of previously released practice exams available for the old SAT exam and the ACT exam. We are therefore recommending that our students plan to take the existing SAT before it is given for the last time (January 2016) or the ACT, which is not changing.
- There will be inevitable glitches and delays rolling out the new SAT. For example, students who take the new SAT the first time it is given, in March 2016, will have to wait until after the new SAT is given for the second time, in May 2016, to get their March SAT results back. This lag in receiving the March scores will not allow students the opportunity to learn what their strengths and weaknesses are so that they can study appropriately for the May SAT.
- Students taking the new SAT during its first year will basically be guinea pigs who are being used by the College Board to test out its new exam. The College Board will use these students' experiences as a way to find and deal with issues that come up during the first several administrations.
- The new SAT is going to look a lot like the ACT, an exam that has not changed much in decades. For example, multiple-choice questions on the new SAT will have four answer choices rather than five, there will be no penalty for wrong answers, and math questions will be less tricky and will cover topics through

trigonometry. If students are going to face an exam like the ACT, they might as well just prepare for the ACT itself, since there is an abundance of practice material available for the ACT. And since the ACT is not changing, students won't have to worry about glitches.

So what should students in the class of 2017 do?

We encourage current sophomores either to take the existing SAT before it is retired (it will be given for the final time on January 23, 2016) or to take the ACT. The most important thing for students to do right now is determine whether the SAT or ACT is a better fit. Great Lakes Educational Group offers free proctored practice SAT and ACT exams, so feel free to call our office at [734.944.5658](tel:734.944.5658) to schedule an appointment. We will be available throughout the summer to schedule individual sessions at no charge.

The reason it is important to do this now (before the end of summer 2015) is that if we determine the SAT is the better fit for your student, test prep should begin this summer or fall. This is earlier than normal, but will be necessary to allow the student to take the SAT at least twice before it is expired and replaced by the "new" SAT.

On the other hand, if we determine that the ACT is the better fit, there is much more time (since the ACT is not changing) and we can proceed on a more typical schedule of test preparation.

Please note that we at Great Lakes Educational Group provide students with full-length, proctored, actual SAT and ACT exams, not combination SAT/ACT mock exams. While it takes longer for students to take the full-length, actual exams, we believe there is no substitute for the "real thing." Combination SAT/ACT mock exams are convenient, but do not provide accurate information about which test is a better fit, so in reality time spent taking these mock exams is wasted.

Call Great Lakes Educational Group today at [734-944-5658](tel:734-944-5658) to schedule a free proctored practice SAT or ACT for your student.

If you would like to discuss [SAT](#) or [ACT tutoring](#) for your student, have questions about the new SAT or the ACT, or need any other information about college admissions exams, please contact us at lgilbert@greatlakeseducationalgroup.com or call 734.944.5658.

This article, written by Daniel Ascher, M.Ed., is used with the permission of [A+ Test Prep and Tutoring](#) in Jenkintown, PA.