

# COLLEGE BOUND

## YOUR APPLICATION MENTOR<sup>SM</sup>

Standardized Testings Ins and Outs

February, 2009

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### Free Parent/Student Upcoming Seminars

Colleges and Post  
Secondary Options for  
Students with Learning  
Differences and/or

**ADHD:** Making a Successful  
Transition from High School to  
College.

March 18, 7:30  
Edison Intermediate School in  
Westfield  
(LD Fair)

March 24, 7:30 pm  
Scotch Plains Library

### Should I take the SAT or the ACT with Writing?

Testing is a necessary evil for getting into college. So the key is to find the test that works best for you. Colleges accept both the ACT and the SAT. So what's the difference? The ACT tends to be more straight- forward and also has a science section. The SAT tends to ask trickier questions and students with a good vocabulary can shine. Check out the link to build your vocabulary while also feeding the hungry. It's a fun way to learn new words.

### Preparing for Standardized Tests

- 1) Know which test you are going to take. Both tests are equally accepted so if you can focus your energy and time on the test that suits you best, you are ahead of the game.
- 2) Decide if you do better learning in a group class or with one on one tutoring. Both are effective, but some kids do better in a one on one setting.
- 3) Allow enough time to prepare. Most people do better when they have ample time to prepare. Allow at least three to four months of preparation before the test. As sophomores, you can also spread it out over time and do things like "SAT Question of the Day" or other sites to help you break it down over a longer period. However, some people only do well with a deadline hanging over their head. So get into a prep course and do the homework each week. This will give you a deadline each week and keep you on track.
- 4) Figure out if you need and are eligible for extended time. I've had several clients improve their scores by upwards of 300 points just by getting the proper documentation to prove they need extended time. (See Diane's info on how to do that below)

## What's the Deal with SAT Subject tests? Commonly asked Questions and Answers

### How do I know if I need to take the SAT subject tests?

"Do I have to take the SAT Subject tests?" is a question I often get asked and the answer is it depends. The subject tests or SAT II's are required by several select colleges and if you are applying to certain select schools, then yes you need to take them. Most schools require or recommend two additional subject tests in conjunction with the SAT I with writing or the ACT with writing. Certain schools require an additional three subject tests, like Georgetown. The best way to determine if and how many subject tests are required or recommended is to look on the college's website under admission requirements. If your high school subscribes to Naviance, you can also find the information listed there.

### What are the Subject Tests?

The subject tests are offered in several areas included Math, Language, History & Social Studies, English, and Science. It's best to take the Subject test in the spring after you have completed a the subject, for example if you are taking US AP History, take the subject test around the same time you are preparing for the AP exam. Take the Chemistry exam right after you've finished a full year of the course. Math 1 is best to take towards the end of honors algebra 2 and when you still have a good handle on geometry. For Math 2 you will need to be almost done with trigonometry. Also it is important to take a Math and Science subject test if you plan on majoring in engineering or something science or math related.

### How are they used?

Subject tests are most often used by colleges for placement purposes. They also give the admissions committee another point of reference to determine your understanding of a given subject and readiness for college.

### Do I have to study for them?

It's a good idea to review a test before going in, however if you take it in conjunction with an AP exam, most students do not typically require additional studying. If not, the studying that you do will help you prepare for your final, so either way it's a plus.

## STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES AND/OR ADHD-TEST TAKING TIPS (Advice from Diane)

### Standardized Testing

Allow enough time (4-6 weeks) to process the necessary paperwork when applying for testing accommodations for the College Board or the ACT. If you will be applying for accommodations for the PSAT, SAT, SAT Subject Test, or ACT you need to do the following:

1. Go to the College Board website and read through the Student Eligibility Form  
<http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/index.html>

2. View the ACT Policy for Documentation

<http://www.act.org/aap/disab/policy.html>

If you haven't already, please call to set up a sophomore or junior consultation.

Phone/Fax 908-789-8566

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