



Family Tree Private School
SCHOOLHOUSE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Testing information / PSAT, SAT and ACT Tests

The following is from Crosswalk.com:

The first test used in the college admission process is the PSAT-NMSQ. The PSAT, or Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test is the practice version of the SAT, and is usually taken in October for the 11th grade. The importance of this exam is two-fold: as the name implies, it serves as a trial for the SAT and is the National Merit Scholarship qualifier (thus the NMSQ). Students who want to try to qualify for National Merit Scholarships must take this test in their junior year. The PSAT may be taken in other years, but only the junior year allows for NMS Qualification. Aside from scholarship qualification, the PSAT provides a practice run for the SAT. However, the PSAT is not identical to the SAT in form or content, and the SAT can be taken more than once. PSAT-NMSQ exams are given only once a year, in the fall, and only at local schools. This will require that you contact the school district for information on how to sign up for the exam. Contact the school district in the spring of a student who will be junior next year.

There are two exams that may be used for actual college admission purposes, the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) and the ACT (American College Test). Students applying for freshman admission (not transfer) to a four-year college or university will certainly need to take one or both of these exams. Some very selective colleges will require scores from both. The SAT is most well known on the East and West coasts, while the ACT is popular in the South and Midwest. Most colleges, however, will accept either exam without prejudice.

How do the two compare?

The SAT I focuses more on reasoning skills and only covers verbal (language) and math skills. (Appropriate scores on this test is all that is required for meeting the testing requirement for Family Tree Private School.) The ACT also includes math and verbal skills; additionally, it contains a science reasoning section where the ability to reason through scientific information is tested. Both exams cover math skills from pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. Both exams contain reading comprehension. Both exams are multiple choice in format and are timed. Both exams offer a qualitative analysis of readiness for college- level study. The SAT, however, deals more with logic, vocabulary, and reasoning skills, whereas the ACT focuses more on content. Also, half of the SAT score is dependent on math skills, while on the ACT, math accounts for a third of the score. So, a student stronger in math skills might do better by taking the SAT, while one weaker in math may do better on the ACT. ACT exams are given throughout the year and may be taken more than once.

You will find a schedule of testing dates and information about the ACT online at www.act.org, by calling (800) 525-6926 or (319) 337-1270. You may also register for the ACT exam online or by calling or writing the ACT National Office. The SAT-I exam is also given throughout the year, and again, the student may test more than once. The College Board web site at www.collegeboard.com posts information on fees, schedules, test helps, and more. You may register for the SAT-I at the web site or by contacting The College Board at (212) 713-8000.

USE The Family Tree Private School College Board ID Code number #101-618 for all tests.