

Assessment Brief



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2008-2009 SAT RESULTS

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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes local, state, and national SAT results for students in the high school graduating class of 2009. The results are for 2008-09 high school seniors who took the SAT at any time through March 2009, using only the most recent score for students who tested more than once. Mean scores for Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) students increased from the previous school year in each section of the SAT. The mean critical reading score (503) increased by three points to surpass the national mean for the first time since 2003. The VBCPS mean mathematics score (511) increased by one point, and the mean writing score (486) increased by two points. The mean scores for African American students in Virginia Beach exceeded the mean scores for their peers at the state and national levels by at least seven points on all three SAT sections. The participation rate for VBCPS graduating seniors decreased from 60 percent in 2007-08 to 54 percent in 2008-09.

BACKGROUND

The SAT, originally known as the Scholastic Aptitude Test, is perhaps the best-known program of the College Board, a not-for-profit association founded in 1900 that currently includes over 5,600 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations among its membership. The SAT was first administered in 1926 to approximately 8,000 students¹ and has since become the most widely used college admissions test in the nation, with over two million students taking the test annually.² There are two types of SAT tests offered by the College Board: the SAT[®] (formerly known as the SAT I: Reasoning Test) and the SAT Subject Tests[™] (formerly known as the SAT II: Subject Tests). The SAT is comprised of three sections: critical reading, mathematics, and writing. According to the

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¹I. M. Lawrence, G. W. Rigol, T. Van Essen, & C. A. Jackson, *A Historical Perspective on the Content of the SAT[®]*, College Board, 2003, <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/pdf/031306researchreport2_23504.pdf>, accessed on September 8, 2009.

²College Board, *Why You Should Take the SAT*, <<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/sat/whytake.html>>, accessed on September 8, 2009.

College Board, “nearly every college in America accepts the SAT or SAT Subject Tests as a part of its admissions process.”³ Not only are SAT scores required by many colleges and universities, the results are also used to identify scholarship recipients and determine placement in course work. For these reasons, performance on the SAT is vitally important to students and their parents.

SAT COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS REPORT

The data presented in this brief are based on the 2009 *College-Bound Seniors* reports, distributed annually by the College Board. The *College-Bound Seniors District Profile Report* provides the most recent scores for VBCPS students who took the SAT at least once during their high school years (through March 2009) and were expected to graduate in 2009, based on the data provided at the time of testing. Students who graduated from a Virginia Beach school and last took the SAT while enrolled in another school division are not included in the data. In addition, it is possible that some scores included in the report are for former VBCPS students who transferred to another school division after taking the SAT.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SAT TEST TAKERS

Table 1 provides demographic information at the local, state, and national levels for seniors who took the SAT. Specific characteristics were selected to allow comparisons between groups of test takers.

Table 1
Characteristics of SAT Test Takers

Characteristic	Virginia Beach	Virginia	Nation
<i>Total Number of Test Takers</i>	2,685	59,612	1,530,128
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	45.4%	46.6%	46.5%
Female	54.6%	53.4%	53.5%
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
Asian or Pacific Islander	9.6%	7.8%	10.4%
Black or African American	22.1%	19.3%	12.2%
Hispanic	5.5%	5.3%	13.5%
White or Caucasian	57.7%	60.3%	55.6%
Other	2.1%	3.4%	3.3%
No Response	2.5%	3.3%	4.3%
<i>Highest Level Parental Education</i>⁴			
No High School Diploma	1.1%	2.5%	5.0%
High School Diploma	32.7%	29.2%	31.1%
Associate’s Degree	10.6%	8.1%	8.7%
Bachelor’s Degree	31.6%	30.9%	29.7%
Graduate Degree	24.1%	29.2%	25.4%
<i>Year SAT Reasoning Test Last Taken</i>			
Senior	73.4%	72.5%	66.4%
Junior	26.4%	27.3%	33.2%
Sophomore	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%
Freshman	0.0%	< 0.1%	< 0.1%

Source: 2009 *College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports*, VBCPS (Tables 2, 3, 8, 11), Virginia (Tables 2, 3, 9, 12), Total Group (Tables 2, 3, 8, 11).

³College Board, *About the SAT*, <<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about.html>>, accessed on September 8, 2009.

⁴Percentages in this section are limited to the students who provided information about their parents’ level of education.

As shown in Table 1, more females than males took the SAT in Virginia Beach, which was consistent with the data for the state and nation. There was a somewhat higher proportion of female SAT test takers locally than in Virginia and nationally. Also, a higher percentage of African American seniors in Virginia Beach took the SAT in comparison with the state and the nation. Due to the fact that some students chose not to indicate their ethnicity at the time they took the SAT, the percentages in the ethnicity section of the table may be slightly different than the actual percentages of test takers.

The percentage of VBCPS seniors who reported that their parents had a high school diploma or an associate’s or bachelor’s degree was comparable with the state and national percentages, although the Virginia Beach numbers were somewhat higher. In contrast, a smaller percentage of VBCPS seniors responded that their parents had no high school diploma or that their parents’ highest level of education was a graduate degree, when compared to seniors across Virginia and the nation. Most VBCPS students indicated that they last took the SAT during their senior year, which was similar to the percentage of senior test takers in Virginia. The percentage of VBCPS and Virginia students who most recently took the SAT as juniors was somewhat lower than the percentage of junior test takers at the national level.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER LOCAL SCHOOL DIVISIONS

The SAT results for VBCPS seniors were compared with the scores of seniors from other public school divisions in the Hampton Roads area. Results from all three sections of the SAT were obtained from the following school divisions: Chesapeake Public Schools, Hampton City Schools, Newport News Public Schools, Norfolk Public Schools, Portsmouth Public Schools, and Suffolk Public Schools.

Critical Reading Scores

As illustrated in Table 2 below, the mean critical reading score for the VBCPS class of 2009 was the only mean score among the seven Hampton Roads school divisions at or above 500 for the second consecutive year. Virginia Beach’s mean score increased by three points from the previous school year. The mean reading scores for Hampton City Schools and Chesapeake Public Schools also increased from 2007-08, while the reading scores for the other school divisions decreased compared to the previous school year.

Table 2
2007-08 and 2008-09 SAT Critical Reading Scores for Selected School Divisions

School Division	2007-08 Critical Reading Score	2008-09 Critical Reading Score	Change from Previous Year
Virginia Beach, VA	500	503	+ 3
Chesapeake, VA	493	494	+ 1
Hampton, VA	467	471	+ 4
Newport News, VA	473	465	- 8
Norfolk, VA	457	451	- 6
Portsmouth, VA	437	430	- 7
Suffolk, VA	463	458	- 5

Sources: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 1), Suffolk Public Schools website, and personal communication.

Mathematics Scores

The mean mathematics score for Virginia Beach seniors increased from 510 for the 2007-08 school year to 511 for the 2008-09 school year. The VBCPS mean math score was the highest in Hampton

Roads. Chesapeake Public Schools was the only other school division with an increase from the previous year. Table 3 includes the SAT mean mathematics scores for each of the Hampton Roads school divisions for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years.

Table 3
2007-08 and 2008-09 SAT Mathematics Scores for Selected School Divisions

School Division	2007-08 Math Score	2008-09 Math Score	Change from Previous Year
Virginia Beach, VA	510	511	+ 1
Chesapeake, VA	507	509	+ 2
Hampton, VA	476	474	- 2
Newport News, VA	464	453	- 11
Norfolk, VA	450	444	- 6
Portsmouth, VA	418	417	- 1
Suffolk, VA	457	444	- 13

Sources: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 1), Suffolk Public Schools website, and personal communication.

Writing Scores

Virginia Beach’s writing score was also the highest mean score of the seven Hampton Roads school divisions. The Virginia Beach mean score improved by two points over the previous year’s score, as seen below in Table 4. The writing score for Chesapeake increased by four points, and the writing scores for all of the other Hampton Roads school divisions decreased from their 2007-08 mean scores.

Table 4
2007-08 and 2008-09 SAT Writing Scores for Selected School Divisions

School Division	2007-08 Writing Score	2008-09 Writing Score	Change from Previous Year
Virginia Beach, VA	484	486	+ 2
Chesapeake, VA	478	482	+ 4
Hampton, VA	456	455	- 1
Newport News, VA	461	452	- 9
Norfolk, VA	442	432	- 10
Portsmouth, VA	426	413	- 13
Suffolk, VA	454	444	- 10

Sources: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 1), Suffolk Public Schools website, and personal communication.

SAT TEST RESULTS – WITHIN SCORE RANGES

In addition to examining mean scores, another method of understanding student performance on each section of the SAT is by considering the percentage of students who received scores within certain score ranges. These data are described in the following sections of this report. The lowest possible score for each SAT section is 200, while the maximum score is 800 (i.e., perfect score).

Critical Reading Scores

Table 5 shows that the proportion of VBCPS seniors who received scores in the upper ranges (i.e., 600-699 and 700-800) on the SAT critical reading section was lower than the proportion of students across the state and nation who scored in the same ranges. The percentage of Virginia Beach seniors in the

middle ranges (i.e., 400-499 and 500-599) was somewhat higher than the percentages of their peers in the middle ranges in Virginia and nationally. Just over 48 percent of VBCPS test takers received reading scores that were lower than 500, compared with slightly more than 45 percent of Virginia test takers and over 49 percent of national test takers who scored below 500.

Table 5
Percent of Students Scoring Within Score Ranges: SAT Critical Reading Section

Group	700-800	600-699	500-599	400-499	300-399	200-299
Virginia Beach	3.3	15.8	32.8	33.5	13.1	1.6
Virginia	5.2	17.7	31.8	30.7	12.5	1.9
Nation	4.8	15.7	30.4	31.7	14.3	3.2

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports, VBCPS (Table 6), Virginia (Table 6), Total Group (Table 5).

Mathematics Scores

Although there was a lower percentage of VBCPS seniors than students in the state and nation in the uppermost score range (i.e., 700-800) on the SAT mathematics section, the Virginia Beach percentages are comparable, and in most instances, higher than the state and national percentages in the next three score ranges (i.e., 400-499, 500-599, and 600-699). In all, over 84 percent of VBCPS test takers scored from 400 to 699 on the mathematics portion of the SAT compared to almost 81 percent of state test takers and approximately 78 percent of national test takers.

Table 6
Percent of Students Scoring Within Score Ranges: SAT Mathematics Section

Group	700-800	600-699	500-599	400-499	300-399	200-299
Virginia Beach	3.3	19.1	33.2	32.0	10.7	1.8
Virginia	4.9	18.8	30.4	31.4	12.6	1.9
Nation	6.4	19.3	29.4	29.7	12.9	2.3

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports, VBCPS (Table 6), Virginia (Table 6), Total Group (Table 5).

Writing Scores

The data in Table 7 indicate that the percentage of Virginia Beach test takers in the upper ranges (i.e., 600-699 and 700-800) on the SAT writing section was not as high as the upper range percentages at the state and national levels. However, the compiled percentages for VBCPS, Virginia, and the nation were similar for the middle score ranges (i.e., 400-499 and 500-599), as approximately 66 percent of VBCPS seniors scored between 400 and 599 on the writing section, compared with about 63 percent of Virginia test takers and 62 percent of seniors nationally.

Table 7
Percent of Students Scoring Within Score Ranges: SAT Writing Section

Group	700-800	600-699	500-599	400-499	300-399	200-299
Virginia Beach	2.2	12.9	29.0	37.1	16.8	2.0
Virginia	3.9	15.5	30.1	33.0	15.5	2.0
Nation	4.2	14.5	28.9	33.0	16.4	2.9

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports, VBCPS (Table 6), Virginia (Table 6), Total Group (Table 5).

PARTICIPATION RATES

Table 8 shows that the number of Virginia Beach graduating seniors who took the SAT declined for the second year in a row. The percentage of test takers decreased by seven percent from the 2006-07 to the 2007-08 school year, and by another six percent from 2007-08 to 2008-09. The VBCPS participation rates are derived from the number of students who received a standard, advanced, special, International Baccalaureate (IB), or modified standard diploma during the 2008-09 school year. The estimated state participation rate of 68 percent did not change from 2007-08 to 2008-09.

Table 8
Number and Percent of Virginia Beach Graduates Taking the SAT

Year ↵	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Number	3,012	3,160	3,294	3,011	2,685
Percent	65%	67%	67%	60%	54%

Sources: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 1) and VBCPS Report of Combined Term Graduates for each school year.

Table 9 shows the number and percentage of VBCPS graduates from the three largest racial/ethnic groups who took the SAT. Over the past five years, the participation rate of Asian/Pacific Islander graduates who took the SAT continues to be significantly higher than the participation rates for the other racial/ethnic groups. The percentage of African American and Caucasian SAT test takers in the 2009 graduating class has decreased for the past two years. It should be noted that 2.1 percent of the VBCPS students indicated their race/ethnicity as “Other,” and another 2.5 percent chose not to report their race/ethnicity on the SAT questionnaire.

Table 9
Number and Percent of Virginia Beach Graduates Taking the SAT by Racial/Ethnic Group

Group	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
African American/Black	529 (45%)	631 (51%)	657 (54%)	644 (47%)	593 (44%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	228 (70%)	303 (73%)	289 (81%)	312 (79%)	257 (79%)
Caucasian/White	1,785 (59%)	1,764 (61%)	1,883 (62%)	1,696 (58%)	1,550 (53%)

Sources: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 8) and VBCPS Report of Combined Term Graduates for each school year.

SAT SCORES BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP

Table 10 on the following page contains a summary of SAT results for the three largest racial/ethnic groups in Virginia Beach. The mean scores of Asian/Pacific Islander students in the VBCPS class of 2009 showed marked improvement from the previous year’s scores on all three sections of the SAT, with increases of 19, 10, and 17 points in critical reading, mathematics, and writing, respectively. In comparison with the mean scores of Asian/Pacific Islander seniors at the state and national levels, the scores of VBCPS Asian/Pacific Islander seniors were lower in each SAT section.

For the third consecutive year, the mean scores of Caucasian students in Virginia Beach increased in critical reading and mathematics. The mean score for the writing section was unchanged from 2007-08. Except for mathematics, the mean scores for Caucasian seniors were higher than the scores of the VBCPS Asian/Pacific Islander students. However, mathematics was the only area in which Virginia Beach Caucasian students exceeded the mean scores of their peers across Virginia. All of the Virginia Beach mean scores were lower than the mean scores of Caucasian students at the national level.

The performance of 2008-09 African American seniors in Virginia Beach improved in the SAT mathematics section from 2007-08, while the mean reading and writing scores each decreased from the previous year. The SAT scores for Virginia Beach African American students exceeded the mean scores for African American students at the state and national levels in all three areas by seven points or more, but were lower than the mean scores of VBCPS Asian/Pacific Islander and Caucasian students.

Table 10
Virginia Beach SAT Performance by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/ Ethnic Group	2004-05		2005-06			2006-07			2007-08			2008-09		
	Rdg.	Math	Rdg.	Math	Writing	Rdg.	Math	Writing	Rdg.	Math	Writing	Rdg.	Math	Writing
African American/Black	451	441	450	442	434	433	434	419	447	447	433	441	450	430
Virginia	436	429	438	429	429	435	428	424	433	427	425	434	427	423
Nation	433	431	434	429	428	433	429	425	430	426	424	429	426	421
Asian/Pacific Islander	495	512	485	528	485	497	521	483	492	527	480	511	537	497
Virginia	509	562	512	566	510	518	566	512	522	572	521	522	574	523
Nation	511	580	510	578	512	514	578	513	513	581	516	516	587	520
Caucasian/White	526	524	517	525	503	519	528	504	523	533	505	524	534	505
Virginia	538	532	533	532	521	534	531	520	535	533	521	536	533	520
Nation	532	536	527	536	519	527	534	518	528	537	518	528	536	517

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 8).

Table 11 displays the performance gap between African American students and Caucasian students in the VBCPS class of 2009 on the critical reading, mathematics, and writing portions of the SAT. The 2008-09 data showed a decrease in the gap in the mathematics section and an increase in the gaps in critical reading and writing from the previous year.

Table 11
Gap in Mean Scores Between VBCPS African Americans and Caucasians

Section	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Critical Reading	75	67	86	76	83
Mathematics	83	83	94	86	84
Writing ⁵	N/A	69	85	72	75

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 8).

PSAT EXPERIENCE AND SAT SCORES

The two primary purposes of the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT[®]) are to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses for students and provide them with practice for the SAT. Approximately 95 percent of the 2008-09 Virginia Beach seniors who reported their PSAT/NMSQT experience on the SAT questionnaire indicated that they took the PSAT/NMSQT at some

⁵The SAT Writing section was added during 2005-06.

point before taking the SAT. This was a higher percentage of college-bound seniors who reported taking the PSAT/NMSQT than in Virginia (89%) and the nation (83%).

The mean scores on each section of the SAT for VBCPS seniors with different PSAT/NMSQT experience is shown below in Table 12. In general, students who took the PSAT/NMSQT more than once had higher scores than other students in all three SAT sections, as the mean scores of the multiple PSAT/NMSQT test takers were at least 511. Students who took the PSAT/NMSQT during their sophomore year or earlier outscored students who took the PSAT/NMSQT during their junior year only. Although PSAT/NMSQT experience may contribute to higher scores on the SAT, it does not fully account for the difference in SAT scores between the means of the high and low groups.

Table 12
PSAT Experience and SAT Scores

High School Year PSAT Taken	Percent ⁶	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing
As a Junior and Sophomore or Younger	59.1%	526	535	511
As a Sophomore or Younger	18.5%	497	507	479
As a Junior	17.5%	466	471	443
Did Not Take the PSAT	4.9%	428	451	419

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Report, VBCPS (Table 11), Virginia (Table 12), Total Group (Table 11).

SAT TEST RESULTS BY HIGH SCHOOL

In the 2009 *College-Bound Seniors* reports, the College Board pointed out that not all students take the SAT and that the population of test takers is self-selected; therefore, “using aggregate SAT scores to compare or evaluate teachers, schools, districts, states, or other educational units is not valid, and the College Board discourages such uses.” For these reasons, comparisons between the mean SAT scores of seniors from VBCPS high schools, as shown in the following sections, should be made with caution. It should also be noted that two high schools house advanced academy programs. The Mathematics and Science Academy at Ocean Lakes High School and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program at Princess Anne High School are available to any student in Virginia Beach who submits an application and is accepted into the program, and a number of high-achieving students attend these schools each year.

Verbal/Critical Reading Scores

A five-year summary indicating the number of students tested and the mean SAT critical reading scores for each VBCPS high school—as well as for the division, the state, and the nation—is included in Table 13. The mean critical reading score for Virginia Beach seniors in the class of 2009 increased by three points from 2007-08, while critical reading scores remained constant for Virginia and decreased by one point at the national level. The VBCPS critical reading score of 503 surpassed the national mean for the first time since the 2002-03 school year and was eight points lower than the state mean of 511. The mean scores of Princess Anne, Cox, Ocean Lakes, and Kempsville high schools were all above the mean reading score for the state.

There were seven schools with increases of five or more points in their mean reading scores from the previous school year. These schools included Green Run (+15), Kellam (+13), Ocean Lakes (+13),

⁶Percentages represent the proportion of students who provided information about their PSAT experience.

Landstown (+9), Tallwood (+9), Kempsville (+8), and Cox (+5). The other four high schools had decreases in the 2008-09 mean critical reading scores from the 2007-08 school year: Bayside (-14), Princess Anne (-13), First Colonial (-11), and Salem (-10).

Table 13
Summary of SAT Critical Reading Scores⁷

School	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score
Bayside	178	469	215	481	212	488	232	483	195	469
Cox	334	537	354	523	328	515	354	529	306	534
First Colonial	310	515	341	514	364	512	308	518	299	507
Green Run	142	468	232	462	174	450	131	437	159	452
Kellam	374	505	351	499	408	491	341	492	257	505
Kempsville	275	514	251	506	262	503	254	511	219	519
Landstown	288	485	273	479	300	468	275	472	237	481
Ocean Lakes	272	527	298	507	360	521	345	508	314	521
Princess Anne	283	529	348	518	332	531	253	550	262	537
Salem	252	496	222	468	254	466	266	486	209	476
Tallwood	298	484	268	483	293	478	243	478	218	487
Virginia Beach⁸	3,012	506	3,160	497	3,294	496	3,011	500	2,685	503
Virginia	56,544	516	56,336	512	58,921	511	59,573	511	59,612	511
Nation	1,475,623	508	1,465,744	503	1,494,531	502	1,518,859	502	1,530,128	501

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports, High Schools (Table 1), VBCPS (Table 1), Virginia (Table 1), Total Group (Table 1).

Mathematics Scores

As shown in Table 14, the mean SAT mathematics score for 2008-09 seniors in Virginia Beach increased by one point from the 2007-08 school year. The state and the national mean mathematics scores remained the same as the previous year. The improvement in the VBCPS mean mathematics scores reduced the gap to one point between the VBCPS and state mean mathematics scores, and to four points between the VBCPS and national mean scores. Princess Anne, Cox, Ocean Lakes, Kempsville, and First Colonial high schools all scored above Virginia's mean mathematics score, while Kellam High School matched the state mean mathematics score.

Six high schools demonstrated an increase from the previous year in their mean math scores, and the mean mathematics scores of five schools decreased from 2007-08. The schools with increases were Tallwood (+16), Cox (+11), Kempsville (+8), Kellam (+7), Princess Anne (+5), and Green Run (+4). A decrease in mean math scores occurred at First Colonial (-13), Bayside (-12), Landstown (-4), Salem (-4), and Ocean Lakes (-2) high schools.

⁷Prior to 2006, this section of the SAT was called the Verbal section.

⁸SAT data for students attending Virginia Beach Central Academy and Open Campus are included in the overall figures for Virginia Beach, but are not listed separately because of the small number of test takers at these schools.

Table 14
Summary of SAT Mathematics Scores

School	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score
Bayside	178	465	215	485	212	484	232	486	195	474
Cox	334	540	354	534	328	528	354	539	306	550
First Colonial	310	518	341	526	364	516	308	527	299	514
Green Run	142	454	232	458	174	460	131	447	159	451
Kellam	374	495	351	498	408	497	341	505	257	512
Kempsville	275	517	251	521	262	509	254	517	219	525
Landstown	288	482	273	498	300	485	275	488	237	484
Ocean Lakes	272	538	298	520	360	540	345	533	314	531
Princess Anne	283	521	348	524	332	537	253	547	262	552
Salem	252	491	222	474	254	471	266	495	209	491
Tallwood	298	479	268	481	293	477	243	480	218	496
Virginia Beach⁹	3,012	504	3,160	505	3,294	504	3,011	510	2,685	511
Virginia	56,544	514	56,336	513	58,921	511	59,573	512	59,612	512
Nation	1,475,623	520	1,465,744	518	1,494,531	515	1,518,859	515	1,530,128	515

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports, High Schools (Table 1), VBCPS (Table 1), Virginia (Table 1), Total Group (Table 1).

Writing Scores

In 2005, the College Board added a third section to the SAT. During the 2005-06 testing cycle, the writing section was initiated and the name of the verbal section was changed to “critical reading.” The mean SAT writing scores for the past three years for each Virginia Beach high school, VBCPS, Virginia, and the nation are presented in Table 15 on the following page. The mean score for Virginia Beach increased by two points from 2006-07 to 2007-08 and by another two points from 2007-08 to 2008-09. The improvement in the VBCPS writing scores, along with the decrease by one point in the Virginia and national mean writing scores from the previous year reduced the gaps between the local mean score and the state and national scores. The writing score gap for 2008-09 between VBCPS and the state was 12 points, and the gap between VBCPS and the nation was 7 points. The mean writing scores for four VBCPS high schools—Princess Anne, Cox, Ocean Lakes, and Kempsville—were all above Virginia’s mean writing score in 2008-09.

Five high schools in Virginia Beach had increases of ten or more points in their average writing scores from the 2007-08 school year. They were Tallwood (+15), Green Run (+10), Kellam (+10), Kempsville (+10), and Ocean Lakes (+10). The mean writing scores of five schools decreased from the previous year: Bayside (-13), First Colonial (-12), Princess Anne (-9), Salem (-3), and Cox (-1). Landstown High School’s mean writing score did not change from the 2007-08 school year.

⁹SAT data for students attending Virginia Beach Central Academy and Open Campus are included in the overall figures for Virginia Beach, but are not listed separately because of the small number of test takers at these schools.

Table 15
Summary of SAT Writing Scores¹⁰

School	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Mean Score
Bayside	208	470	212	478	232	474	195	461
Cox	325	513	328	501	354	516	306	515
First Colonial	312	502	363	496	308	503	299	491
Green Run	227	446	173	435	131	423	159	433
Kellam	330	482	407	474	341	479	257	489
Kempsville	231	509	262	489	254	491	219	501
Landstown	262	463	300	455	275	463	237	463
Ocean Lakes	276	487	360	509	345	492	314	502
Princess Anne	311	510	332	514	253	525	262	516
Salem	208	450	254	445	266	461	209	458
Tallwood	236	471	292	468	243	458	218	473
Virginia Beach¹¹	2,932	485	3,290	482	3,011	484	2,685	486
Virginia	52,992	500	58,859	498	59,573	499	59,612	498
Nation	1,376,745	497	1,491,749	494	1,518,859	494	1,530,128	493

Source: 2009 College-Bound Seniors Profile Reports, High Schools (Table 1), VBCPS (Table 1), Virginia (Table 1), Total Group (Table 1).

¹⁰The SAT Writing section was added during 2005-06.

¹¹SAT data for students attending Virginia Beach Central Academy and Open Campus are included in the overall figures for Virginia Beach, but are not listed separately because of the small number of test takers at these schools.