

September 13, 2010

**NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM ANNOUNCES
2010 SAT RESULTS**

GROUP	#TEST TAKERS	READING	5 YEAR TREND	MATH	5 YEAR TREND	WRITING	5 YEAR TREND
Alcovy	168 (+69)	462 (0)	NA	456 (+2)	NA	449 (-2)	NA
Eastside	113 (+1)	492 (+18)	-20	479 (+18)	-36	474 (+13)	-14
Newton	172 (+60)	447 (-16)	-31	434 (-17)	-60	437 (-20)	-32
NCSS	454 (+131)	464 (-3)	-26	453 (-2)	-49	451 (-5)	-24
GEORGIA	66,019 (+2579)	488 (-2)	-6	490 (-1)	-6	475 (-4)	-12
NATION	1,547,990 (+17,862)	501 (0)	-2	516 (+1)	-2	492 (-1)	-5

() = gain or loss vs. 2009

According to data released by the College Board, Newton County School System (NCSS) students like their statewide peers, saw a decrease across the board in scores on the 2010 SAT. The school system's 2010 average scores decreased three points in reading, two points in math and five points in writing compared to 2009 test takers. Likewise, Georgia's average scores decreased as follows: two points in reading, one point in math, and four points in writing. Nationwide, reading scores remained constant in 2010 while math inched up one point and writing dropped one point. Newton County's district scores were below the state and nation in all categories on the 2010 SAT.

Although scores dropped in 2010, all NCSS schools, the state and the nation saw an increase in test takers. Overall, NCSS had 131 more test takers in 2010, with the break down as follows: Alcovy plus 69; Eastside plus one; and Newton plus 60.

"Not unlike recent ACT results, our overall SAT results indicate we have work to do in better preparing our students for college," said NCSS Superintendent Gary Mathews. "In meeting with middle and high school principals and counselors last week, I stressed the importance of our students taking rigorous coursework to be optimally prepared for college and the required entrance exams. I've also charged our Curriculum Instruction and Technology Department to work with school staff in establishing a well-articulated protocol or set of steps for students and parents to access when it comes to better preparation for taking the ACT and SAT exams. This will likely dictate that we in the school system stop, start, or amend doing some things. Certainly our 5-year SAT trend in reading, math, and writing calls for such."

The SAT is a national college entrance exam some colleges and universities utilize to measure critical thinking skills students need for academic success in college. The SAT assesses how well students analyze and solve problems. It is typically taken by high school juniors and seniors.

Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200—800, with two Writing sub-scores for multiple-choice and the essay. It is administered seven times a year in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and U.S. Territories, and six times a year overseas. Students may take the test multiple times over multiple years. Colleges and universities will use for admission purposes the highest score from a testing category; regardless of how many times the student has taken the test. The College Board, however, only reports collectively the most recent scores achieved by students.

At the school level, Alcovy High School (AHS) students maintained their average score in reading and posted a two point increase in math; the school's writing score dropped two points in 2010.

"Alcovy's performance on the SAT continues to be a focus for students, teachers, counselors, and administration," said Dr. LaQuanda Brown, principal of Alcovy High School. "As the data continues to be made available to us, the staff will begin to discuss plans for college readiness, and ensuring that we are doing all that we can in regards to preparing our students for life beyond high school. At this time, a few members of the staff are researching transition programs, summer readiness programs, and best practices that have proven to help students to be prepared for secondary institutions of learning in order to give the students resources and materials that will assist them on their path of success. In addition, as the principal, I am working alongside the counseling staff in helping to provide appropriate opportunities of preparedness for students as they attempt to take and excel on the SAT."

Eastside High School students posted significant increases across the board on the 2010 SAT. Both reading and math scores increased by 18 points and the writing score increased 13 points in 2010. In addition, Eastside High School students surpassed the state reading score by 4 points—492 compared to 488.

"The administration and faculty of Eastside High School are extremely proud of our 2010 SAT data," said Dennis Roddenberry, principal of Eastside High School. "This group of students reversed a negative 5 year trend that we had been experiencing. With an increase of 18 points in reading, 18 points in mathematics and finally a 13 point increase in writing, our students demonstrated a statistically substantial increase over the previous year's results."

"Eastside deserves our kudos for student performance on the SAT," added Superintendent Mathews. "We look for this trend to continue even as more Eastside students take the SAT."

At Newton High School, scores decreased across the board by double digits in 2010. Reading scores dropped 16 points and math scores fell 17 points in 2010. Newton High students lost the most ground in writing, with a 20-point decrease compared to 2009 scores.

"The decrease in SAT scores for Newton High School has raised curricular concerns that must be addressed," said Dr. Carl Skinner, interim principal for Newton High School. "Although we are not pleased with the scores, we are encouraged with the increased number of students participating in the SAT."

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