



Written by [James Heiser](#) on August 26, 2009

SAT Scores Decline in NYC Schools

SAT scores continue to decline in New York City schools. As NBCNewYork.com reports: "It's a sad state for standardized tests. City and state SAT scores have plummeted for the fourth year in a row, according to new data."

The report continues: "The city's average score on each 800-point section of the SAT has plunged 18 points in math, to 459, and 13 points in reading, to 435, after reaching a peak in 2005. Scores on the writing component of the test, which began in 2006, fell six points, to 432. While state and county scores have continued to outpace the city's by nearly 70 points in each section, they too have experienced declines in the last four years, though not as prominent as the drops in city scores. The city average continues to fall more than 55 points below the national average for SAT scores, [reports the Daily News](#)."



The test results should hardly be a surprise; they are part of a larger trend in which declining standards of education simply encourage disinterest among the students, while increasing time devoted to what may be politely referred to as "non-academic" topics — that is, indoctrination in various secular dogmas (e.g. "global warming"), "sensitivities" and various other claptrap — devours the hours that could have been used to actually educate students in the traditional "three-Rs" that standardized testing is intended to evaluate.

The interesting fact revealed in the NBC report is that education officials are attributing the declining test scores to racial and ethnic factors:

For the last two years, city education officials have attributed the plummeting test scores to the increasing number of students taking the tests. They've also said school initiatives have encouraged more black and Hispanic students — kids who may not have planned to go to college in the past — to take the test, which has contributed to the drop. "We're expanding the group of kids, and it's becoming much more representative of the entire student population," NYC Education Department spokesman Andy Jacob told the *News*. "It's clear that in the past the kids who took the SATs were much more likely to be the highest performing kids from the most selective schools."

The declining scores make sense, of course, because the SAT tests are intended to be part of the college and university admissions process; students who are not intending, or expected, to go to college are obviously not likely to perform as well as students who are highly-motivated to get into a university. But in an age of "No Child Left Behind," tragically farcical test-chasing has become standard operating



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procedure. When federal and state money become the goal, rather than education, one may expect the schools to “teach to the test.”

The story continues:

“Now we need to focus on raising SAT scores across the board,” [Jacobs] added. Indeed. The most recent data indicate a vast achievement gap between white students and black and Hispanic students. Since 2005, the gap has extended by about 20 points in math and reading, [reports *The New York Post*](#). White students now score nearly 100 points higher in reading and about 108 points higher in math than black and Hispanic students.

Generations of race-based busing and racially and ethnically-preferential university admissions have not yielded the desired equality of outcome. But the goal of education is not to educate *races*, but *students*. A whole host of factors are intertwined in the success, or failure, of any given school and any particular student. What is needed is a return to the basics in education, and to a model of education which view students as students, not lab rats for sociology experiments. Then educators might begin to see students, and not statistics.



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