

KDE awards contract for statewide college admissions exam to College Board for the SAT

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To Jessica Addison <jessica.addison@todd.kyschools.us>

 Meeting notice graphic featuring the Kentucky Department of Education and United We Learn logos

Press Release

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This is an advanced copy of a press release that will be released to the public at 2:30 p.m. ET today.

(FRANKFORT, KY) – The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) announces the award of a contract to the College Board to administer the SAT Junior State Administration as the state-funded college admissions exam beginning in spring 2026. This initial four-year contract, with a cost of \$30 per student locked in over the four years, has the potential to save the Commonwealth up to \$350,000 annually.

KDE had received a protest, as of July 14, regarding the contract awarded to the College Board. Upon receiving the protest, KDE continued to work closely with the Finance and Administration Cabinet to ensure compliance with all procurement laws and determine the next steps.

As of Sept. 23, after a thorough review, the Finance and Administration Cabinet determined that the protest lacked merit and did not demonstrate any prejudice. Accordingly, the protest filed against the College Board contract was denied.

Kentucky high school juniors will take the SAT during the school day as part of the state's required college admissions exam testing. KDE had previously worked with

ACT as its college admissions exam provider; that contract ended on June 30, 2025.

The SAT is widely accepted by four-year colleges and universities across the United States. In Kentucky, most public institutions – including the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, Eastern Kentucky University and Western Kentucky University – consider SAT scores for admission, even when submission is optional.

“The move to the SAT gives Kentucky students access to powerful tools that support their success, like free, personalized practice through Khan Academy and a new digital format that’s shorter, adaptive and designed to be more student-friendly with fast score reporting,” Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher said.

Students and families have access to a wide range of supports to help them navigate the SAT experience with confidence. Resources such as [Understanding Scores](#) explain what SAT results mean and how they connect to college readiness, while [More Than a Score](#) highlights the many ways SAT results can open opportunities beyond admissions. Parents are supported with a dedicated [Parent’s Guide to Getting Your Teen Ready for the SAT](#), which offers clear steps to encourage preparation, reduce test anxiety, and connect students to free, personalized practice tools. Together, these resources ensure that both students and parents are equipped with the knowledge and strategies needed to make the most of the SAT journey.

College Board provides educators with practical tools to strengthen student learning and readiness for the SAT. The guide emphasizes how teachers can integrate free Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy into daily instruction, using personalized practice recommendations to target skill gaps. It also includes classroom strategies, sample activities and guidance for aligning SAT practice with state standards. These supports help teachers connect assessment insights to instruction, empowering them to build students’ confidence and academic skills over time.

“We are excited to partner with the Kentucky Department of Education and schools across the Commonwealth to deliver a state-of-the-art testing experience that will give educators actionable insights into student performance,” said Priscilla Rodriguez, head of The College Board’s SAT program. “Additionally, the SAT will provide students and their families with information and resources about college and career pathways to help them plan their futures.”

KDE is required to follow the Kentucky Model Procurement Code (KRS Chapter 45A), which governs how state agencies purchase goods and services, including large-scale contracts like statewide assessments. This process is designed to ensure fairness in vendor selection and was facilitated by the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet. KDE followed all procedures outlined in state laws. The recent change in assessment vendor was the result of a competitive request for proposal process, which evaluated multiple factors, including the technical quality of each proposal submitted by vendors and cost. The decision to move forward with The College Board is the result of a legally required procurement process.

Students will take the exam as part of the College Board's SAT School Day program. The SAT Junior State Administration is an online exam administered by school staff, and schools select the date(s) they plan to test during a six-week testing window beginning March 2.

Created by The College Board, the SAT is the leading college admissions exam that assesses the core reading, writing and math skills essential for success in any postsecondary pathway. The SAT is a 2-hour, 14-minute digital assessment with reading, writing and math sections, each scored on a 200-800 scale. An additional "analysis in science" score is generated based on relevant questions across subjects.

The SAT is a multistage adaptive exam. Both the Reading and Writing section and the Math section are divided into two equal-length and separately timed parts called modules. Based on the performance of the first module, the second module of questions will either be more difficult or less difficult overall.

Students also will have access to free test preparation [materials](#) through the College Board's testing platform, Bluebook, and via partnerships with Khan Academy.®

Kentucky has long provided a state-funded college admissions exam to ensure access for all students. Many school districts already partner with the College Board to administer Advanced Placement (AP) exams and PSAT, and the SAT testing platform aligns closely with those existing systems and supports.



Kentucky Department of Education

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