

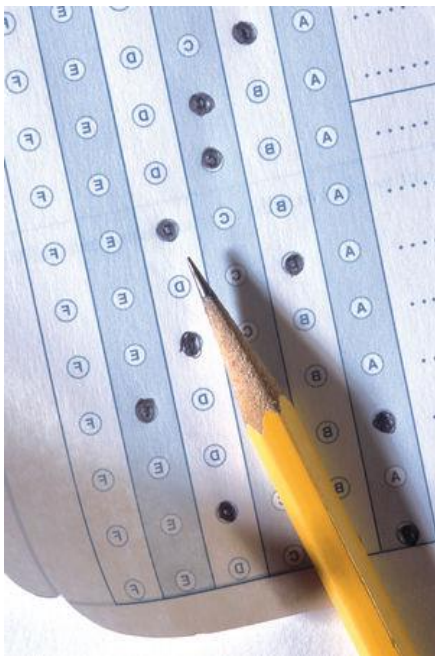
CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MACOMB TOWNSHIP

# Chippewa Valley Schools preparing for new SAT

C and G Newspapers

By Thomas Franz✉

🕒 Posted January 27, 2016



CLINTON TOWNSHIP — On April 12, all high school juniors in the state of Michigan will be required to take the new SAT exam.

That is a change from previous years, in which students took the ACT exam for their college admittance exam, and also a change from the old SAT.

Kim Voss, the coordinator for student learning for Chippewa Valley Schools, gave an approximately hourlong presentation during a Jan. 11 Board of Education meeting to discuss what the new exam entails.

“Last March, we were told that we would be taking the SAT instead of the ACT. Very quickly, we also learned the actual SAT test was also changing,” Voss said. “The fact that our students would not have to take the old SAT test is a good thing.”

The reason why the old SAT test wouldn't have been well-suited for district students is because it didn't align with the district's curriculum. The new exam is closely aligned with Common Core, which Michigan standards are aligned with, according to Voss.

“The good news here is our teachers do not have to rewrite curriculum to prepare our students for the SAT, and we do not have to do anything extraordinary to prepare our students for the SAT as a result,” Voss said.

Although district students are preparing for the exam simply by going to class, Voss said there will be several other preparation options, especially after midterm exams.

Students already have access to the Khan Academy, which is an online resource that provides students with practice tests and other materials. The district is also planning to host preparation sessions at both high schools in late February and early March.

“This group of kids, because they’re the first group that’s going to take the new SAT test, is feeling maybe a little more anxious than usual, but we’re doing everything we can, and probably more than we’ve ever had, to prepare them for the transition,” Voss said.

As for the test itself, Voss said a major change is that there will be no penalty for providing wrong answers, unlike the old SAT and current Advanced Placement exams.

The essay portion will be different from the ACT. Voss said students will be required to analyze an author’s argument from a passage.

“This is more challenging, but our teachers are confident our students can do it,” Voss said. “They no longer have to come up with their own argument and evidence. They just have to be able to analyze and explain.”

To prepare students for the essay, every teacher in the two high schools from all subjects except math is being asked to help students get ready for that portion of the test.

There are no stand-alone science or social studies sections, but students will receive scores in both of those areas based on responses to questions embedded in other sections.

In math, there will be an area of grid-in responses where students must provide numerical answers, as opposed to multiple-choice answers. Sections will vary on whether students can use a calculator.

Voss’ presentation showed the total testing time to be three hours, plus 50 minutes for the essay. The scoring range is 400-1600 points.

Students will be able to send their scores to four colleges or universities at no charge. For students identified as receiving free or reduced lunch, they will be allowed to send their scores to eight schools at no charge. Those students will also be able to receive a question-and-answer report on their exam for free, as opposed to an \$18 charge.

In addition to the SAT being a state-mandated exam, the district is also requiring that all students take the SAT in order to receive their high school diploma.



#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

*Staff Writer Thomas Franz covers Macomb Township, Chippewa Valley Schools and the Macomb County Board of Commissioners for the Macomb Township Chronicle. He also covers sports primarily for the Shelby-Utica News. He has worked for C & G Newspapers since 2013 and attended Michigan State University.*

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