

STANDARDIZED TESTING REVIEW

THE ACT

Purpose
Registering for the ACT
Preparing
Scoring
Score Reports
Sending Scores to Colleges

Standardized Testing: ACT (American College Testing Program)

Purpose

Created 50 years ago to compete with the SAT, the ACT caught on predominantly in the Midwest where it was developed. Now, colleges Nationwide allow students to submit the ACT with writing and/or the SAT as part of their application. If both the SAT and the ACT scores are submitted, colleges typically consider the higher score. In some cases, the ACT can substitute for some subject tests. Always review the testing requirements for each college of interest so that the appropriate tests are taken.

The ACT is an 'abilities' based standardized test that many of our students choose to take in the Spring of their Junior year and/or the Fall of their Senior year. When students take the ACT, they often choose between the stronger score (ACT or SAT) for college admissions purposes.

The ACT was designed to measure four educational areas with Writing as an optional section:

1. **English**
2. **Math**
3. **Reading**
4. **Science Reasoning**
5. **Writing**

This is an optional section that is scored separately and not included with the Composite Score. Students applying to the University of California must also take the writing section to be considered for admission. Go to www.actstudent.org for a listing of colleges that require or recommend taking the writing portion of the ACT.

Registering to Take the ACT

Go to: www.actstudent.org

St. Ignatius College Preparatory School Code: 053-010

There are two options to register for the ACT:

- 1) **Online** at www.actstudent.org
- 2) **Paper** registration packets are located in the counseling center. Students typically register online unless disability accommodations are being requested for the first time.
Please Note: St. Ignatius College Preparatory is not a test center for the ACT.

Preparing for the ACT (with writing)

The best way for a student to prepare is by studying and learning from their coursework. Students may utilize resources such as test prep books or tutors to assist them with increasing their comfort level with the pace and content of the test.

A few suggestions

In preparation, students should review their PLAN results along with their test booklet. This is an excellent 'first' step in preparing for the ACT as it allows students to focus on their specific preparation needs.

Students may also log on to their Family Connection account and use the Method Test Preparation, which offers free online SAT/ACT diagnostic testing as well as learning strategies that may greatly enhance their test-taking skills. For additional information about the ACT, students and parents are directed to the ACT website: www.actstudent.org.

ACT Scoring

The ACT consists of four 35-50 minute subtests [English, Math, Reading, Science Reasoning, & Writing (optional)] which are scored on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 36 (highest). Each subtest is scored individually followed by a composite score, averaging the subtests.

Corresponding percentiles for each section and the composite score provide an understanding of how a student scored in comparison to the other students who took the test.

ACT Score Reports

Students may generally find their scores online approximately 2½ weeks after each national test date. Score reports are usually mailed home within 3 to 8 weeks after each test date. If the Writing section was included, the score report will be mailed only after the Writing scores are available, normally 2 weeks after the multiple-choice scores (within 5 to 8 weeks after the test date).

Sending ACT Scores to Colleges

ACT sends scores to colleges by individual test date. Students who wish to send ACT scores should go to the ACT website (www.actstudents.org) and enter the appropriate college codes.