



College Planning

Making Your College Application Stand Out From The Rest

(NAPSA)—With more students than ever applying to college, one of the most frequently asked questions high school guidance counselors hear from students is “How can I make my admissions application stand out from the rest?”

In addition to high school grades and extracurricular activities, SAT Subject Tests can help students customize their applications by providing colleges and universities with an even more complete picture of their academic skills.

Students take nearly 1 million SAT Subject Tests every year because these one-hour achievement tests can help highlight mastery in specific high school subjects. Twenty different SAT Subject Tests are currently offered in five categories: English, History, Mathematics, Science and Languages.

“I recommend that all students consider taking the SAT Subject Tests in their strongest subject[s],” said Dr. Bill Smith of Bristol High School in Bristol, Pennsylvania. “I inform them that I earned two full tuition scholarships when I graduated high school...and both universities cited my SAT Subject Test performance in chemistry on my acceptance and scholarship letters.”

With the national demand for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) majors rising, college admissions officers value the SAT Subject Tests as valid and reliable standardized measures of achievement in high school biology, chemistry and physics.

“We select candidates from a talented pool of applicants, and SAT Subject Tests help us better understand a student’s preparation for our demanding curriculum,” said Jarrid Whitney, execu-



SAT Subject Tests let students highlight their academic strengths.

tive director of admissions and financial aid at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech).

If students are interested in a particular major in college, SAT Subject Tests can help them demonstrate their skill in a given subject and their passion and enthusiasm for a particular field of study. Many colleges and universities require SAT Subject Tests for specific majors or programs, while nearly all institutions will review SAT Subject Test scores as part of a student’s admissions packet. Some colleges even use them to place students out of introductory-level courses, which may save students time and tuition money.

While SAT Subject Tests are offered several times throughout the year, guidance counselors suggest taking them as soon as possible after completing the course work for that subject. For foreign languages, math and literature, it may be beneficial to have two or more years of experience in those subjects before taking the exams. Students who qualify for fee waivers can take up to six SAT Subject Tests for free.

For more information on the SAT Subject Tests, including how to register and which tests to consider taking, visit <http://sat.collegeboard.org/about-tests/sat-subject-tests>.