



2001-2002 SAT Results

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ABOUT THE SAT

The Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), more formally known as the SAT I: Reasoning Test, is a national examination, offered through the College Board. The exam is designed to assess a student's chances of success at the college level. The SAT I is a three-hour test of students' general verbal and mathematical skills. The exam uses a multiple-choice format, and results for each section are scored on a scale from 200 to 800 points.

The other component of the SAT testing program is the SAT II: Subject Tests. The SAT II exams measure knowledge of specific subject areas and the ability to apply that knowledge. However, only about 10% of SAT I test-takers take one of the SAT II Subject Tests. In WCPSS, 4,278 students took the SAT I in 2001-2002, while only 437 took one of the SAT II exams.

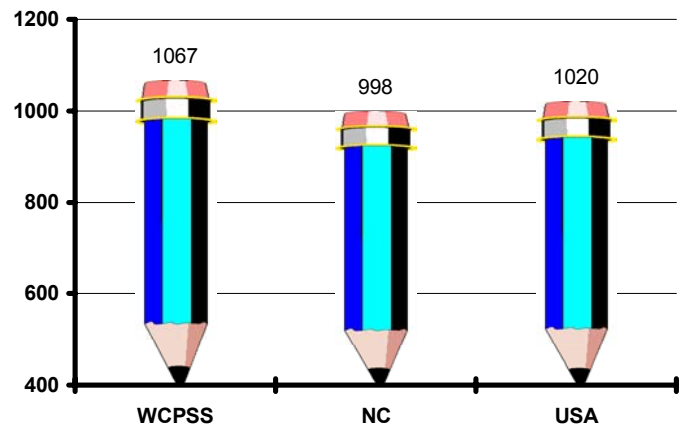
This bulletin summarizes national, state, and county SAT I data for seniors who took the test any time during their high school years through March, 2002. If a student took a test more than once, the most recent score is used. The statistics presented are based on reports provided by the College Board. Another report will be issued later in the school year exploring the data compiled by the school district. Differences between school system data and College Board data will be examined in more detail in that second report.

WCPSS SAT Scores Reach Historic High

The average total SAT score for Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) seniors in 2001-2002 was 1067, a thirteen point gain from 2000-01 and a six point gain from the previous high score of 1061 achieved in 1999-00. Both math and verbal scores in 2002 were the highest they have ever been. Moreover, the 1067 average was the second-highest in the state. Chapel Hill-Carrboro led the state with an 1177 average score.

For North Carolina as a whole, the average score rose six points while the national average remained unchanged from 2001. As shown in Figure 1, the WCPSS average score remains substantially higher than the North Carolina and United States averages.

Figure 1: Average Total SAT Score



Participation of the 2002 WCPSS senior class did not change from the previous year, remaining at 79% of graduating seniors, far above both state and national participation rates. Participation in the exam among all U.S. seniors rose one point to 46%. In the state of North Carolina, participation rose two points to 67%.

Nationwide, 1,327,831 students in the 2002 graduating class took the SAT I prior to graduation - a 4.0% increase from 2001. In Wake County, the number of seniors taking the SAT I rose to 4,278 in 2002 from 4,042 in 2001, a 5.8% increase.

The participation rate in WCPSS was calculated by dividing the number of senior students who took the SAT by the size of the 2002 graduating class. Participation rates were near the 75% mark for 10 years, and rose to 79% for the past three years. Participation rates reported by the College Board are based upon estimates of enrollment compiled through national surveys. While the College Board rates are probably accurate at the state and national level, they are not accurate at the district and individual school level. Therefore, participation rates for WCPSS in this report have been calculated from district records.

WCPSS SAT Scores Compared with State and National Scores

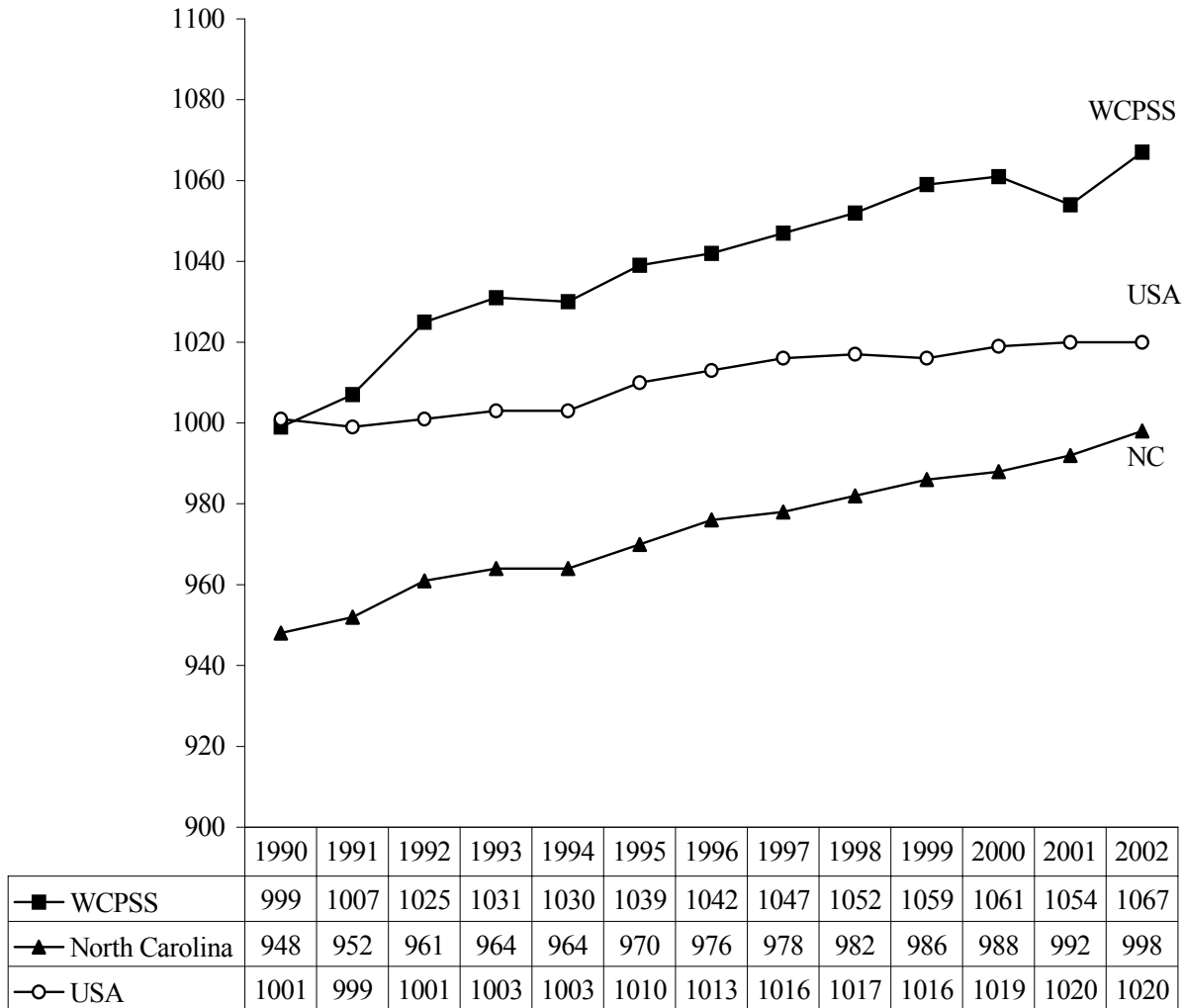
The average WCPSS senior taking the test scored 27 points higher on the math test and 20 points higher on the verbal test than the average senior across the country. Both math and verbal average scores in 2002 were the highest they have ever been in WCPSS history. Since 1990, average verbal scores have risen 23 points and average math scores have risen 45 points in WCPSS. The WCPSS total score increase of 68 points since 1990 greatly exceeds both the national increase of 19 points and the North Carolina increase of 50 points.

Figure 2: WCPSS, NC, and USA Scores Over Time

Year	WCPSS				NC				USA			
	Total	Math	Verbal	Rate	Total	Math	Verbal	Rate	Total	Math	Verbal	Rate
1990	999	498	501	73%	948	470	478	55%	1001	501	500	40%
1991	1007	508	499	75%	952	474	478	57%	999	500	499	42%
1992	1025	516	509	74%	961	479	482	57%	1001	501	500	42%
1993	1031	521	510	76%	964	481	483	60%	1003	503	500	43%
1994	1030	520	510	75%	964	482	482	60%	1003	504	499	42%
1995	1039	524	515	76%	970	482	488	60%	1010	506	504	41%
1996	1042	525	517	73%	976	486	490	59%	1013	508	505	41%
1997	1047	529	518	74%	978	488	490	59%	1016	511	505	42%
1998	1052	531	521	76%	982	492	490	62%	1017	512	505	43%
1999	1059	537	522	76%	986	493	493	61%	1016	511	505	43%
2000	1061	539	522	79%	988	496	492	64%	1019	514	505	44%
2001	1054	534	520	79%	992	499	493	65%	1020	514	506	45%
2002	1067	543	524	79%	998	505	493	67%	1020	516	504	46%

Figure 3 below shows average SAT scores over the past 13 years for WCPSS, North Carolina, and the United States. With the exception of 2001, when the average score dropped seven points, WCPSS has seen a steady increase in its SAT scores over the past decade.

Figure 3
WCPSS, NC, and USA Total Scores Over Time



Comparisons With Other School Districts

Last year, WCPSS had the fifth highest score of districts across the state. This year WCPSS ranked second. Chapel Hill-Carrboro continues to lead NC districts with an average score of 1177 in 2002. Figure 4 on the following page shows average scores for the top school districts in North Carolina.

Figure 4: Top NC District Scores

System	2000	2001	2002	Number of Test-Takers 2002
Asheville City	1038	1027	1058	199
Buncombe County	1059	1060	1066	845
Chapel Hill	1175	1185	1177	561
Watauga	1054	1057	1064	269
WCPSS	1061	1054	1067	4278

WCPSS' strong gains in 2002 stand out among large urban districts in North Carolina as shown in Figure 5. Average scores declined by one point in Charlotte-Mecklenberg and three points in Guilford, and rose by only two points in Durham and Winston-Salem. Furthermore, with a participation rate of 79.1%, WCPSS continues to lead large NC districts in high school student participation in the SAT exam.

Figure 5: Comparison of Wake to Similar Large North Carolina Districts

LEA	2001				2002			
	Total	Math	Verbal	Part. Rate	Total	Math	Verbal	Part. Rate
USA	1020	514	506	45.0%	1020	516	504	44.0%
NC	992	499	493	65.0%	998	505	493	64.0%
Wake County	1054	534	520	78.6%	1067	543	524	79.1%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	997	500	497	72.3%	996	502	494	72.7%
Durham	992	498	494	76.8%	994	505	489	78.9%
Guilford	998	503	495	74.0%	995	503	492	71.9%
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	1000	502	498	69.3%	1002	506	496	73.0%

Note: SAT participation rates reported by the College Board are based upon estimates of counts of graduating seniors compiled through national surveys. While the College Board rates are probably accurate at the state and national level, they are not accurate at the district and individual school level. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) uses 8th month twelfth grade membership rather than actual numbers of graduates. Whenever the actual number of graduates is known, WCPSS uses that count to calculate participation rates, dividing the number of senior students who took the SAT by the size of the 2002 graduating class for the district and for each high school.

The score for the average WCPSS student also compared well to students in other similar large school districts in other states as shown in Figure 6. WCPSS exceeded most districts, but the average score was lower than the average score in Fairfax County, VA.

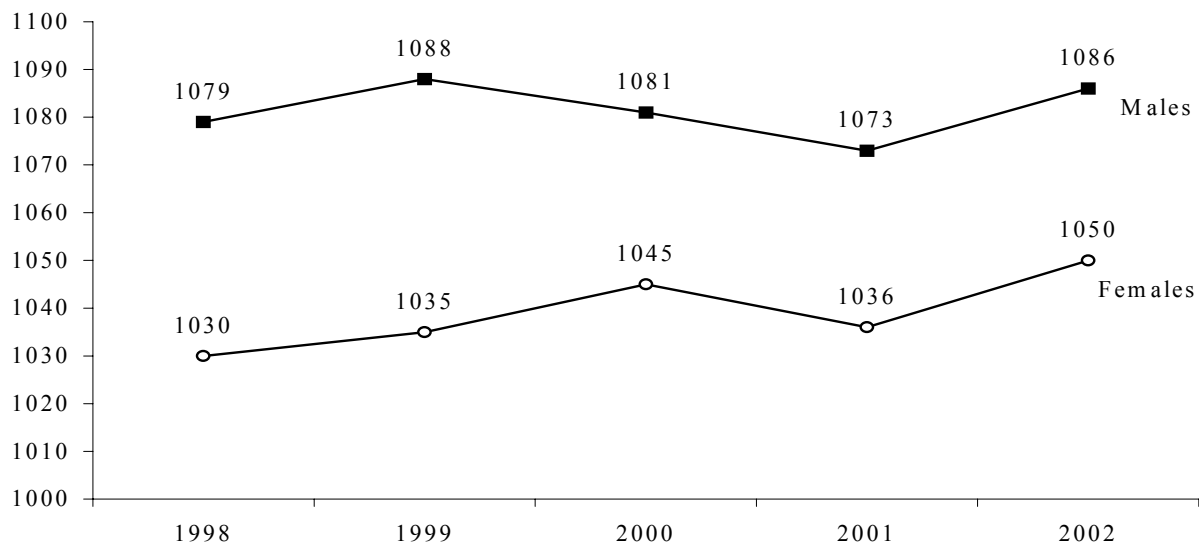
Figure 6: Comparison of Wake to Similar Large Urban/Suburban Districts

2001-2002 SAT Scores	Verbal	Math	Total	Part. Rate
Wake County, NC	524	543	1067	79.1%
Cobb County, GA	515	517	1032	85.0%
Fulton County, GA	511	528	1039	88.6%
Gwinnett County, GA	506	527	1033	84.0%
Fairfax County, VA	540	556	1096	NA
Virginia Beach, VA	506	503	1009	61.6%

SAT Scores by Gender

Slightly more females (53%) than males in WCPSS took the SAT exam in 2001-2002, but male students performed better on the exam than female students. The average total score for males (1086) was 36 points higher than that of female students (1050), with most of the difference coming on the math test. Males had an average math score of 560 while females had a score of 529. The averages for both groups were higher than last year's, with male scores up 13 points and female scores up 14 points. However, as shown below, over the past five years, the average score for female students has been on a more consistent upward trend than that of male students.

Figure 7: Average Total SAT Scores by Gender 1998-2002



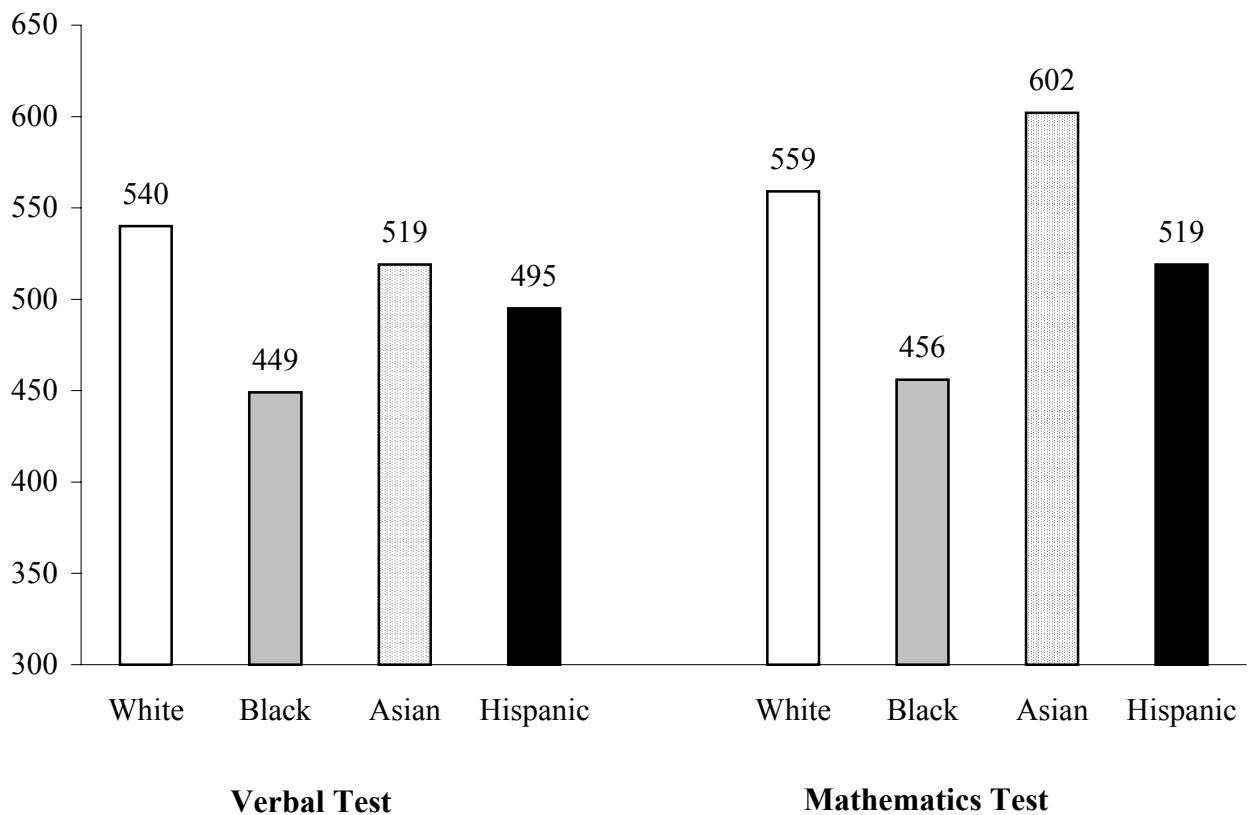
SAT Scores by Race

As in past years, there were large differences in average SAT scores among racial and ethnic groups. White students performed the best on the verbal test, with an average score of 540, while Asian students received the highest score on the math test, 602. Figure 8 below shows how each sub-group performed on each of the two sections of the SAT exam.

The statistics presented below are based on disaggregated data reported by the College Board. However, the percentage of students choosing not to report their racial/ethnic group to the College Board when they register to take the SAT has risen from 6.3% in 1998 to 14.9% in 2002, raising questions about the validity of the disaggregated SAT scores.

In an effort to gauge the accuracy of these statistics, the College Board's data were merged with WCPSS's own student records, which contain information on race for most of the students who did not respond to this question when they filled out the SAT questionnaire. SAT scores then were disaggregated by race using the WCPSS-matched data set. A report to be issued later this year will explore differences that emerged when non-responders' race was included.

Figure 8
WCPSS SAT Scores by Race 2002



SAT Scores by Race Over Time

As illustrated in Figure 9 below and Figure 10 on the following page, when compared to last year, Black students made the largest gains among all the racial groups in improving their SAT scores. Their average verbal score increased by six points, and their average math score increased 18 points. As a result, the gap between their scores and those of other racial groups narrowed somewhat in 2002. On the other hand, average SAT scores for Hispanic students declined by 23 points on the verbal test and seven points on the math test. Asian students gained 14 points in the math test, but lost three points in the verbal test. White students made modest improvements in both tests, with their average increasing two points in verbal and seven points in math.

Figure 9
WCPSS Average SAT Verbal Scores By Race, 1998-2002

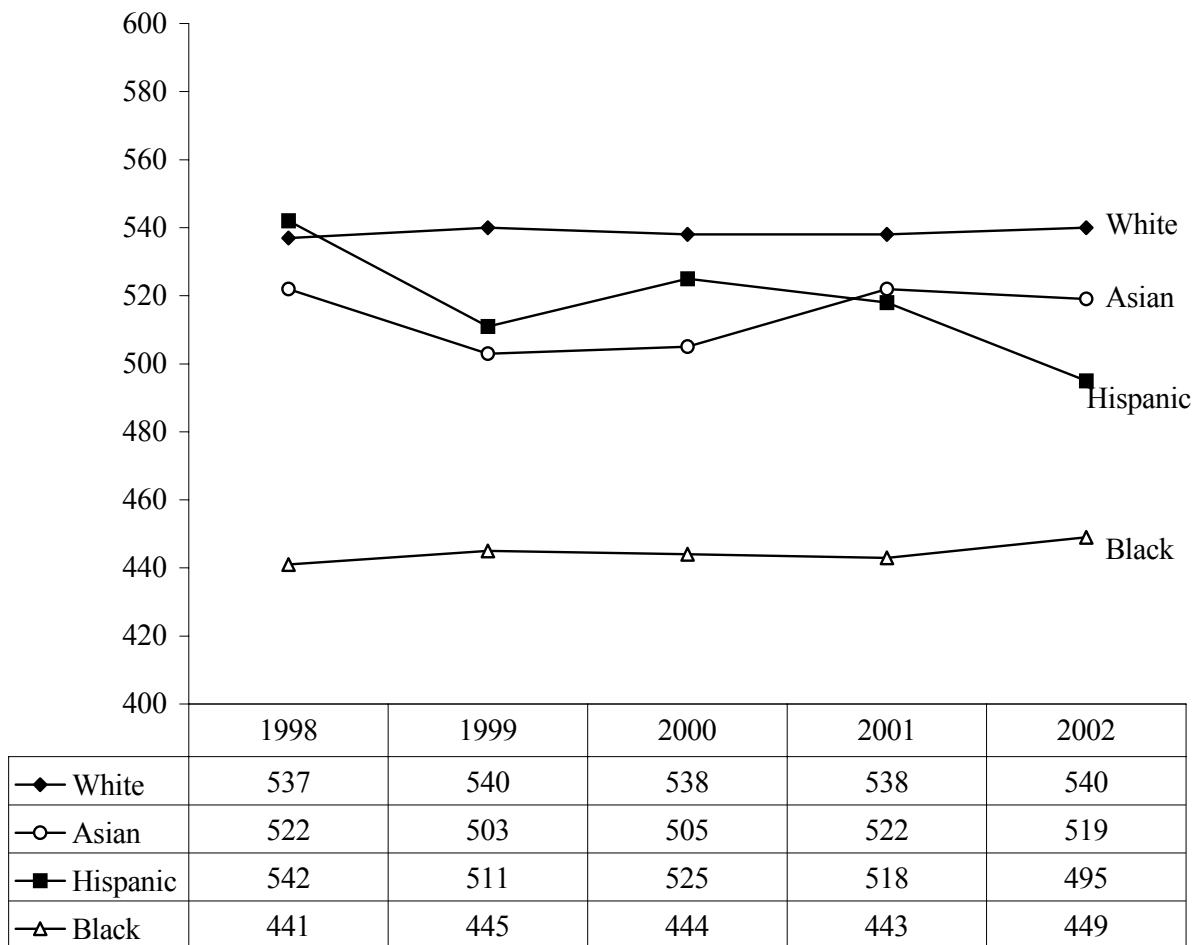
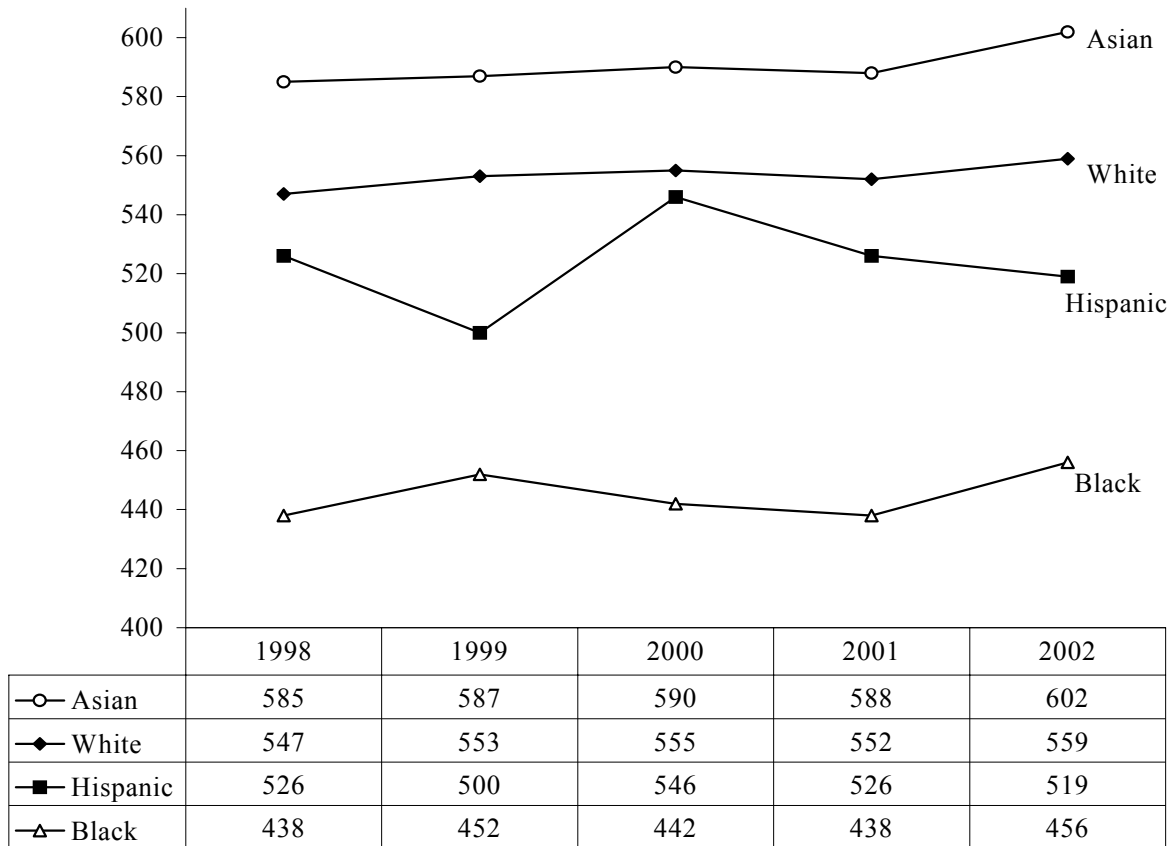


Figure 10
WCPSS Average SAT Math Scores By Race, 1998-2002



SAT Performance and Participation by School

As shown in Figure 11 on the following page, average SAT scores rose at all WCPSS high schools in 2001-2002 except Apex and Wake Forest, where they declined by four points and 11 points, respectively. The high schools showing the largest increases were Garner (up 32 points), Leesville (+31), and Broughton and Millbrook (both up 22 points). Students at Green Hope and Wakefield took the SAT exam for the first time in 2001-2002.

Average SAT scores varied widely across area high schools. Enloe continued to lead WCPSS with an average score (1164) nearly one hundred points higher than the district average (1067). All but two schools had averages surpassing the 1000 mark. The exceptions were East Wake (970) and Fuquay-Varina (987). Ten out of 15 WCPSS high schools had higher scores than the national average (1020).

Participation in the SAT exam in 2001-2002 also varied considerably across WCPSS high schools. The highest participation rate was at Leesville (94%), followed by Enloe (92%), and Green Hope (90%). Schools with the lowest participation rates were Garner (53%), East Wake (60%), and Fuquay-Varina (63%). Overall, the percentage of seniors taking the SAT exam in WCPSS was much higher than the comparable national rate (46%), and for 12 out of 15 high schools, it was higher than the North Carolina rate (67%).

Figure 11: WCPSS School-by-School SAT 2000-2002 Scores

	1999-00				2000-01				2001-02			
	Part.	Verbal	Math	Total	Part.	Verbal	Math	Total	Part.	Verbal	Math	Total
USA	44%	505	514	1019	45%	506	514	1020	46%	504	516	1020
NC	64%	492	496	988	65%	493	499	992	67%	493	505	998
Wake County	79%	522	539	1061	79%	520	534	1054	79%	524	543	1067
Apex	86%	526	551	1077	84%	536	558	1094	76%	536	554	1090
Athens	83%	523	550	1073	81%	520	556	1076	86%	530	559	1089
Broughton	79%	526	551	1077	89%	526	545	1071	89%	532	561	1093
Cary	79%	525	544	1069	80%	525	539	1064	77%	518	552	1070
East Wake	69%	470	487	957	76%	470	485	955	60%	477	493	970
Enloe	88%	580	577	1157	90%	573	575	1148	92%	577	587	1164
Fuquay	71%	497	505	1002	68%	474	499	973	63%	483	504	987
Garner	65%	488	500	988	50%	476	494	970	53%	489	513	1002
Green Hope	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	90%	524	546	1070
Leesville	87%	539	557	1096	87%	525	541	1066	94%	538	559	1097
Millbrook	76%	515	530	1045	78%	495	506	1001	78%	506	517	1023
Sanderson	83%	518	552	1070	82%	522	535	1057	82%	521	546	1067
SE Raleigh	74%	500	509	1009	84%	523	523	1046	87%	523	538	1061
Wakefield	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	84%	494	513	1007
Wake Forest	76%	500	517	1017	78%	508	517	1025	74%	503	511	1014

The participation rate is the percentage of graduating seniors who took the SAT I.