



Spring 2015

Dear Parents:

Each year the state of Michigan administers a mandated state wide college entrance exam to all its public school juniors. Up until this year the state has utilized the ACT assessment for this purpose, but starting in the spring of 2016 public school juniors will begin taking the SAT, this after the SAT won a three year competitively-bid contract from the Michigan Department of Education.

As you know, Saint Francis students also take the ACT as a college entrance exam. Fortunately, we are not bound by the state's decision to move its mandated test to the SAT. We take great care to make decisions for the best of our students, and for the foreseeable future we recommend that our students continue to take the ACT for their college entrance exam.

Why stick with the ACT?

- Our average ACT scores continue to rise because of a relentless dedication of our teachers. Each year we learn more and more about helping our students prepare for the ACT and align our curriculum with ACT College Readiness Standards—to change paths now would mean starting over, and we would lose all the traction that we've gained to this point. In short, our students best chance for a high score on a college entrance exam is the ACT.
- In talking with various colleges and universities across the state, they've always accepted an ACT or an SAT score—this will not change. Our students will stand the same chance for college entrance with an ACT score as with an SAT score, but again their score on the ACT will most likely be higher.
- While the state of Michigan's decision was made for various reasons, it certainly helped that the SAT's bid saved them \$15.4 million dollars over the course of three-year contract. Fortunately, political decisions made in Lansing does not mean the same must occur for Saint Francis students. It seems likely that the SAT's low bid was in part due to the fact that ACT has been gaining market share over the SAT and just supplanted the SAT as the most taken college entrance exam in the nation.
- We believe strongly that slow and methodical decisions lead to excellence. We prefer not to jump from curriculum to curriculum or assessment to assessment—instead we prefer to diligently go about getting better each year without expending energy starting over.
- Finally, the SAT has recently revamped their entire assessment and will be unveiled Spring of 2016. It's our preference to do our "homework" and research on what this new test looks like before recommending that our students take it. We know and trust the ACT, while the new SAT is untested and unproven.

Please know that we work hard to make decisions that are best for our students. In this case, we feel strongly that continuing to recommend the ACT to our students is in their best interest.

We welcome any concerns or questions that you might have,
Mr. Erick Chittle
Principal, Saint Francis High School

Mr. Matt Bauman
Curriculum Director, GTACS