

College and Career Readiness Benchmarks

What are the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks?

The PSAT/NMSQT College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are the scores that students should meet or exceed to be considered on track to be college ready. Separate benchmarks are provided for sophomores and juniors (see table below).

The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are included in PSAT/NMSQT reporting to help educators better understand how many and also which students are on track to have the skills necessary for success in college. Equipped with this information, educators can support students who need extra help while there is still time for improvement.

Why have the benchmark values changed?

The methodology for calculating the PSAT/NMSQT benchmarks changed so that it now mirrors the calculation of the SAT benchmarks. The current benchmarks are the 10th-grade or 11th-grade PSAT/NMSQT scores that predict, with a 65 percent probability, a first year college grade point average (FYGPA) of 2.67 or higher.

What does the change mean?

Because the values are now directly relating PSAT/NMSQT performance to college performance, we are providing a better prediction of students' likelihoods of succeeding in the first year of college based on their PSAT/NMSQT scores, rather than their likelihoods of doing well on future assessments. In this way, the new PSAT/NMSQT benchmarks are a more direct measure of whether or not students are on track to college readiness.

Where are they reported?

The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are reflected in several PSAT/NMSQT reports, including the Summary of Answers and Skills (SOAS) Report, College-Bound Junior and Sophomore State Summary Reports, and the optional Student Data File CD. SOAS reports and College-Bound Junior and Sophomore reports indicate the percentage of students who meet the benchmark while the Student Data File provides a yes/no composite score indicator for each student, identifying those who are on track for college readiness and those who are not. The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are not reported on any reports for students.

How were the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks developed?

The PSAT/NMSQT College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are part of a series of indicators that help educators gauge college readiness at different points in a student's career. The PSAT/NMSQT College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are aligned with the Benchmarks for the ReadStep and SAT assessments.

The PSAT/NMSQT benchmarks are the scores for sophomores and juniors associated with a 65 percent likelihood of achieving a B- first-year college grade point average.

Recommended uses

Designed to help educators gauge progress toward college readiness, the College and Career Readiness Benchmarks can help educators:

- See how many students are on track for college.
- Identify students who may need extra support while there is still time for improvement.
- Find students who may be ready for more rigorous course work.

The College and Career Readiness Benchmarks should not be used for tracking purposes, to discourage students from pursuing college, or to keep students from participating in rigorous courses.

PSAT/NMSQT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS BENCHMARKS FOR 10TH- AND 11TH-GRADERS

	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing	PSAT/NMSQT Composite*
11th-grade PSAT/NMSQT	45	47	45	142
10th-grade PSAT/NMSQT	42	44	42	133

*Composite score was computed independently of individual section scores.