

'March' Onward with Revised SAT

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From March 2016 onwards, students will no longer aim a perfect the score of 2400 on the nationwide Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Instead, with the revised SAT, 1600 will be the highest score, along with other changes. The various changes will be aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS), according to The New York Times.

According to College Board, the revised SAT will consist of three mandatory parts: reading, writing and math. The test is now scheduled to be a three hour long exam, with a 65-minute reading section, a 35-minute writing and language section, an 80-minute math section (25 minutes allotted for a non-calculator portion and 55 minutes allotted for a calculator portion) and an optional 50-minute essay section. The revised SAT will also have no penalty for incorrect answers, unlike the current SAT which has a one-fourth point deduction for incorrect answers. Four answer choices, instead of the current five choices,

will be provided for each multiple choice question. Moreover, test-takers will have the option of taking a digital version of the assessment on a computer compared to the traditional pencil and paper variant.

Because the test is aligned with CCSS, students will be asked to interpret and locate evidence in passages and charts. According to College Board, the reading section will include five to six passages regarding science, social science or history. The reading and writing portions will only consist of passages and informational charts with relevant questions, instead of stand-alone questions about vocabulary and grammar.

"I like how [the revised SAT] won't test us on [advanced vocabulary] that we won't use ever again after [the] test," junior Dilagsayini Mylvaganam said.

According to College Board, the math portion will include three topics: problem solving and data analysis, heart of algebra and passport to advanced math. The questions will be based on logic and reasoning to solve problems in real-life contexts. In the revised test, math questions will be split into two sections: one with

calculators and one without calculators.

The math portion for the revised SAT will focus on multi-step problems and higher-level math, according to the Princeton Review. In an effort to align with CCSS, the math portion will also include word problems to test students in translating between English and math. The shift toward conceptual learning and questioning will also be present in the revised SAT.

For the optional 50-minute essay, students will write an analysis of an argumentative text. Instead of writing about their opinions and personal experiences, students will instead be told to analyze an author's rhetorical devices and persuasive techniques. Though the essay is optional, some schools, such as Caltech and the Universities of California (UCs), require or recommend completion of the essay for admissions.

Overall, the revised SAT, aligned with CCSS, will feature real-world examples in all sections. The revision hopes to prepare students for college by exposing them to problems and concerns within a global context, according to the College Board website.

MOOR graphic by SAMMIE CHEN

News Briefs

Update on PI Status at Alhambra HS

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"In spite of continued growth, AUSD has been identified as a Program Improvement (PI) District in Year 3 and is required to notify all parents of this status," a letter handed out to students two weeks ago notified. AHS has been a PI school since 2012 after failing to meet the testing requirements in English Language Arts and Math.

These requirements, known as Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP), are part of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which was created to level scores between students from families with different socioeconomic backgrounds. AHS now has a total Academic Performance Index (API) of 844 with the high school graduation rate at about 91 percent.

However, according to Education Week, after 50 percent of schools failed to meet AYP standards in 2011, waivers were created by the Obama Administration for schools to avoid being put into PI. Upon receiving the waiver, schools must set goals to put students on the right track for college and future careers.

These waivers put an end to evaluating schools strictly based on test scores, taking suspension/expulsion rates, absentee rates and parent and student evaluations into overall judgement. This new alleviation has the potential to bring AHS out of PI status and produce even more students who exceed in all academic aspects.

AHS' New Counselor, ASB Adviser

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As the new school year begins, unfamiliar faces can be seen throughout the AHS campus. One new staff member includes the new counselor, Carol Lam-Jones, while ASB has a new adviser, Tuan Pham. Pham, who is a mathematics teacher as well, took over the position after former adviser Sally Yoo left.

Pham, inspired by his high school mathematics and history teachers, pursued his teaching career while juggling his favorite activities:

playing basketball and watching movies.

After his years at Cal State Los Angeles, Pham began his teaching career and has been maintaining it for ten years. This year, he decided to become the ASB adviser.

Lam-Jones became a part of AHS faculty in December 2014, with prior counseling experience from another school. She spent years at several universities

studying as an English teacher before pursuing a career in counseling.

"High school is a very brief period in your life. We hope you learn as

much as you can and enjoy your time here [by taking] advantage of all the opportunities and programs [that are offered]. We look to you all to make the world a better place," Lam-Jones said.

MOOR photos by SHANNON KHA

Teacher's Dismissal Sparks Debate Over Student Expression at San Gabriel High School

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The AUSD continues to be met with protests from San Gabriel High School (SGHS) students after the controversial firing of English teacher and debate coach Andrew Nguyen and the alleged censorship of the student newspaper article regarding the issue.

In May, Rebecca Lei, editor in chief of SGHS' award-winning student newspaper, The Matador, contacted former principal Jim Schofield for comment via email regarding the sudden dismissal of Nguyen, according to Pasadena Star News. Schofield declined to provide information, stating that policies in place prohibited him from speaking about employee matter and expressed concerns about Nguyen's right to privacy.

Members of The Matador staff then attempted to discuss the matter with Schofield in person, but according to former copy editor Simon Yung, Schofield gave an order not to publish material about the specifics of Nguyen's dismissal, as re-

ported by the Student Press Law Center.

The Matador's staff subsequently contacted the Student Press Law Center for guidance and addressed concerns of censorship at an AUSD school board meeting. On June 2, the American Civil Liberties Union asked

the AUSD board meetings, most recently on Sept. 15. In their statements, they have called on the district to rehire Nguyen, discipline Schofield, end institutional intimidation and increase transparency in decision-making.

"The way in which the district dismissed Nguyen was private, the appropriate method which many individuals appreciate. No laws were broken; the only things that have been [broken] are the hearts of his students," AHS Speech and Debate event captain Agatha Handojo said. "I think it's great that they care so much about him to fight for him; however, I think it is time they let go. Creating this much media attention over his dismissal is only hurting him. If they really cared about him,

they might consider getting to know their new debate coach and supporting their teammates in an effort to do justice to the team Nguyen worked so hard to assist."

In the wake of the controversy, the AUSD held an administrative meeting in which they informed the district staff of students' freedom of speech rights and student press law.



Photo courtesy of Alhambra Source
Various SGHS students voiced their concerns at the AUSD board meeting

the school district for an investigation over whether Schofield illegally censored students.

SGHS students and alumni have continued to present statements and grievances at

College Board 'APUSH'ing Out 2014 Curriculum

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On July 31, College Board released an updated version of the AP U.S. History (APUSH) course and exam description. This change was a result of protests by opponents of the curriculum, who claimed the previous 2014 APUSH framework was unpatriotic and anti-American.

According to College Board, the 2015 edition presents a "clearer and more balanced approach" to the teaching of U.S. history. The new course and exam de-

scription was unanimously embraced by APUSH teachers at the recent AP Annual Conference, according to College Board.

The new curriculum will highlight American national identity and unity as well as American ideals of liberty, citizenship and self-governance. The new edition will also highlight American founding political leaders and documents, the United States' role in the victories of wars such as World War I, World War II and the Cold War, and finally the role of free enterprise, entrepreneurship, and innovation in shaping United

States history. Contrary to the 2014 edition, the 2015 edition will also lessen the negativity that was seen with territorial expansion and Manifest Destiny.

However, not everyone supports College Board's decision to redesign the APUSH coursework, in favor of American patriotism.

"I liked that last year's curriculum revealed [the] atrocities and victories of America. It's unsettling to know that this year, students [will] only see the triumphs of the United States," former APUSH student Kesia Eng said.