



# FACT SHEET

South Carolina Policy Council

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## 2010 SAT Scores Second-Lowest in the Nation

South Carolina student performance on the 2010 SAT declined by 5 points to a lowest-in-the-South average composite score of 1447. Students from private schools and religiously affiliated schools again scored far ahead of their peers in public schools while the state's best students again scored far below their peers in other states. While the achievement gap between white and African-American students declined slightly, the gap between students from the state's wealthiest and poorest households increased.

The full results of the Policy Council's analysis will be posted on our [website, scpolicycouncil.com](http://scpolicycouncil.com). Here are some of the highlights:

### *SAT Scores 62 Points Below the National Average and Lowest in the South*

- In 2010, South Carolina students scored 1447, 62 points below the national average of 1509.
- In 2009, the average score was 1452, 57 points below the national average of 1509.
- Nationally, only one other state (Maine) ranked lower than South Carolina's composite SAT score of 1447.

### *Ethnic Achievement Gap Showed Slight Decline, But Still Very High*

- African-American student test scores dropped from 1240 points to 1239 points.
- White student performance went from 1536 points to 1527 points.
- The achievement gap between the state's two largest ethnic groups thus improved by 8 points, going from 296 points in 2009 to 288 points in 2010.
- This marks the end of four consecutive years in which the achievement gap has increased.

### *South Carolina's Best Students Scored Far Below Their Peers in Other States*

- South Carolina students in the top 10 percent of their class scored an average composite of 1689, placing them in the 71<sup>th</sup> percentile nationwide.
- Nationwide, the average score for students in the top 10 percent of their class was 1759, or at the 78<sup>th</sup> percentile ranking.
- The state's second-best performing students (top 11 percent to 20 percent of their class) score of 1489 was also lower than their peers, who scored a nationwide average of 1554, but also lower than the national average for all students.

***Private Schools Outperformed Public Schools***

- Students in South Carolina public schools scored an average of 1443.
- Students in S.C. private schools scored 1528: an average of 85 points higher; and 19 points above the national average.
- Students in religiously affiliated schools scored 1563: an average of 120 points higher.

***The Poorest Students in the State Fell Even Further Behind***

- Students from households with income exceeding \$200,000 improved by 13 points.
- Although students from households earning \$0 to \$20,000 saw their scores improve by an average of 10 points; the achievement gap increased from 375 points in 2009 to 378 points in 2010.

For more detailed analysis, see our new report: [An Analysis of 2010 SAT Scores: Part I](#)

And check back for Part II of this series, which will be posted on our website.

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