



Financial Aid Impact

A higher SAT® or ACT® score can help you earn merit based aid.

According to a recent study by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), nearly four out of five colleges use standardized test scores as an eligibility criterion for merit aid.

The study also reported that colleges are continuing to increase the amount of merit aid offered to students at the expense of need-based-aid.

A student who scores in the top ten percent of test-takers (about 2000 out of 2400 on the SAT® or 28 out of 36 on the ACT®) can be offered merit scholarships as large as \$20,000 a year at many great colleges. In fact, score-based merit scholarships are spelled out by some schools in “black and white”. For example, Seattle Pacific University’s website shows that a student with a 3.75 grade-point average and a combined score of 1110 on the SAT® math and reading section qualifies for a \$12,000-a-year scholarship. But if that student were able to score 100 points higher, the scholarship would increase

to \$15,000, netting the student an additional \$12,000 over four years of school.

You can check out the impact on the “net cost calculator” on the website of the college or university that your son or daughter is interested in attending. The “net cost calculator”, a requirement that went into effect in October 2011, enables parents and students to see how much they would be expected to pay out of pocket to attend. Once you enter your full profile, then change nothing but the SAT® or ACT® score, you can watch the scholarship offers grow as the score rises.

An SAT® or ACT® score alone won’t get a student into college or guarantee a big scholarship, but many colleges appear to believe that a student with a higher score will be a stronger student, more likely to graduate in four years, more likely to earn top grades and more likely to succeed after college.

