



October 8, 2020

Florida Board of Governors  
325 West Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Board Members,

The undersigned organizations call on the Board of Governors to waive standardized admission test score requirements for Florida’s public colleges in light of unprecedented challenges.

The current college application cycle is being reshaped by unprecedented disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The fundamental infrastructure upon which the college application process relies has largely been rendered inoperable due to health and safety concerns. Secondary schools play an integral role in facilitating college recruitment, offering students assistance with college advising, FAFSA completion, college application assistance, hosting college admission representatives, and assisting students with registration for the college admission exams. Importantly, colleges rely on secondary schools to administer the ACT and SAT. All of these services to students have been disrupted by the pandemic.

*Education Week*, which has [tracked K-12 school closures](#) nationwide, notes that the “COVID-19 pandemic is poised to make the 2020–21 school year as challenging—if not more so—than the last.” Globally, according to [UNESCO](#), at the peak of the pandemic in mid-April 2020, 194 countries had implemented nationwide school closures, affecting close to 1.6 billion students—90.1 percent of the world’s total enrolled learners.

As a result, ACT and SAT [testing centers are severely limited](#) or unavailable for test administration. In addition, school closures have resulted in limited or no availability of assistance from school counselors and other educators to help students prepare or register for the SAT and ACT. Over a week prior to the August administration, [46 percent](#) of testing centers have closed, according to the College Board, and, of those still open, many are operating at reduced capacity.

Finally, if institutions were to continue to require the tests for admission, the pandemic and its accompanying risks will place an extraordinary financial and public health burden on high schools to administer tests. As a result, high school students unable to take SAT or ACT this year [number in the millions](#).

Yet even in the face of these extraordinary circumstances, you continue to require students to submit either an SAT or ACT score for the current admission cycle. Public institutions in Florida

enroll tens of thousands of students. Maintaining admission testing requirements creates an outsized burden for all families whose students seek admission to them. Moreover, this burden falls disproportionately on low-income families, first-generation students, and students of color.

Should public institutions maintain their test requirements, US Department of Education [data](#) suggest that they stand to lose tens of thousands of students (and correlated tuition)—both from within and outside the state—to institutions not requiring the tests. They also risk creating a [disparate impact](#) due to prohibitive costs of sitting for an exam, particularly among low-income and many minority communities, which could expose state institutions, systems, and administration to civil rights actions.

The existence of public universities is predicated on their ability to serve *all* the citizens in their respective states, not just those with means or privilege. We cannot muzzle the dire reality our students, schools, and colleges face. Inequities caused by COVID-19 disruption—loss of family income, secondary school closures, interruptions in the K-12 educational program—will worsen an already difficult situation for millions of students.

In this critical time, public colleges must be mindful of their founding purpose of serving students and families and recognize that lifting testing requirements in 2020–21 will be in the students’ best interest. Taking this action will strengthen the future of our nation’s public colleges.

Sincerely,

National Association for College Admission Counseling  
Southern Association for College Admission Counseling  
ACCEPT: Admissions Community Cultivating Equity & Peace Today