

SUMMARY

TOPIC: 2011 Secondary Student Conference Resolution 21 - SAT Preparatory Classes

BACKGROUND:

A long history of Hawaii's high school students scoring below the national average for the SAT exam prompted the Hawaii State Student Council to submit this resolution to the 2011 Secondary Student Conference. According to a survey taken by more than 350 secondary students at the 2011 Student Leadership Workshop, at least a two-thirds majority believed that students were not as adequately prepared as need be for post-secondary education. One of the factors for such preparation is college-entrance examination scores. Thus, the students at the Conference voted to pass the resolution that would call for the Department of Education to create and fund SAT preparatory courses as accredited electives for interested students, at no monetary expense.

In late December 2011, closer discussion with the Department of Education revealed that college exam preparatory courses already existed in the ACCN catalog. The issue remains that not enough students know about this course and that the demand for it is still prevalent. Resolution 21 was revised to call for continuation and publicity of the preparatory courses and for the Department to look into expansion of other forms in offering such courses for students. (see RECOMMENDATION)

Resolution student author Wai Sam Lao has conferred with Specialist in student curriculum Anna Viggiano on the next steps to be taken with Resolution 21.

KEY POINTS:

Studies have shown that SAT scores are generally indicative of actual performance at the post-secondary level. There is a strong correlation between decent SAT scores (and high school GPAs) and good GPAs in college.

In 2010, however, Hawaii was placed 47th out of 51 states and the District of Columbia for SAT scores.

Studies show that a score of at least 1550 indicates a greater chance of maintaining a grade of B+ or higher in a post secondary institution. Hawaii's average in 2010 was only 1458.

Family income is also a significant factor of the achievement gap. The latest College Board study continues to show that lower family incomes generally result in lower scores, often because of a lack of or insufficient test preparation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Resolution 21 therefore recommends that:

The Department of Education will authorize memorandums to be sent to secondary, mainly high, schools requesting that educators continue to offer college examination (both the ACT and SAT as needed) preparatory classes as accredited courses listed in the ACCN Catalog as well as to promote awareness of the courses' existence. Ms. Anna Viggiano has also offered to make flyers to be posted in key areas, for instance, in the registrar's offices, to help publicize this course offering.

The Department of Education will look into other options in offering accessible college entrance examination preparation, such as through online courses and classes during intersession, at little or no cost for the students.