

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Headed to College?

Huntington Learning Center of Downers Grove offers parents and students three-month college entrance exam preparation checklist

Downers Grove, IL (Grassroots Newswire) July 18, 2011 - Most parents know that the SAT and/or ACT are a vital part of the college application process, but somehow, the preparation for such exams tends to overwhelm-and sneak up on-parents and their teens. "A student's academic record is the most important component of his or her college application, and the SAT and ACT are key parts of that record," said David Pickering, director of Huntington Learning Center of Downers Grove. "Entrance exams allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and are an accurate predictor of one's academic success at college. When gearing up to prepare for the SAT and/or ACT, teens should develop a study timeline and a careful study strategy so they can present their best self to their target colleges."

What should that timeline and strategy look like? Pickering offers a month-by-month checklist for exam preparation:

Month one:

- * Get familiar with the exam(s) by taking an initial evaluation test (offered at Huntington).
- * Choose which exam to take based on the results of the evaluation (and the preference of the target college).
- * Identify strong and weak areas and develop a targeted plan to improve weak areas and bolster strong ones.
- * Work with a tutor to develop the best test prep schedule based on the student's school schedule, time until college enrollment and any other relevant factors.
- * Divide study schedule into exam (math, for example) sections and sub-sections (algebra, geometry, etc.). Depending on the outcome of the initial evaluation test, some sections may require more time and attention than others.
- * Begin practicing different problem types (multiple choice, student-produced response questions, improving sentence questions, etc.)
- * Study a few days a week based on customized prep schedule.

Month two:

- * Delve more deeply into the different exam sections, targeting weaker areas.
- * Practice time management by understanding the structure of the exam(s), learning to quickly recognize incorrect answers and by improving speed.

- * Gain an understanding of how the tests are scored, which will impact a student's test-taking strategies regarding leaving answers blank and pacing oneself.
- * Take at least two full-length, timed practice tests-one at the beginning of the month, one toward the end of the month.
- * Register for the exam(s). For both the ACT and the SAT, registration deadlines are approximately four weeks before test dates.
- * Study a few days a week based on customized prep schedule.

Month three:

- * Focus on weaker sections by taking timed simulation exams on those specific sections.
- * Improve on question types where the lowest practice scores are received. For example, if a student struggles most with sentence completion questions, but does well on the passage-based reading area (which contains 48 of the section's 67 questions), minimize study time spent on the latter.
- * Continue to focus on improving speed on the exam.
- * Study each day and take one full-length, timed exam every week.

Night before/day of the exam:

- * Pack a bag with everything needed for the exam:
 - o Admission ticket (which can be printed from the MySAT website or ACT student web account).
 - o Two No. 2 pencils and an eraser.
 - o A current, valid photo identification such as a state-issued driver's license, a school identification card or a passport.
 - o An acceptable calculator (see the College Board or ACT website for the calculator policy).
 - o A drink and snack.
- * Look up the address of the testing center and map out the driving route.
- * Get a good night of sleep.
- * Leave for the exam with plenty of time to avoid unexpected delays.

The most important thing to remember when getting ready for the SAT or ACT is that there is no one-size-fits-all study strategy. "Huntington Learning Center of Downers Grove has had great success with our exam preparation services because we customize programs for each individual," said Pickering. "No matter how a student chooses to prepare, he or she should keep in mind that there is no quick or easy way to ace these tests. Students should aim to identify and improve their weaker areas and learn as much as they can about the tests beforehand. Those two things alone will help them raise their scores dramatically."

To learn more about Huntington's individualized exam preparation services, contact David Pickering, Huntington Learning Center of Downers Grove, at (630) 963-3359 or PickeringD@hlcmail.com. For more information on Huntington Learning Center, please call 1-800-CAN-LEARN or visit www.huntingtonlearning.com.

About Huntington Learning Center

Founded in 1977, Huntington Learning Center is the nation's

longest-running supplemental education services provider. Today they continue to be an industry leader providing instruction in reading, writing, spelling, phonics, mathematics and study skills as well as SAT and ACT preparation to tens of thousands of students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Huntington prides itself on its unparalleled programs that help parents, caregivers and educators identify the gaps in skills and knowledge that can limit learning potential. Huntington's personalized programs of instruction enable children to excel. To learn more or to locate a center near you, call 1-800 CAN LEARN.

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