

Iowa College Aid Announces Free ACT®, SAT® and GRE® Test Prep

Written by Heather Doe

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Students can prepare for free at www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov

Des Moines, IA., March 10, 2009 – Iowa students have access to a free test preparation resource to help them prepare for quickly approaching ACT® and SAT® test dates. Free online ACT® and SAT® test prep, available through Iowa’s statewide community portal, www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov, adapts to the skill level of the user, provides personal tutoring with immediate feedback on every incorrect answer, and sends emails about what to study next. There also is a test prep component for the GRE®, an admissions test used by many graduate and business schools to evaluate readiness for graduate level work. A separate vocabulary builder helps all students increase their vocabulary in preparation for testing.

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) launched www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov in 2009 to help students progress through middle school, high school, college and beyond and to provide tools for adults seeking education and employment opportunities. “We believe all Iowans should have the same opportunities to prepare for college admissions exams,” said Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “Iowa families could save nearly \$1.5 million if every Iowa high school junior and senior takes advantage of the free test preparation at www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov. It is important for all Iowans to have a plan for accomplishing their college and employment goals. The State of Iowa is committed to providing the tools and resources needed to make that a reality.”

While the ACT® and SAT® are both standardized college admissions tests accepted by most

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colleges and universities, there are differences. Students should first check to see if the colleges they are interested in attending prefer one test over the other. If either test is accepted, Iowa College Aid recommends students keep the following differences in mind when determining which test is best suited to their skills and strengths.

The ACT® tests students on subject matter covered in high school while the SAT® is considered an aptitude test that measures reasoning or critical thinking. The ACT® has four sections: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. The SAT® has three sections: Critical Reading, Mathematics and Writing. The SAT has a required writing section, while the writing section is optional in the ACT. While both the ACT® and SAT® are primarily multiple choice tests (except for the writing section), the SAT has a math section that requires students to produce their own answers. The SAT® penalizes students slightly for wrong answers, while the ACT® does not.

For more information about the free test prep and other resources available through www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov, students and families can contact Iowa College Aid's Information Service Center at 877-272-4456. In addition, more information to help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college is available on Iowa College Aid's website at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

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About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission

As the state's designated guaranty agency for the Family Federal Education Loan Program (FFELP), Iowa College Aid guarantees more than \$853 million annually in student loans from private lenders to support over 78,000 Iowa students and parents.. In addition, Iowa College Aid administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$68.5 million, provides borrowers with assistance to avoid the serious consequences of default, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.