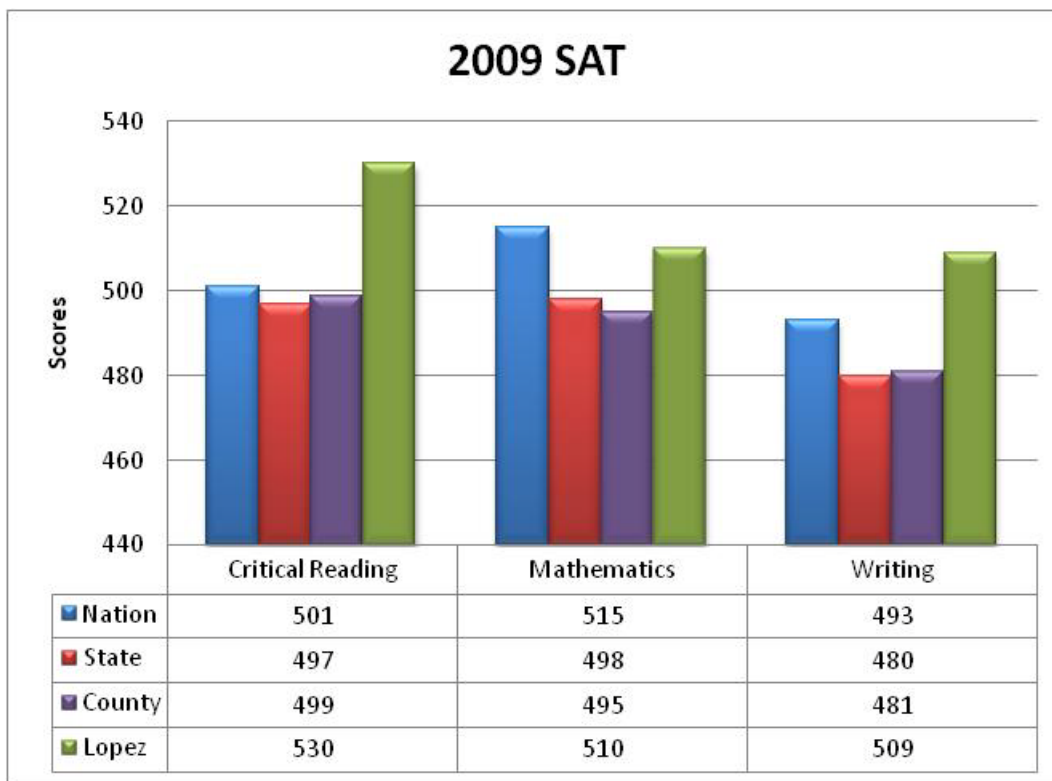


The SAT: Keeping you informed.

Each year, high school juniors and seniors take the SAT Reasoning Test for college placement. It is called a reasoning test because it assesses students' critical thinking skills and their ability to take their classroom knowledge to new levels; it is not a test of material specifically taught in classes. The SAT consists of three sub-tests: critical reading, mathematics, and writing. Scores for each sub-test are reported on an 800 point scale. Students will often take the SAT two or three times, since most colleges use only the highest score a student attains on each sub-test when making admissions decisions. Many colleges, including all universities in the Florida state university system, consider only the critical reading and mathematics scores in their decision-making process.

The College Board – the company that creates and administers SAT, PSAT, and AP exams – reports SAT scores for the previous year's high school seniors in September each year. This data is very useful in our school planning, as it helps us to target areas for improvement. It also helps us to see if our interventions have been successful over the previous year.

We are pleased to report the following scores for the class of 2009, in comparison to the county, the state, and the nation:



The scores in the report are the average of all the students' attempts at the SAT in each of the tested areas. In other words, if a student takes the SAT two times and has mathematics scores of 500 on the first attempt and 600 on the second attempt, the report will show 550.

Comparing scores for different schools or groups of schools is difficult. In a small school like Father Lopez, there will be large variations in our overall average scores in any given year. As an example, say that one of our seniors takes the SAT only once and gets a 350 (quite a low

score) on critical reading. Since we have a small number of seniors, that low score affects the school's average much more than it would if there were a larger group. As another example, in Volusia County, only 41.5% of all high school seniors take the SAT. As you might imagine, that is the top 41.5% of students in the county. Almost all Father Lopez seniors take the SAT each year, since we expect that all of our students are going on to college. We are thus limited in drawing comparisons.

While we are happy with our students' performance last year, we are always striving to improve. Last year, we piloted a program that is designed to support our 9th grade students who struggle with mathematics and English. We anticipate seeing the results of this intervention within the next year or so. We are also integrating SAT preparation in all of our mathematics and English classes in an attempt to improve our students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Parents often ask how their children can do better on the SAT, and thus improve college admissions potential. The answer depends upon what will work for your child or your family. Some families choose to purchase SAT preparation materials at bookstores or online; others will choose an SAT prep course offered by a local tutoring company. At Father Lopez, we provide built-in SAT prep (see above) and we require all students to take the PSAT (Practice SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) in grades 9-11. We will provide the results of the PSAT to parents in an evening meeting in early December. These results and the associated PSAT website will allow parents and students to see a complete analysis of every question and answer on the test. Math and English teachers will then go over the questions in the classroom, allowing students to get personal feedback.

In future e-Newsletters, we will provide information on our students' performance on the ACT and AP exams. We will also provide additional information on the October PSAT.