

An Critical Analysis of the 2004 and 2005 SAT Scores of College Bound Students, With  
Implications for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Law and the State of Virginia Standards of  
Learning (“SOLs”)

by

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## ***TABLE OF CONTENTS***

INTRODUCTION	-1-
ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF BLACK AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NCLB LAW	-2-
ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF HISPANIC AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NCLB LAW	-2-
ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF BLACK AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STATE OF VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING PROGRAM	-4-
ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF HISPANIC AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STATE OF VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING PROGRAM	-6-
ANALYSIS OF HOW FAR BLACK COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS ARE BEHIND THEIR WHITE AND HISPANIC COUNTERPARTS, WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR WHAT THEY MUST ACCOMPLISH DURING THEIR FOUR OR MORE YEARS IN COLLEGE	-9-
ANALYSIS OF HOW FAR HISPANIC COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS ARE BEHIND THEIR WHITE COUNTERPARTS, WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR WHAT THEY MUST ACCOMPLISH DURING THEIR FOUR OR MORE YEARS IN COLLEGE	-9-
THE ACTUAL GAP THAT BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS MUST CLOSE BY THE TIME THEY GRADUATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY	-12-
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	-12-
REFERENCES	-13-
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	-13-
ABSTRACT	-14-

## INTRODUCTION

A recent article published in a local newspaper highlighted some of the disparities in SAT scores of Blacks and Whites and Hispanics and Whites, for 2004 and 2005. The purpose of this paper is to take a closer look at the disparities mentioned in the newspaper article and what those disparities suggest about the effectiveness of Virginia’s “SOL” program and the Federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) program.

One of the ways that the NCLB (Public Law 107-110) program accomplishes its goals is by helping children that are behind to catch up. Since the “SOL” tests, in Virginia, are being used to measure the degree to which Virginia has accomplished the goals of the NCLB program, the act of helping children that are behind catch up must be one of the Virginia “SOL” program (adopted by the Virginia Department of Education in June 1995) objectives also.

**Figure 1: SAT Scores in Virginia and the Nation 2004 and 2005 (Source: The Virginian Pilot 8/31/2005)**

**SAT SCORES INCREASE**  
 The SAT scores released Tuesday showed improvements in math scores, but in Virginia and the nation, the achievement gap between white and minority students widened. Here's how Virginia compared with the nation:

			MATH	VERBAL	TOTAL SCORE	CHANGE SINCE LAST YEAR	
<b>VIRGINIA</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	2004	421	433	854	+11	
		2005	429	436	865		
	<b>Hispanics</b>	2004	483	488	971	+3	
		2005	486	488	974		
	<b>Whites</b>	2004	524	534	1058	+12	
		2005	532	538	1070		
	<b>Total</b>	2004	509	515	1024	+6	
		2005	514	516	1030		
	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	2004	427	430	857	+7
			2005	431	433	864	
<b>Hispanics</b>		2004	460	456	916	+6	
		2005	464	458	922		
<b>Whites</b>		2004	531	528	1059	+9	
		2005	536	532	1068		
<b>Total</b>		2004	518	508	1026	+2	
		2005	520	508	1028		

SOURCE: The College Board The Virginian-Pilot

Figure 1 shows the information about the SAT scores as they appeared in local newspaper on Wednesday, August 31, 2005. Tables 1 through 6 were constructed from the information in Figure 1 in order to highlight the differences between the SAT scores of Blacks and Whites, Hispanics and Whites, and Blacks and Hispanics. What follows is a discussion of some of those differences and what they say about the effectiveness of the Virginia “SOLs” and the “No Child Left Behind” program.

## ***ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF BLACK AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NCLB LAW***

First, Table 1 shows the comparisons between the overall (verbal and math, combined) SAT scores of White and Black college bound students on a national level. A careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the nation as a whole, the average overall SAT score of Black college bound students was only 202 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average overall SAT score of Black college bound students was 204 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 2 point *increase* in how far Black college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, but, on the contrary, it has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Table 1 also shows the comparisons between the verbal SAT scores of White and Black college bound students on a national level. Another careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the nation as a whole, the average verbal SAT score of Black college bound students was 98 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average verbal SAT score of Black college bound students was 99 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 1 point *increase* in how far Black college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, in verbal skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Finally, Table 1 shows comparisons between the math SAT scores of White and Black college bound students on a national level, for 2004 and 2005. An examination of that part of the table reveals that, in 2004, in the nation as a whole, the average math SAT score of Black college bound students was 104 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average math SAT score of Black college bound students was 105 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 1 point *increase* in how far Black college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, in math skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

## ***ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF HISPANIC AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NCLB LAW***

Table 2 shows the comparisons between the SAT scores of White and Hispanic college bound students on a national level. A careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the nation as a whole, the average overall SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 143 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average overall SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 146 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 3 point *increase* in how far Hispanic college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped college bound Hispanic students to catch up with their White counterparts, but, on the contrary, it has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Table 1. Comparison of SAT Scores of Blacks and Whites on a National Level, USA (2004 and 2005)							
	2004			2005			
Type of SAT Score	Blacks	Whites	Points Blacks are Behind Whites	Blacks	Whites	Points Blacks are Behind Whites	Increase in How Far Blacks are Behind
Overall	857	1059	<b>202</b>	864	1068	<b>204</b>	+2
Verbal	430	528	<b>98</b>	433	532	<b>99</b>	+1
Math	427	531	<b>104</b>	431	536	<b>105</b>	+1

Table 2 also shows the comparisons between the verbal SAT scores of White and Hispanic college bound students on a national level. Another careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the nation as a whole, the average verbal SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 72 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average verbal SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 74 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 2 point *increase* in how far Hispanic college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped Hispanic students to catch up with their White counterparts, in verbal skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Finally, Table 2 shows comparisons between the math SAT scores of White and Hispanic college bound students on a national level, for 2004 and 2005. An examination of that part of the table reveals that, in 2004, in the nation as a whole, the average math SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 71 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average math SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 72 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 1 point *increase* in how far Hispanic college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped Hispanic students to catch up with their White counterparts, in math skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

#### ***ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF BLACK AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STATE OF VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING PROGRAM***

Table 3 shows the comparisons between the overall (verbal and math, combined) SAT scores of White and Black college bound students in the State of Virginia, for 2004 and 2005. A careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the State as a whole, the average overall SAT score of Black college bound students was 204 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average overall SAT score of Black college bound students was 205 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 1 point *increase* in how far Black college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, in the State of Virginia, the “SOL” program has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, but, on the contrary, it has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Table 3 also shows the comparisons between the verbal SAT scores of White and Black college bound students in the State of Virginia, for 2004 and 2005. Another careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the State of Virginia, as a whole, the average verbal SAT score of Black college bound students was 101 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average verbal SAT score of Black college bound students was 102 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 1 point *increase* in how far Black college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, in the State of Virginia, the “SOL” program has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, in verbal skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Table 2. Comparison of SAT Scores of Hispanics and Whites on a National Level, USA (2004 and 2005)

	<b>2004</b>			<b>2005</b>			
Type of SAT Score	Hispanics	Whites	<b>Points Hispanics are Behind Whites</b>	Hispanics	Whites	<b>Points Hispanics are Behind Whites</b>	Increase in How Far Hispanics are Behind
Overall	916	1,059	<b>143</b>	922	1,068	<b>146</b>	+3
Verbal	456	528	<b>72</b>	458	532	<b>74</b>	+2
Math	460	531	<b>71</b>	464	536	<b>72</b>	+1

Finally, Table 3 shows comparisons between the math SAT scores of White and Black college bound students in the State of Virginia, for 2004 and 2005. An examination of that part of the table reveals that, in 2004, in the State of Virginia as a whole, the average math SAT score of Black college bound students was 103 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average math SAT score of Black college bound students was also 103 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 0 point *increase* in how far Black college bound students fell behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, in the State of Virginia, the “SOL” program, once again, has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, in math skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them just as far behind as they were the previous year.

***ANALYSIS OF DISPARITIES BETWEEN SAT SCORES OF HISPANIC AND WHITE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STATE OF VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING PROGRAM***

Table 4 shows the comparisons between the overall (verbal and math, combined) SAT scores of White and Hispanic college bound students in the State of Virginia, for 2004 and 2005. A careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the State as a whole, the average overall SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 87 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average overall SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 96 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 9 point *increase* in how far Hispanic college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, in the State of Virginia, the “SOL” program has not helped Hispanic students to catch up with their White counterparts, but, on the contrary, it has succeeded in leaving them further behind.

Table 4 also shows the comparisons between the verbal SAT scores of White and Hispanic college bound students in the State of Virginia, for 2004 and 2005. Another careful perusal of that table reveals that, in 2004, in the State of Virginia, as a whole, the average verbal SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 46 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average verbal SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 50 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 4 point *increase* in how far Hispanic college bound students are behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, in the State of Virginia, the “SOL” program has not helped Hispanic students to catch up with their White counterparts, in verbal skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind. .

Finally, Table 4 shows comparisons between the math SAT scores of White and Hispanic college bound students in the State of Virginia, for 2004 and 2005. An examination of that part of the table reveals that, in 2004, in the State of Virginia as a whole, the average math SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was 41 points behind that of Whites. In comparison, in 2005, average math SAT score of Hispanic college bound students was also 46 points behind that of their White counterparts. This represents a 5 point *increase* in how far Hispanic college bound students fell behind their White counterparts from 2004 to 2005. This suggest that, in the State of Virginia, the “SOL” program, once again, has not helped Hispanic students to catch up with their White counterparts, in math skills (as measured by the SAT), but, on the contrary, has succeeded in leaving them further behind.



Table 3. Comparison of SAT Scores of Blacks and Whites in the State of Virginia, USA (2004 and 2005)

Type of SAT Score	<b>2004</b>			<b>2005</b>			Increase in How Far Blacks are Behind
	Blacks	Whites	<b>Points Blacks were Behind Whites</b>	Blacks	Whites	<b>Points Blacks are Behind Whites</b>	
Overall	854	1058	<b>204</b>	865	1070	<b>205</b>	+1
Verbal	433	534	<b>101</b>	436	538	<b>102</b>	+1
Math	421	524	<b>103</b>	429	532	<b>103</b>	0

Table 4. Comparison of SAT Scores of Hispanics and Whites in the State of Virginia, USA (2004 and 2005)

	<b>2004</b>			<b>2005</b>			
Type of SAT Score	Hispanics	Whites	<b>Points Hispanics are Behind Whites</b>	Hispanics	Whites	<b>Points Hispanics are Behind Whites</b>	Increase in How Far Hispanics are Behind
Overall	971	1058	<b>87</b>	974	1070	<b>96</b>	+9
Verbal	488	534	<b>46</b>	488	538	<b>50</b>	+4
Math	483	524	<b>41</b>	486	532	<b>46</b>	+5

***ANALYSIS OF HOW FAR BLACK COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS ARE BEHIND THEIR WHITE AND HISPANIC COUNTERPARTS, WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR WHAT THEY MUST ACCOMPLISH DURING THEIR FOUR OR MORE YEARS IN COLLEGE***

Tables 5 shows how much SAT catching up Black college and university students have to do to catch up with their White and Hispanic counterparts in Fall 2005. As indicated in the table, for Black college and university students to catch up with their White counterparts in the United States at-large, they must gain 99 on the verbal portion of the SAT, and 105 points on the Math portion. To catch up with their Hispanics counterparts in the USA, they must gain 25 points on the verbal and 33 points on the math portion of the SAT. This means that, according to the SAT, Black college and university students are considerably behind both White and Hispanic college students on both the verbal and math portions of the SAT. But, that's only part of the story.

In reality, the gap that Black college and university students must close by the time they finish their college or university education is much larger than indicated by the SAT. This is because White and Hispanic college and university students are not just standing still waiting for Black students to catch up with them. They are moving forward too. This means that, in order for Black college and university students to be prepared to compete in the job market after they finish their undergraduate education, not only do they have to catch up to the point where their White and Hispanic counterparts are now, but they also have to close the gap between that point and where White and Hispanic students will be when they finish college. (They and their college and university professors have their work caught out for them.)

Of course, catching up with White and Hispanic students will not assure Black college and university students that they will be able to compete in the future. One reason that this is the case is that the United States (and, indeed, the world) is moving toward a global economy. For Black college students to be successful in the future, they must not only make sure that they are competitive with White and Hispanic students, but also with college and university students throughout the world.

***ANALYSIS OF HOW FAR HISPANIC COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS ARE BEHIND THEIR WHITE COUNTERPARTS, WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR WHAT THEY MUST ACCOMPLISH DURING THEIR FOUR OR MORE YEARS IN COLLEGE***

Tables 6 shows how much SAT catching up Hispanic college and university students have to do to catch-up with their White counterparts in Fall 2005. As indicated in the table, for Hispanic college and university students to catch up with their White counterparts in the United States at-large, they must gain 74 on the verbal portion of the SAT, and 72 points on the Math portion.. This means that, according to the SAT, Hispanic college and university students are considerably behind White college students on both the verbal and math portions of the SAT. But, that's only part of the story.

In reality, the gap that Hispanic college and university students must close by the time they finish their college or university education is much larger than indicated by the SAT. This is because White college and university students are not just standing still waiting for Hispanic

Table 5 SAT Gap That Black College and University Students Must Close, Now, to Catch Up With Their White and Hispanic Counterparts (Fall 2005)

Type of Gap	Overall SAT	Verbal SAT	Math SAT
Gap that Black college and university students must close to catch up with White students, today (United States At-Large)	204	99	105
Gap that Black college and university students must close to catch up with White students, today (State of Virginia)	205	102	103
Gap that Black college and university students must close to catch up with Hispanic students, today (United States At-Large)	58	25	33
Gap that Black college and university students must close to catch up with Hispanic students, today (State of Virginia)	109	52	57

Table 6. SAT Gap That Hispanic College and University Students Must Close, Now, to Catch Up With Their White Counterparts (Fall 2005)			
Type of Gap	Overall SAT	Verbal SAT	Math SAT
Gap that Hispanic college and university students must close to catch up with White students, today (United States At-Large)	146	74	72
Gap that Hispanic college and university students must close to catch up with White students, today (State of Virginia)	96	50	46

students to catch up with them. They are moving forward too. This means that, in order for Hispanic college and university students to be prepared to compete in the job market after they finish their undergraduate education, not only do they have to catch up to the point where their White counterparts are now, but they also have to close the gap between that point and where White students will be when they finish college.

Of course, catching up with White students will not assure Hispanic college and university students that they will be able to compete in the future. One reason that this is the case is that the United States (and, indeed, the world) is moving toward a global economy. For Hispanic college students to be successful in the future, they must not only make sure that they are competitive with White students, but also with college and university students throughout the world.

### ***THE ACTUAL GAP THAT BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS MUST CLOSE BY THE TIME THEY GRADUATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY***

The findings of this analysis are very problematic. What's even more problematic is the large gaps that exist between Blacks and Whites and Hispanics and Whites. Based on the SAT scores, the gaps are very large. Those are gaps that college professors must help Black and Hispanic college and university students to close, once they enroll in the university. Not only must those professors help their students to close those gaps, but they must also help them to climb the high mountains of the GRE, the LSAT, the MCAT, the GMAT, the MAT, the PRAXIS, and a whole string of more advanced national tests. One must keep in mind though, that the students are the ones that must really close the gap. The university can provide some motivation, some instructions, some tutoring, and many other opportunities and resources, but ultimately, it's up to the student. To close the gap, the Black and Hispanic students themselves must be committed to doing what's necessary (attending class everyday, taking notes in class, studying, doing homework and classwork, attending tutoring sessions, etc.) to catch up with their White counterparts as soon as possible (ASAP).

### ***SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION***

In summary, an examination of State of Virginia and U.S. SAT scores, for 2004 and 2005, reveals that, based on overall, verbal, and math SAT scores, the national "No Child Left Behind" program and the State of Virginia "SOL" program have, for the most part, only succeeded in leaving Black and Hispanic college bound students further behind their White counterparts. It also reveals that, perhaps NCLB and Virginia "SOLs" should be geared toward helping all students to meet higher standard, instead of low or minimum ones. If the present system persists, with Blacks and Hispanics being steered toward low and/or minimum standard and the Whites being steered toward high and/or maximum standard, the gap will surely grow even wider in the future.

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An Critical Analysis of the 2004 and 2005 SAT Scores of College Bound Students, With Implications for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Law and the State of Virginia Standards of Learning (“SOLs”)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to conduct a critical analysis of (1.) the disparities between the SAT scores of Black and White students, and Hispanic and White students, for 2004 and 2005 and (2.) what those disparities suggest about the effectiveness of the State of Virginia “SOL” program and the Federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) program. The nationwide averages of Black and White students on the 2004 and 2005 overall, verbal, and math SAT were compared. Conclusions were drawn about the effectiveness of the “NCLB” program, based on the results of those comparisons. Comparisons were also done between Black and White students, in the State of Virginia, using their statewide overall, verbal, and math averages on the SAT, for 2004 and 2005. Based on those comparisons, conclusions were drawn concerning the effectiveness of the State of Virginia “SOLs”. The same kinds of comparisons were done between Hispanic and White students and similar conclusions were. The sizes of the gaps between Blacks and Whites, and Hispanics and Whites, were examined, along with their implications for what Black and Hispanic students, and colleges and universities, must do to accomplish the task of closing them. Results indicate that , based on overall, verbal, and math SAT scores, on a national level, the “No Child Left Behind” program has not helped Black students to catch up with their White counterparts, but, on the contrary, it has succeeded, for the most part, in leaving them further behind. The same was found to be the case for comparisons between Hispanic and White students. Comparisons of SAT scores of Black and White students and Hispanic and White students, at the statewide level revealed similar results, i.e., the State of Virginia “SOLs” did not decrease the gaps. If Black and Hispanic students are to be competitive (in the job market) when they finish college, the gap must be closed between the day that they enter college and the day that they graduate. Perhaps, in stead focusing on helping the students that are behind to reach low or minimum standards, the State of Virginia “SOL” program and the “No Child Left Behind” program should focus on helping them to reach the highest level of education that they are capable of achieving. Future studies should focus on comparisons with other subgroups, i.e., females, Black males, students from low income families, etc. (Contains 6 tables, 1 figure (a bar graph), and 4 references)