

Realizing Your College Potential? Impacts of College Board's RYCP Campaign on Postsecondary Enrollment

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Background

- College admissions process contains numerous stumbling blocks
- Is this a problem?
 - Where students attend impacts degree completion and wages
 - Students and families have limited information
 - Traditionally underrepresented students “undermatch”



Background

- How could we improve application strategies?
- Traditional view: rational cost-benefit actors
 - More information; relieve credit constraints
- Modern view is “behavioral”: inattention; complexity; small effort costs
 - Simplified information; reminders; “opt-in” defaults; eliminate administrative or cost barriers



Research Question

- Can a “light-touch” intervention induce students to consider or enroll in more selective postsecondary institutions at scale?
 - Provide information to minimize aggregation costs, nudge into starting the college search process, and encourage a broader portfolio
 - Remove some barriers identified by “behavioral economics”

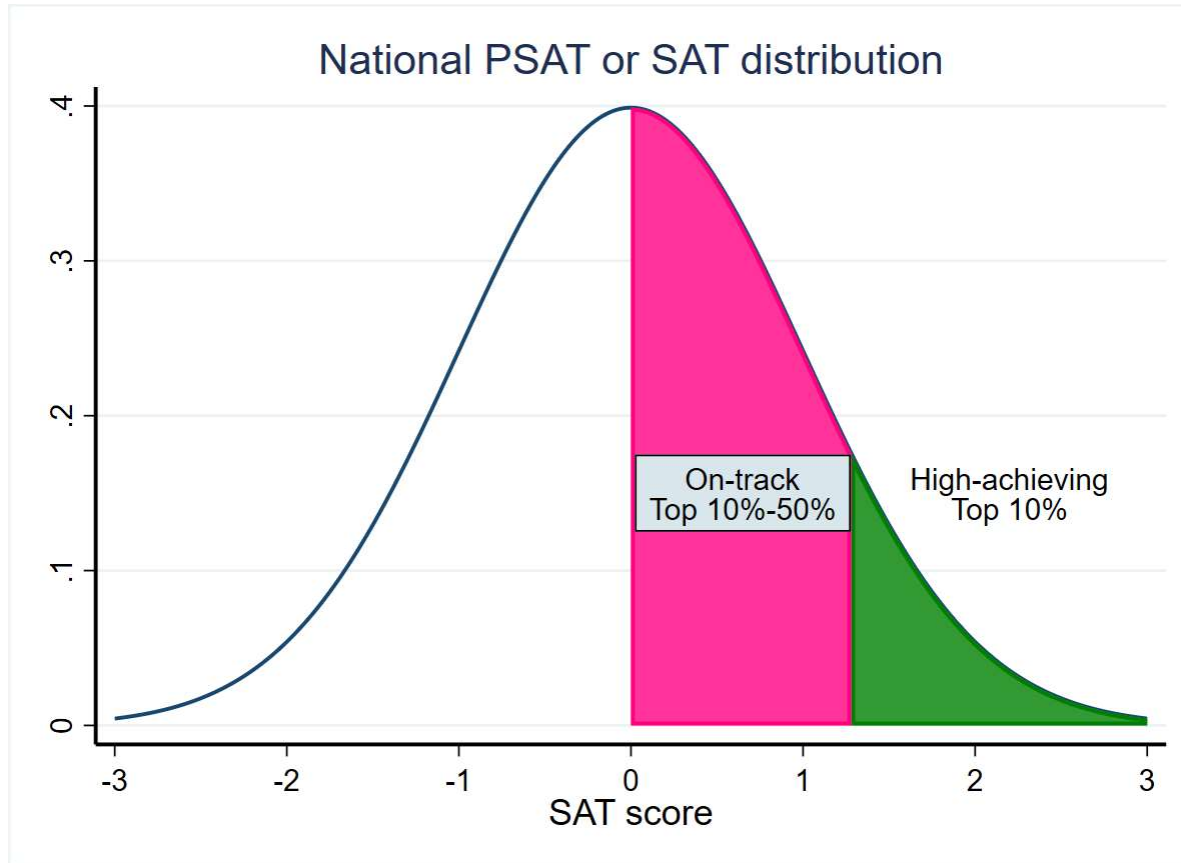


Background

- Why should this matter?
 - Prior efforts helped high-achieving, low-income students (e.g., Hoxby & Turner, 2013)
 - Other examples: text nudges, counseling support
 - Tension between “low” and “high” touch interventions



Sample selection



- Low- and middle-income
- 2016 & 2017 cohorts



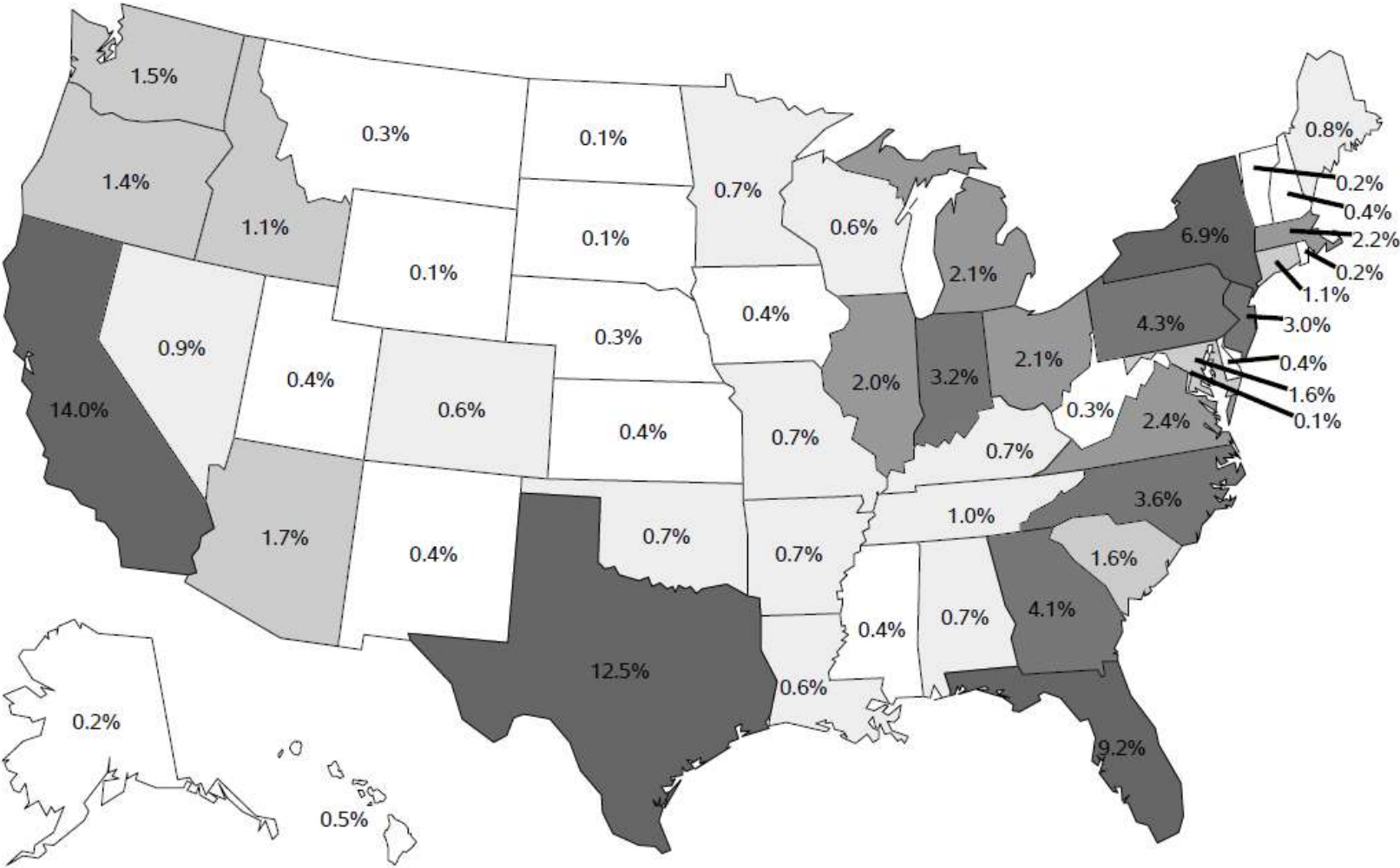
Table 1. Student characteristics

	Full sample
N	785752
Demographics	
Female	54.5%
African-American	9.8%
Asian	13.3%
Hispanic	22.5%
White	46.9%
Other ethnicity	7.5%
College-educated parents	31.5%
High school characteristics	
Type: Public	84.5%
Type: Private	8.1%
Type: Unknown	7.4%
Location: City	32.4%
Location: Suburb	37.0%
Location: Town	8.0%
Location: Rural	15.2%

- 86% took PSAT
- 66% took SAT
- High test scores



Distribution of RYCP participants



Interventions

- Mailers
- Mailers “plus”
- Emails

- Outcomes: (1) SAT score sends; (2) First-year college attendance from NSC
 - Linked to data on college characteristics (IPEDS)





CONGRATULATIONS

on your great performance on the PSAT/NMSQT®, Christopher!

Serifa Std 75 Black
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We know there's a lot to consider when choosing a college — this brochure will help you get started. It's full of everything you need to keep the momentum going.

Inside, you'll find lots of quick tips on:



Finding the Right College for You



How to Build a College List



Make the Most of Your Summer



What the College Board can do for you:

By using bigfuture.org for your college search this summer, **we can provide you with personalized feedback on your choices.** Students who create a college list in BigFuture™ by August 30 will receive a personalized college application checklist this fall.

1 CREATE A FREE BIGFUTURE ACCOUNT

Visit bigfuture.org and sign up for a FREE account, or sign in with your existing College Board account.



2 CLICK ON SEARCH COLLEGES BUTTON

Use this tool to find the right colleges for you. You can start by using similar filters that were used to create your starter college list, such as **test scores, locations, and paying.**



3 CHOOSE ADDITIONAL FILTERS

Add filters that are important to you — type of school, majors, support services, or campus diversity.



Barry S. Human
School of Public Affairs
University of Missouri

How to finish your college applications.

STEP	WHEN TO DO IT
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See how financial aid can make college affordable.	Now
<input type="checkbox"/> Search for colleges at bigfuture.org . Pick the ones that fit you and write them on your application list.	NEXT
<input type="checkbox"/> Check each college's website to confirm the application due date. Some schools may have earlier deadlines for scholarships, particular majors, and housing.	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Review your application list with your counselor, and ask your counselor to send transcripts to the colleges on your application list.	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Write your essays and have a teacher, counselor, or other adult review them.	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask teachers or other adults for recommendations.	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Create your FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov and confirm your state and college financial aid deadlines.	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit collegeboard.org/profilelist to find out whether any of the colleges on your application list require the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®.	October
<input type="checkbox"/> Tell the College Board to send your SAT® scores to the colleges on your application list.	November
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit applications to the colleges on your application list.	By each college's due date

Need help?

Talk with your school counselor, text the word "ASK" to 51612, or call (866) 444-4025 8:30-6 ET on weekdays to reach a college advisor.*



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Start Here, Christopher!

Satya Std 7th Black
29/30

This is your personalized starter college list.

Students who live near you and share your strong academic record graduated from the colleges listed below. Use this to "jump-start" your college search — [start here](#) and then think big!

Univers LT Std 55 Roman
8/10.5; 100% Black

COLLEGE	LOCATION	GRADUATION RATE ¹		MIDDLE 50% TEST SCORES			FULL PRICE ANNUAL COST OF ATTENDANCE	WHAT YOU'LL LIKELY PAY ANNUALLY ("NET PRICE") ²		
		FOUR-YEAR	SIX-YEAR	SAT CRITICAL READING	SAT MATH	ACT		\$0-\$30K	\$30K-\$48K	\$48K-\$75K
Amherst College	Amherst, MA	89%	96%	670-760	680-770	30-34	\$48,574	\$1,938	\$8,389	\$10,016
Harvard University	Cambridge, MA	87%	97%	700-800	710-800	32-35	\$42,292	\$3,897	\$2,977	\$5,405
Dartmouth College	Hanover, NH	87%	95%	670-780	680-780	30-34	\$48,752	\$9,858	\$4,870	\$10,539
Cornell University	Ithaca, NY	87%	93%	640-740	680-780	30-34	\$45,358	\$9,149	\$10,539	\$16,830
Columbia University	New York City, NY	86%	93%	690-780	700-790	31-34	\$49,138	\$8,086	\$3,514	\$71,258
New York University	New York City, NY	77%	84%	620-720	630-740	28-32	\$44,848	\$25,441	\$28,643	\$34,728
Carnegie Mellon University	Pittsburgh, PA	74%	88%	640-740	700-790	30-34	\$47,642	\$23,362	\$24,802	\$28,057
SUNY at Binghamton	Binghamton, NY	69%	81%	590-675	630-710	27-30	\$13,304	\$10,159	\$12,613	\$18,324
Cooper Union	New York City, NY	68%	82%	610-710	610-780	29-33	\$41,400	\$12,772	\$12,399	\$19,937
Stony Brook University	Stony Brook, NY	45%	66%	550-650	600-700	26-30	\$13,985	\$8,585	\$10,717	\$15,882
St John's University	New York City, NY	38%	55%	480-590	490-620	21-27	\$37,260	\$25,738	\$26,228	\$28,728
CUNY City College	New York City, NY	9%	42%	460-590	630-640	-	\$9,344	\$3,537	\$6,028	\$10,035

1. Graduation rate data as well as the 25th and 75th percentiles of enrolled students' test scores are for the 2013-14 school year and come from the U.S. Department of Education.
2. Annual cost of attendance includes the full cost of tuition, fees, books, housing, food, and other expenses reported by colleges in the 2014-15 school year in the Annual Survey of Colleges. These costs are customized for you based on your home state.

3. Net price — or what you'll likely pay — is estimated for 2014-15 using data from the U.S. Department of Education. Net price is the annual amount left after grants and scholarships, which can usually be managed by a combination of family resources, earnings from a campus job, and low interest rate loans.
— Data from other sources and different school years will be slightly different, so remember that the best source of information is each college's website.



Students like you succeed at colleges like these.

We selected these colleges especially for you based on your SAT or PSAT/NMSQT® scores and where you live. As you're deciding where to apply, look for colleges that fit this profile: **Students like you have a record of success at colleges like these.**

COLLEGE	MIDDLE 50% OF SAT SCORES ¹	ACADEMIC FIT BASED ON YOUR SCORE	GRAD. RATE ¹	APPLICATION DUE DATE ²	SALARY AFTER ATTENDING ³
Ohio State University (OH)	1150-1380	Reach	83%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx
Miami University – Oxford Campus (OH)	1120-1320	Reach	81%	2/1	\$xx,xxx
Transylvania University (KY)	1000-1290	Reach	72%	2/1	\$xx,xxx
Ohio Wesleyan University (OH)	890-1260	Reach	83%	3/1	\$xx,xxx
Malone University (OH)	920-1128	Fit	68%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx
Capital University (OH)	980-1210	Fit	68%	6/1	\$xx,xxx
Trinity International University (IL)	930-1160	Fit	46%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx
University of Findlay (OH)	980-1150	Fit	66%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx
Huntington University (IN)	850-1130	Safety	82%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx
Manchester University (IN)	880-1130	Safety	48%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx
Bowling Green State University (OH)	880-1130	Safety	64%	7/16	\$xx,xxx
Defiance College (OH)	790-1080	Safety	46%	2/1 *	\$xx,xxx

Data from other sources and different school years will be slightly different, so remember that the best source of information is each college's website.

1. The middle 50% of enrolled students' SAT scores and six-year graduation rates are based primarily on information supplied by the colleges themselves in response to the College Board's Annual Survey of Colleges, with some data provided via the U.S. Department of Education.

2. Application due dates listed are the Priority Application dates reported by the colleges themselves in the Annual Survey of Colleges. Some colleges may have earlier due dates for scholarships or particular majors. **Before finalizing your application plan, check your colleges' websites to confirm final application due dates.** Due dates marked with an asterisk indicate that the college offers rolling admission and does not report an application due date; however, we recommend completing your application by 1/16 because admission may close once the incoming class has been filled.

3. Salary after attending is the median earnings of former students who received federal financial aid 10 years after entering the college, regardless whether they completed their degree or not. These data come from the U.S. Department of Education. Visit collegescorecard.ed.gov to find average salary information for your colleges.



Apply to SIX OR MORE colleges with manageable costs.

What makes a college an “academic reach,” “academic fit,” or “academic safety?”

It depends on how your SAT score compares to the scores among incoming freshmen at the college.

Academic Reach: Your SAT score falls **below** the middle 50% or the college accepts less than 20% of applicants each year.

Academic Fit: Your SAT score falls **within** the middle 50%.

Academic Safety: Your SAT score falls **above** the middle 50%.

Ultimately, your chances of admission depend on your SAT scores, GPA, other achievements during high school, and also how many students apply and how many students a college admits.



COLLEGE	YOUR TEST SCORE IS ...	ACADEMIC FIT BASED ON YOUR SCORE	GRADUATION RATE	APPLICATION DUE DATE	AVERAGE SALARY AFTER ATTENDING	YOUR ESTIMATED ANNUAL PRICE
	Below the middle 50%	Academic Reach				
	Below the middle 50%	Academic Reach				
	Within the middle 50%	Academic Fit				
	Within the middle 50%	Academic Fit				
	Above the middle 50%	Academic Safety				
	Above the middle 50%	Academic Safety				



**Realize
Your
College
Potential**

Apply to College for FREE.

Your high achievement on the PSAT/NMSQT® or SAT® earned you special FEE WAIVERS.



Realize Your College Potential fee waivers are accepted by 100+ colleges and universities that have agreed to waive their fees for YOU!

In order to use your Realize Your College Potential fee waivers, you must meet at least one of these requirements:

- You registered and took the SAT (or SAT Subject Test) using a fee-waiver
- You are enrolled in or are eligible to participate in the Federal Free or Reduced Price Lunch program
- You are enrolled in a federal, state, or local program that aids students from low-income families such as TRIO or Upward Bound
- Your family receives public assistance
- Your family lives in federally subsidized public housing
- You live in a foster home or you are homeless

- Check if any of the colleges and universities you're considering applying to participate in the program.
- Submit your fee waiver. There are a number of ways you can submit your fee waiver:
 - » **Mail:** Complete the fee-waiver form and mail it to the admission office.
 - » **Online:** If you are using the Common App, you will be asked whether your family financial circumstances qualify you for a fee waiver. If you answer YES, you may apply to any Common App college without a fee.

Go to student.collegeboard.org/collegepotential to get more details about:

- List of participating schools
- How to send your fee waivers

Use this access code to log in:
XXXXXX



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University of Missouri

College Application Fee Waiver 2015-16

**Realize
Your
College
Potential**

<DYNAMIC: STUDENT NAME>

Congratulations on all your success in high school! You deserve the opportunities a college degree can provide — take the next step by applying to college.

<DYNAMIC Address: >

Phone:

Social Security No.:

Social Security number is an optional field. Colleges may use this information to match student admission and financial aid applications.

Email:

By submitting this form, you agree that you:

- Are eligible to use college application fee waivers.
- Understand that participating colleges make the final decision on whether to waive their application fees.

.....
SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Please complete this form and submit it with your college application.

Be sure to double-check the following:

- 1 That you are eligible to use college application fee waivers.
- 2 That you are applying to a college that will accept this fee waiver.
- 3 That you follow any instructions the college may have for submitting this form.

For more information, see the instructions and list of participating colleges included within your materials and online at student.collegeboard.org/collegepotential.

UNIQUE APPLICATION FEE WAIVER CODE: <DYNAMIC CODE>



THIS FORM IS NOT INTENDED AS A WAIVER OF TEST FEES FOR EITHER THE SAT® OR THE SAT SUBJECT TESTS™.
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White, Brooke

From: College Board <CollegeBoard@noreply.collegeboard.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2016 3:33 PM
To: Popper, Cameron
Subject: [t-test][html] [1539_15] Madeline, We've Found Colleges That May Be a Good Fit for You

You've earned a bright future. It's time to apply for it.



Dear Madeline,

Congrats on your performance on the PSAT/NMSQT® or SAT®! You've shown that you have what it takes to succeed in college. Now it's time to apply.

We've identified some colleges that might be a good fit for you. We selected these colleges for you based on your PSAT/NMSQT or SAT scores and where you live — students like you have a record of success at colleges like these. To view these 12 colleges, sign in to your College Board account at bigfuture.org; at the bottom, click on **My Colleges**, then **See All Colleges**.

As you check over each college, you'll find important details like the graduation rate, application due date, and academic fit based on your test scores.

[View your list on BigFuture™](#)

Need help with your college applications? Talk to your school counselor or text the word "ASK" to 51612 to speak with a trained college adviser.*

Here's to the next step in your bright future!

Sincerely,

The College Board

White, Brooke

From: College Board <CollegeBoard@noreply.collegeboard.org>
Sent: Tuesday, November 08, 2016 11:31 AM
To: Popper, Cameron
Subject: [t-test][html] [1539_20] Colin, It's Time to Apply for Financial Aid and Scholarships

You've made so much progress—now it's time to make it pay off.



Colin,

Did you know that almost \$184 billion in financial aid is available to students like you? Most full-time college students receive some type of financial aid.

To apply for financial aid, you'll need to complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) at fafsa.gov.

To access money that makes college affordable, take these five steps:

1. **Compile key dates.** Confirm the financial aid requirements for all of your colleges and the FAFSA deadlines for your state's grant and scholarship programs [here](#).
2. **Create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID.** Go to fsaid.ed.gov and create your login to Federal Student Aid sites, including FAFSA. This can serve as your legal signature.
3. **Apply for federal student aid by completing the FAFSA.** Go to fafsa.gov and fill out the application.
4. **Complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® for all schools that require it.** Check if your colleges require the PROFILE application and fill it out [here](#).



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Interventions

- Mailers: Pre-populated college lists; organizational tools
- “Mailers plus”: short counseling sessions, free score sends and fee waivers
- Emails: Opted-in to biweekly emails
 - Some students received extra functionality
 - Pre-populated college lists in 2017



Methodology

- Basic RCT estimation:

$$Y_{ig} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * Treatment_{ig} + \theta_g + \varepsilon_{ig}$$

- θ_g are income-achievement level-year FE



Results



Table 2. SAT score sending and postsecondary enrollment outcomes

	Score sends			Attend four-year college	College's average SAT	Net cost, family income <= \$48K
	Total	Min SAT	Max SAT			
2016 cohort	0.013 (0.018)	0.540 (0.681)	1.383+ (0.837)	0.001 (0.002)	1.037 (0.705)	33.344 (37.705)
2017 cohort	0.139** (0.021)	-2.998** (0.770)	1.633+ (0.962)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.726 (0.862)	-43.086 (42.489)
Baseline means	3.65	1146	1360	64.5%	1229	\$13,073
Baseline st. dev.	4.19	123	146	47.9%	132	\$6,334

Notes. + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01.

- Score sends up 4% but only 0.01σ in quality
 - Increase only for “mailer plus” w/ free score sends



Appendix Table 3. Sector of postsecondary attendance

	Attend college on starter list (2017 cohort only)				
	Any	Reach	Fit	Safety	Best in-state public option
2017 cohort	-0.000 (0.003)	0.000 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Baseline means (2017)	34.7%	7.3%	19.8%	5.2%	7.5%

Notes. + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01.

- Did not respond to college starter lists
- Also examined Barron's, RYCP/Aspen

Table 4. Postsecondary enrollment outcomes, heterogeneous groups

	N	College quality		Net cost, family income <= \$48K	Starter list	
		College SAT	Six-year bachelor's rate		RYCP	Reach
White or Asian	472834	-0.547 (0.650)	-0.000 (0.001)	29.772 (36.309)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.004+ (0.002)
African-American or Hispanic	254231	3.005** (1.078)	0.003* (0.001)	-13.657 (49.173)	0.003+ (0.002)	0.005+ (0.002)

Notes. + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01.

- College SAT quality increased 0.02σ for ethnic minority students
- No impacts by achievement level; gender; urbanicity,...

Results not shown

- No results disaggregating by intervention type
 - Messaging campaigns; earnings information
 - Additional website functionalities
- Low take-up of opt-in services
- But information not ignored as students:
 - Sent more scores
 - Were more likely to visit website



Discussion

- No change in college enrollment
 - Even small impacts would have constituted meaningful returns
- Students did not avoid the materials
 - Very low take-up of opt-in services



Possible issues

- Need earlier outreach
- SAT-dominant states less in need of help
- Control group students have access to services
- Information not novel enough
- Students might prefer alternate providers
- Limited ability to move students at scale
 - Getting to enrollment is a lot of work



What next?

- These services now widely available
- Eased some opt-in challenges
- Engaging in larger partnerships with direct service providers



Virtual Advising for High-Achieving High School Students

We examine whether virtual advising – college counseling using technology to communicate remotely – increases postsecondary enrollment in selective colleges. We test this approach using a sample of approximately 16,000 high-achieving, low- and middle-income students identified by the College Board and randomly assigned to receive virtual advising from the College Advising Corps. The offer of virtual advising had no impact on overall college enrollment, but increased enrollment in high graduation rate colleges by 2.7 percentage points (5%), with instrumental variable impacts on treated students of 6.1 percentage points. We also find that non-white students who were randomly assigned to a nonwhite adviser exhibited stronger treatment effects.

<https://edworkingpapers.com/ai19-126>



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