

LDs, Accommodations, and Standardized Testing

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Has anything interesting happened in college admissions lately?



Learning Goals

- Admissions Scandal and Accommodations
- Ongoing Lawsuit with ACT Concerning LDs and Privacy

Extra Items –

- Indicators of Potentially Undiagnosed LDs
- How to Apply for Accommodations on the SAT and ACT
- Understand the Various Options for Accommodations
- Advanced Maneuvers – Appeals, Troubleshooting, and Best Practices
- Developments at Test-Optional Colleges

Cheating on the SAT and ACT is not Easy



How Singer did it—

1. Applied for accommodations with 1-on-1 proctoring (sometimes bribed or pressured a psychologist for results + a counselor when applying)
2. Bribed high school administrators at two high schools to use Singer's proctor
 1. Igor Dvorskiy, director of the [West Hollywood College Preparatory School](#)
 2. Lisa "Niki" Williams, an assistant teacher at a public high school in Houston
3. Singer's proctor either changed student answers or took the exam for students

Cheating on the SAT and ACT is not Easy



Lesser Known Facts--

- 30 incidents of cheating with Singer's clients over 8 years
- Singer more often looked to cheat for students with accommodations already in place (very hard to secure accommodations without a paper trail beginning in at least 10th grade)
- It's not easy to secure extra-time. One student in court documents was denied twice and "law enforcement had to step in to get the accommodations"

Backlash Against Extra-Time

- Extra-time does NOT guarantee higher scores
 - For students in the admissions scandal, extra-time wasn't enough. They still had to cheat
 - Most students see small increases with additional time
 - Students with LDs see increases on the range of 20-25%
 - (ACT: 15-24 with 50% extra time)
- Hard-working students can learn the skills to improve their scores
 - They will learn to read faster with a higher level of retention
 - Students with processing speed LDs or reading-related LDs can't internalize the same skills under timed conditions
 - These students are often still very capable on standardized exams (just like those that are blind or deaf or dyslexic)

Discussion

Should we do away with extra-time? If not, why?

Do we need stricter rules regarding accommodations?

Will the recent admissions scandal worsen the stigma surrounding accommodations?

Do we need better messaging for parents about the reality of accommodations?



Lawsuit Against
ACT

Marci Miller, esq.



Discussion

Should colleges be made aware that a student was given accommodations when they took an SAT or ACT?

In 2003, the SAT and LSAT included an asterisk next to scores for students who had obtained accommodations

There was a lawsuit – college board lost

ACT said they would stop too – didn't want to also deal with a lawsuit

Recent Lawsuit

1. Students using accommodations had an “01-” prefix in their ACT ID#
2. “Optional Info” Questions:
 - Do you require special provisions due to your disabilities?
 - Not reasonably clear to students that this information was opt-in
3. Answers were sold to colleges
4. The recent lawsuit was successful – these questions will no longer appear on ACT exams



4 Weird Questions

1. When she says 'letters flip-flop,' are they actually moving?
2. Do letters appear to levitate off the page or wiggle?
3. Does she ever lose her place on a line or on a page while reading? Or need to use her finger or a ruler to keep track of where she is on a page?
4. Is it different when words are printed on colored paper than on white paper?

Diagnosis: Convergence Insufficiency

RESOURCES:

- General Info: https://www.ada.gov/regs2014/testing_accommodations.html
- SAT: <https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>
- ACT: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration/accommodations.html>
- ACT: <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/Accommodations-National-Special.pdf>
- ACT: <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/Accommodations-Infographic-Educator.pdf>
- Local Professional LD Advocacy and College Counseling Services: <http://www.milleradvocacy.com/>
- Free Mock ACT and SAT Exams: www.PrepareGurus.com

Stay In Touch

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If you would like a copy of the slides and resources, **please fill out a contact card.**

ACT PREP TIMELINE


JUNIOR YEAR	SENIOR YEAR
<p>Before September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule an ACT practice test Decide on SAT vs ACT and official test dates 	<p>July or September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take ACT for the second or third time. You're done!!
<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible first official ACT, depending on practice test results 	<p>October or December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backup ACT test date in case something went wrong
<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First or second official ACT 	
<p>May or June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAT Subject Tests, if needed 	
<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official ACT (if you didn't take one in Feb or April) 	


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- Start the planning process the Summer after Sophomore year
- Choose SAT or ACT
- Don't Take More than 3 Official Exams (but take at least 2)

SAT PREP TIMELINE

JUNIOR YEAR	SENIOR YEAR
<p>October - January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the PSAT Decide on SAT vs ACT and official test dates 	<p>August or October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take SAT for the second time. You're done!!
<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible first official SAT, depending on practice test results 	<p>November or December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backup SAT test date in case something went wrong
<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First or second official SAT (due to score report delays, do not enroll for both the March and May SAT exams unless testing must be completed by the end of the Junior year) 	
<p>May or June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAT Subject Tests, if needed 	
<p>May or June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official SAT (if you didn't take one in March or May) 	


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