


SANTA CLARA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Superintendent of Schools

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SUBJECT: College Readiness

In California, college readiness is broadly gauged by four factors:

- 1) SAT[®] exam
- 2) Advanced Placement (AP[®]) exam
- 3) UC/CSU Eligibility
- 4) Early Assessment Program (EAP)

This memo provides a brief description of each factor, together with data that relate to college readiness of students in Santa Clara County (SCC).

SAT[®] exam

The SAT[®] exam administered by the College Board[®], measures students in three areas: Critical Reading¹, Mathematics and Writing. The exam is designed to offer college admissions officers a standardized metric that tests students' knowledge, critical thinking skills, and communication in order to predict how well students will do in college (www.collegeboard.com).

Each section of the SAT[®] exam is scored on a scale of 200-800. As shown in Figure 1:

Average scores for SCC students	Critical Reading- 537 Mathematics - 573 Writing - 539	Figure 1
SCC students compared to students Statewide	Critical Reading - 43 points higher Mathematics – 60 points higher Writing – 46 points higher	Figure 1
Highest performing district in SCC	Palo Alto Critical Reading – 626 Mathematics – 661 Writing – 630	Figure 1

¹ Note: The Critical Reading section is formally known as the Verbal section.

With the state and national average for the SAT[®] exam totaling 1500 across all three sections, Figure 2 compares the percentage of students across SCC with a combined total of 1500 points.

SCC students	66% scoring above 1500 total points	Figure 2
SCC students compared to students Statewide	+ 17% difference SCC has a higher proportion of students scoring above 1500 total points	Figure 2
Highest performing district in SCC	Palo Alto 93% of students scoring above 1500 total points	Figure 2

Advanced Placement (AP[®]) exam

Advanced Placement (AP[®]) exams are offered in thirty-four subject areas for high school students and eligible students can receive college credit if they perform well on the exam. Students generally self-select to take the exam based on their level of preparation, which can be leveraged by the rigorous curriculum advocated by the College Board[®] (www.collegeboard.com).

Though AP[®] exams are offered to all high school students, AP[®] classes are generally intended for 11th and 12th graders. Figure 3 illustrates the percent of 11th and 12th graders in SCC who opted to take at least one AP[®] Exam.

SCC students	33% of 11 th and 12 th graders take at least 1 AP [®] Exam	Figure 3
SCC students compared to students Statewide	+ 10% difference SCC has a higher proportion of 11 th and 12 th graders taking at least 1 AP [®] Exam	Figure 3
Highest performing district in SCC	Palo Alto 59% of 11 th and 12 th graders take at least 1 AP [®] Exam	Figure 3

According to the College Board[®], AP[®] Exam grades are reported on a 5-point scale as follows :

- 5 Extremely well qualified
- 4 Well qualified
- 3 Qualified
- 2 Possibly qualified
- 1 No recommendation

College credits are determined by each college or university. A 3 or higher is generally considered to be “passing” with a “C”. Figure 4 illustrates the percent of AP[®] exams taken in SCC that are considered to have passing scores.

SCC students	72% of tests have passing scores on the AP [®] exam	Figure 4
SCC students compared to students Statewide	+ 15% difference SCC has a higher proportion of tests with passing scores on the AP [®] Exam	Figure 4
Highest performing district in SCC	Palo Alto 94% of tests with passing scores on the AP [®] Exam	Figure 4

UC/CSU Eligibility

Students can become UC/CSU Eligible if they enroll and pass the necessary courses outlined by the A-G Requirements. These requirements consist of the following courses:

- English – 4 years required,
- Mathematics – 3 years required
- Laboratory Science – 2 years required
- History/Social Science – 2 years required
- Language other than English – 2 years required
- Visual and Performing Arts – 1 year required
- Electives – 1 years required

Figure 5 documents the percent of SCC graduates who are UC/CSU eligible.

SCC students	52% of graduates are UC/CSU eligible	Figure 5
SCC students compared to students Statewide	+ 17% difference SCC has a higher proportion of graduates who are UC/CSU eligible	Figure 5
Highest performing district in SCC	Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District 76% of graduates are UC/CSU eligible	Figure 5

Early Assessment Program (EAP)

The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is offered to high school juniors to provide opportunities to measure their readiness for college-level English and Mathematics. This test is designed as an early warning sign for students who may be in need of remedial courses when they arrive at colleges within the California State University (CSU) system. Figure 6 shows the percent of EAP testers in SCC who are ready for college-level English.

SCC students	27% of EAP testers are ready for college-level English	Figure 6
SCC students compared to students Statewide	+ 10% difference SCC has a higher proportion of EAP testers who are ready for college-level English	Figure 6
Highest performing district in SCC	Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District 45% of EAP testers are ready for college-level English	Figure 6

Figure 7 shows the percent of EAP testers in SCC who are ready for College-level Mathematics.

SCC students	24% of EAP testers are ready for college-level Mathematics	Figure 7
SCC students compared to students Statewide	+ 9% difference SCC has a higher proportion of EAP testers who are ready for college-level Mathematics	Figure 7
Highest performing district in SCC	Palo Alto Unified 64% of EAP testers are ready for college-level Mathematics	Figure 7

Figure 1: 2007-08 Average SAT Scores for the Critical Reading, Math and Writing Sections

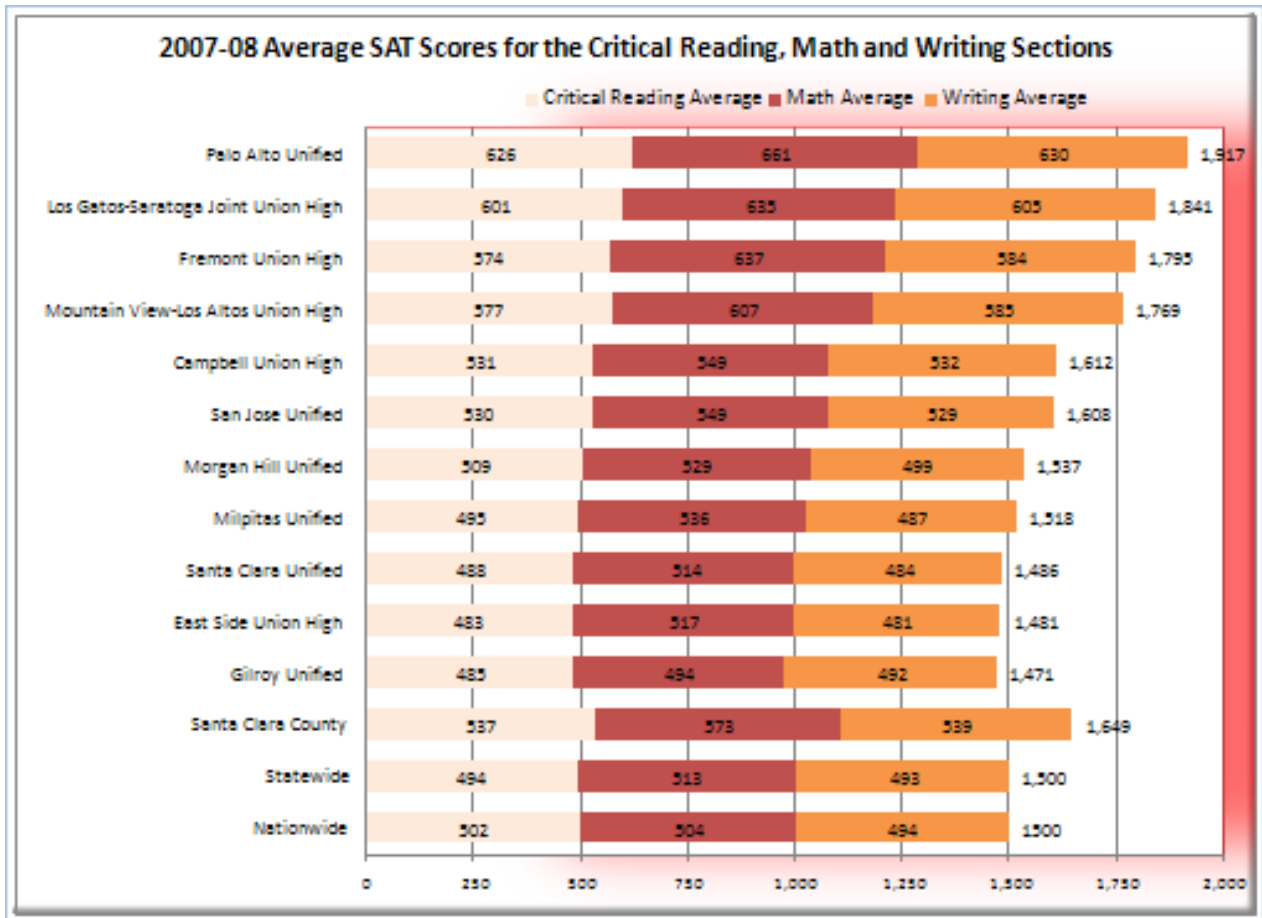


Figure 2: 2007-08 Percent of Students Tested on the SAT with a Total Score (Critical Reading, Math and Writing) of $\geq 1,500$

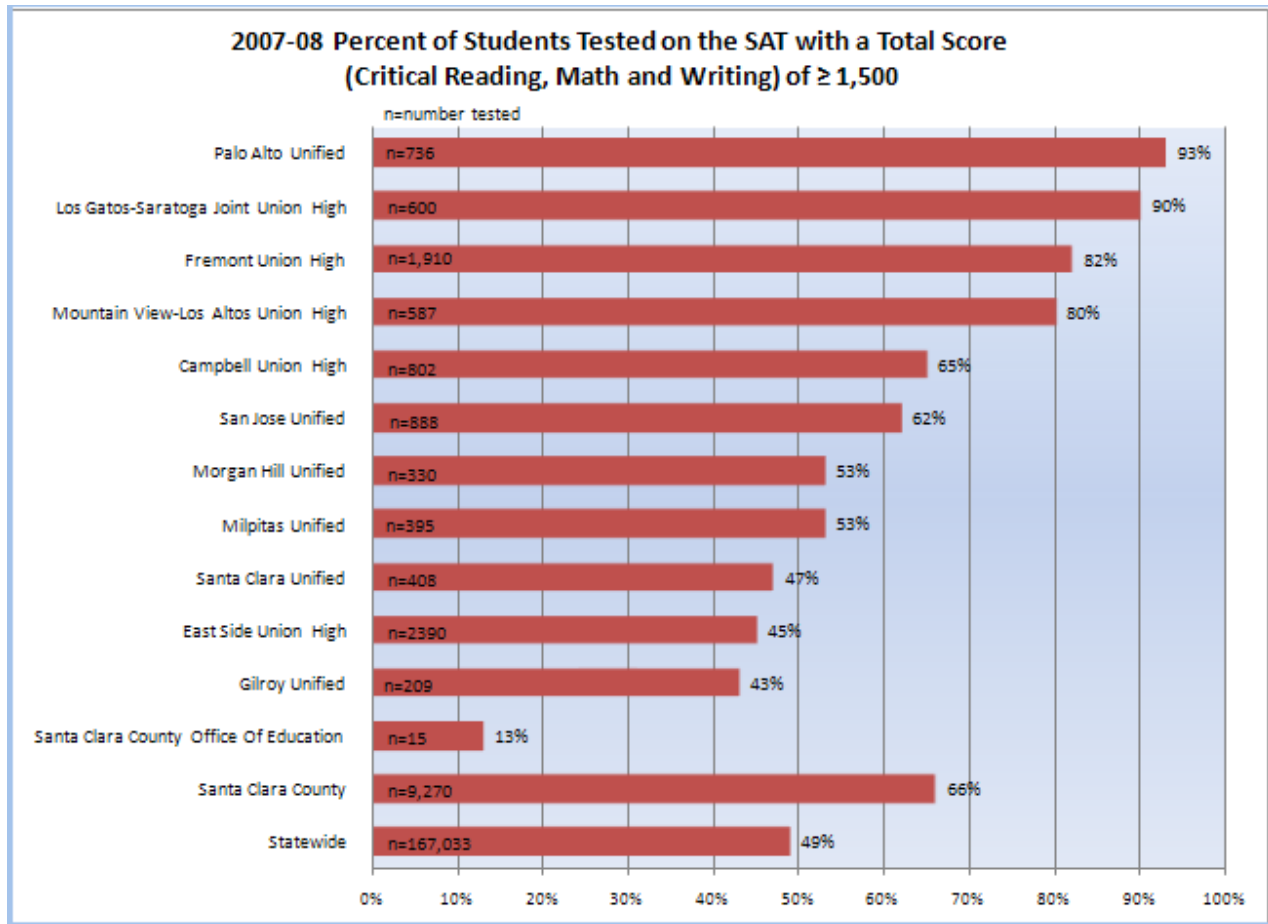


Figure 3: 2007-08 Percent of 11th and 12th graders taking at least 1 Advanced Placement Exam

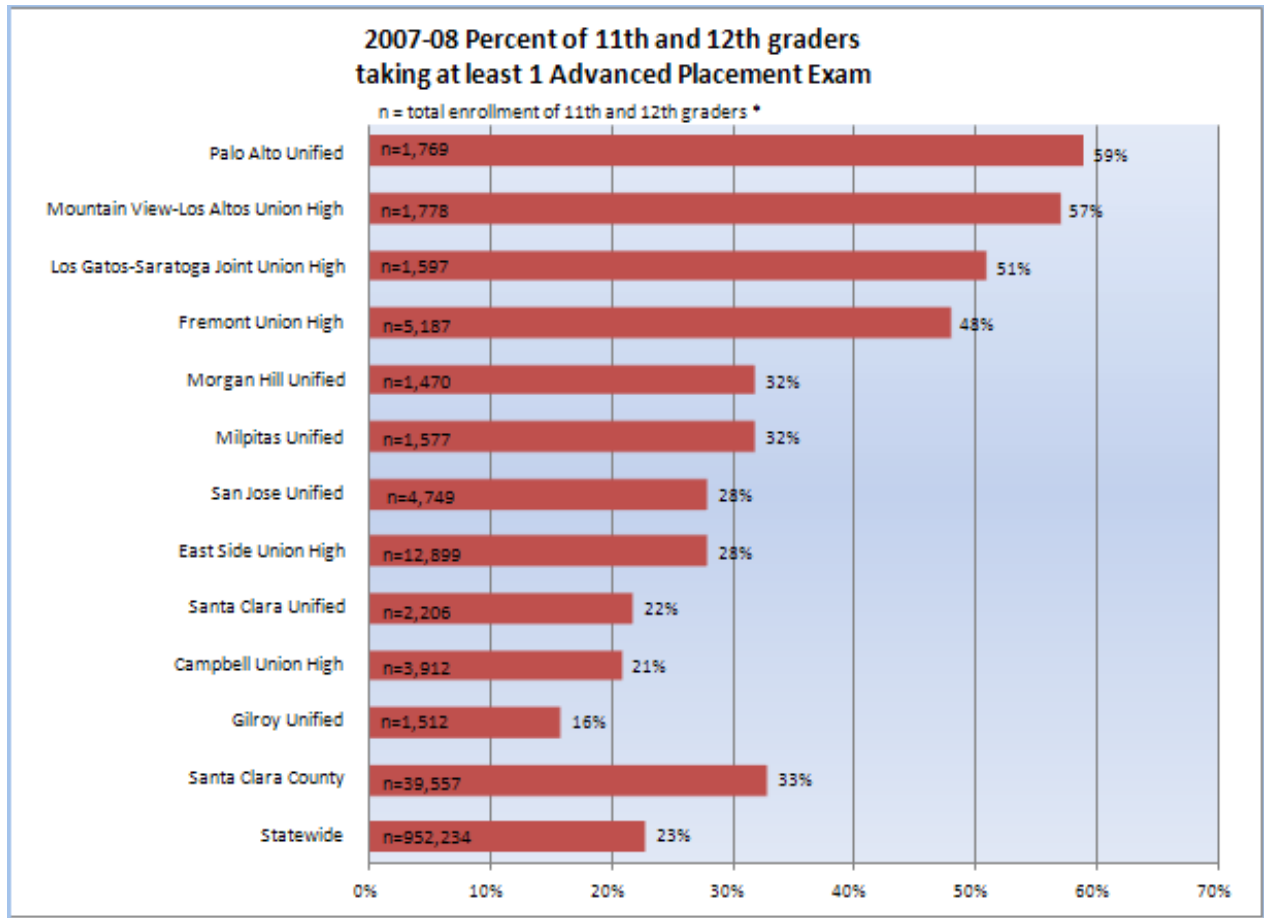


Figure 4: 2007-08 Advanced Placement Test Scores

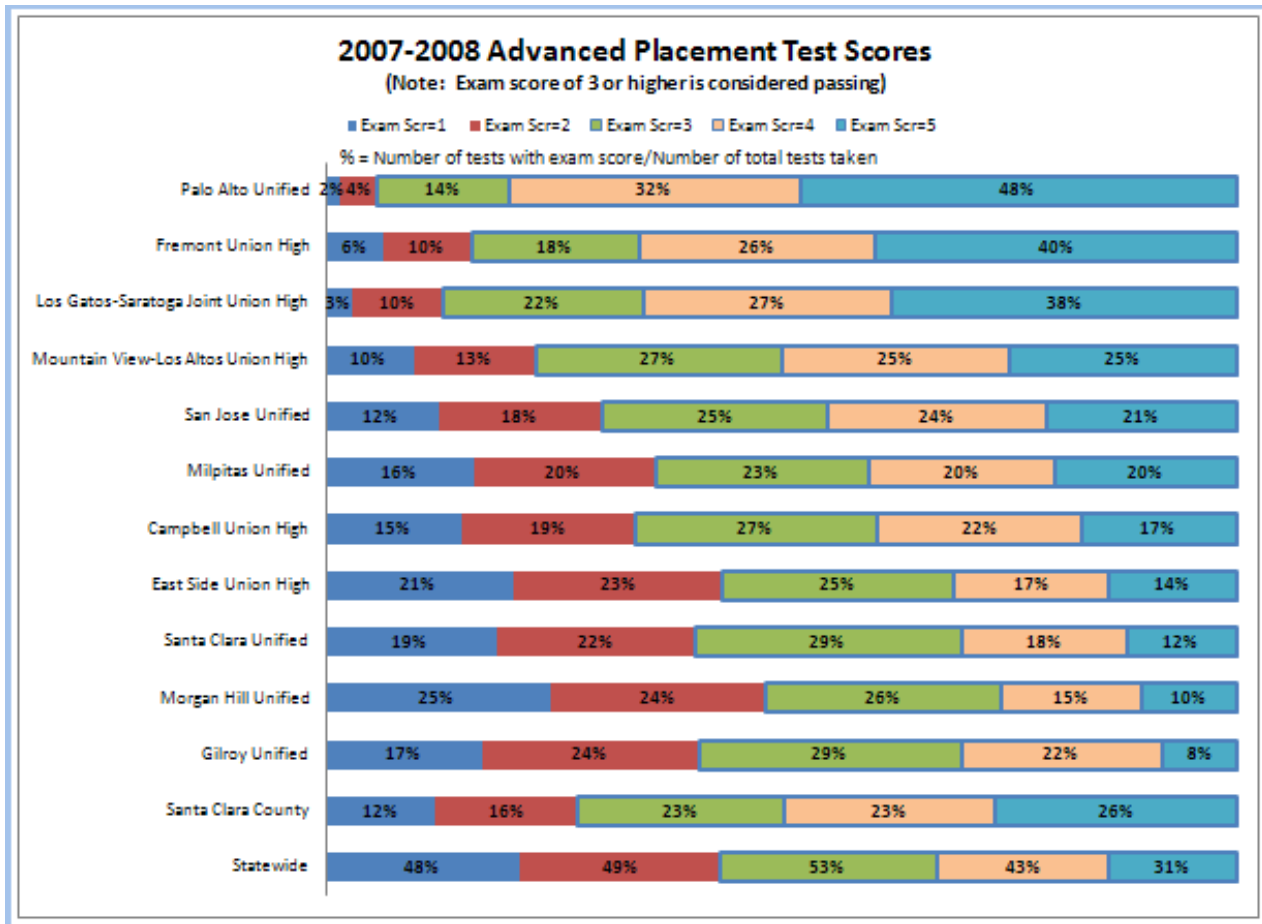


Figure 5: 2007-08 Percent of Graduates UC/CSU Eligible

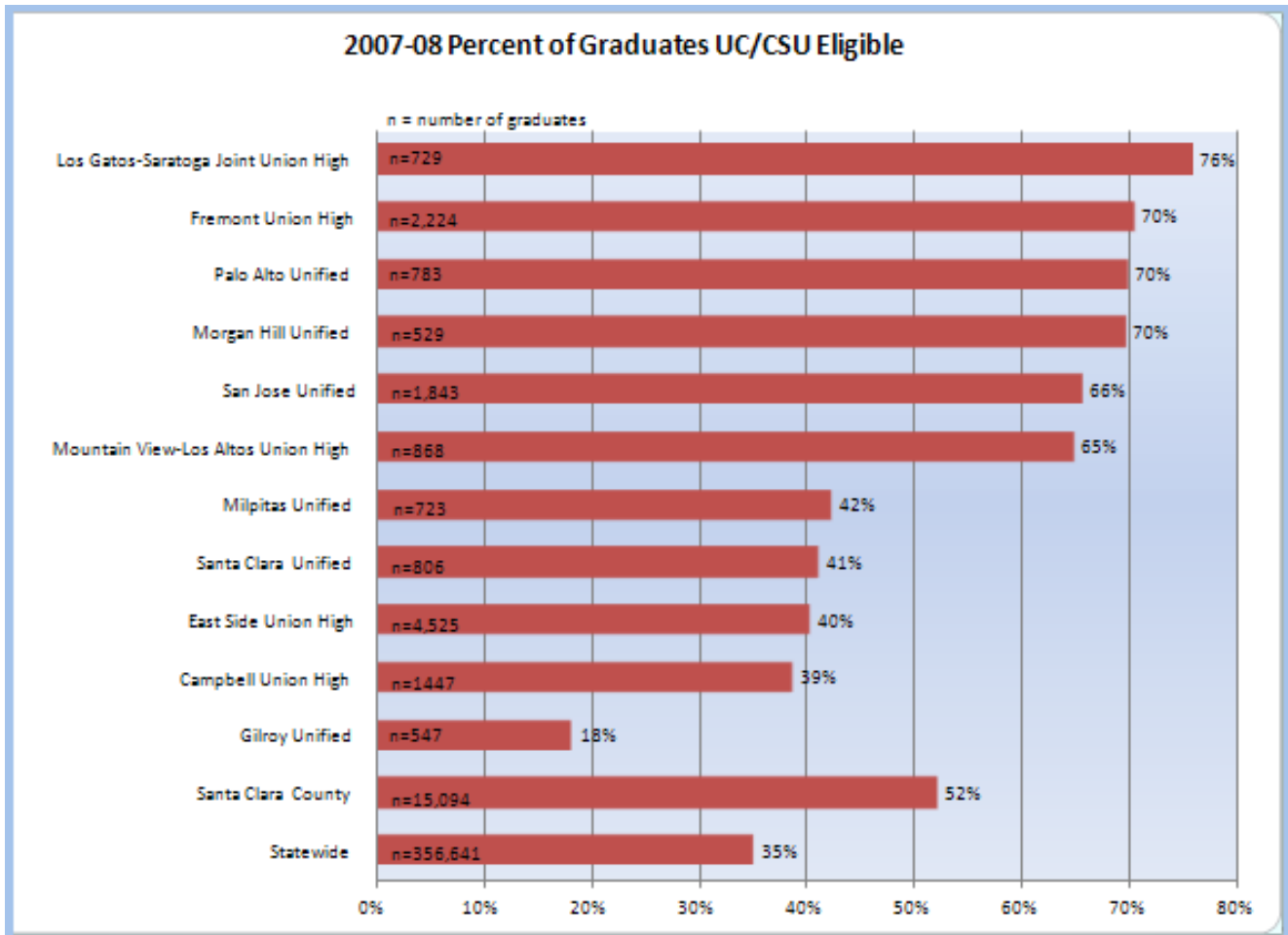


Figure 6: 2007-08 Percent of EAP testers ready for College-Level English

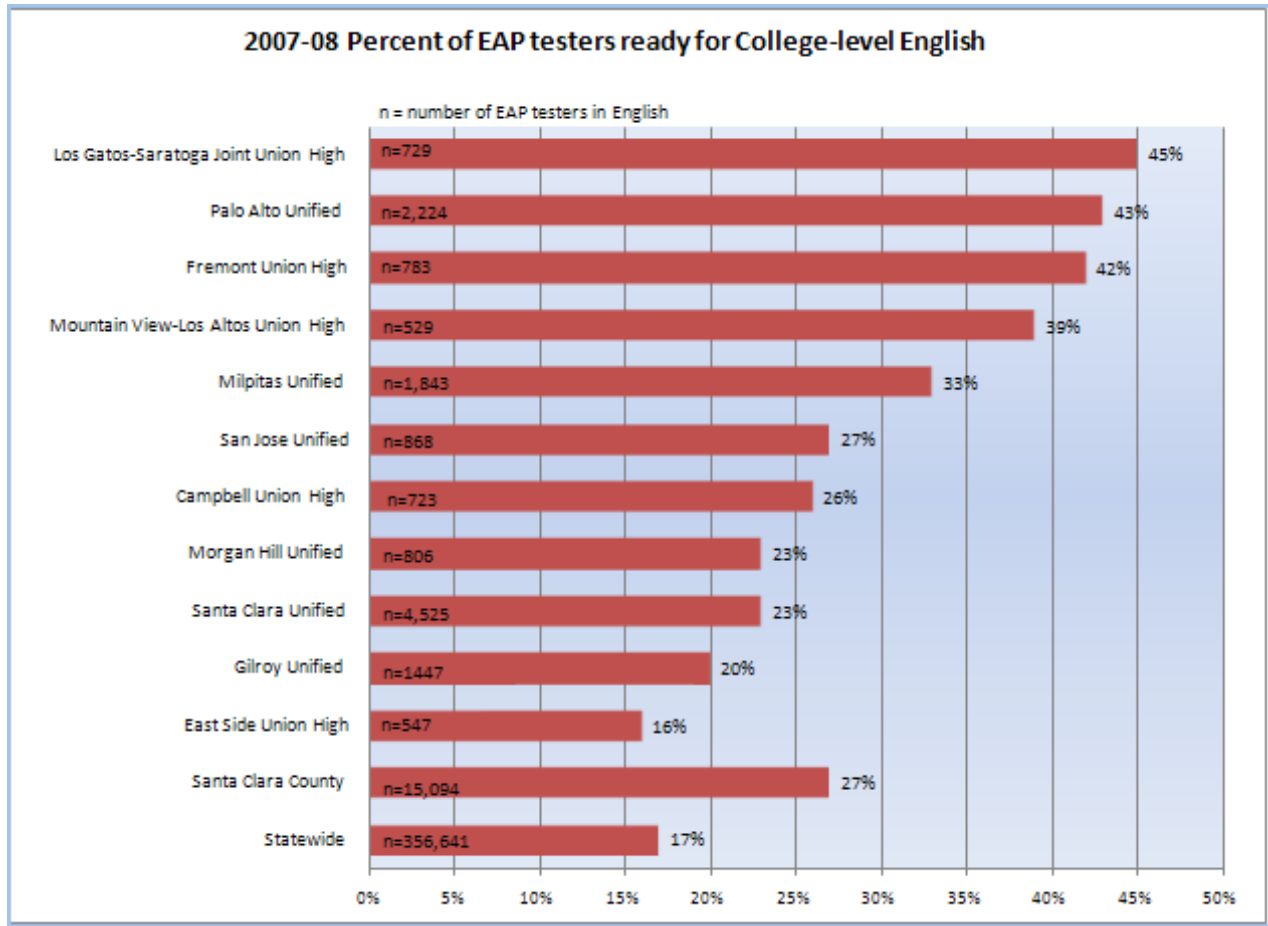


Figure 7: 2007-08 Percent of EAP testers ready for College-level Mathematics

