

News Release

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Board of Governors for Higher Education
Department of Higher Education
State of Connecticut



For Immediate Release

Free College Prep Exam Offered to Bridgeport's 8th Graders

HARTFORD, March 13 — Most high school students know they need to take the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) to apply to college. The better their test preparation, the higher their scores and chances of getting into a top-ranked college or university. But how many 8th graders have thought about the SAT or even the PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test)? Usually, students are not exposed to these exams until they take PSAT in 10th grade.

Not so for 8th grade students in Bridgeport.

More than 600 of these youngsters can take the PSAT *for free* on **Saturday, March 22** from 9:00 to Noon at Central High School located at 1 Lincoln Boulevard in Bridgeport. While students take the practice exam, their parents can attend a series of free workshops including *Riding the Roller Coaster of Change - Helping your Child with the Transition from Middle School, The College Admissions Process, and The ABC's of Paying for College*.

The college prep events are sponsored by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education's GEAR UP project and the Bridgeport Public Schools Partnership Project. GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

GEAR UP is a federally-funded school reform initiative serving students in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven. GEAR UP prepares low-income students for success in college and conducts early awareness and preparation activities in all three cities.

With the College Board, GEAR UP has been working with Bridgeport Public Schools to strengthen math instruction with the long-range goal of having all students enrolled in algebra in 8th grade and in geometry by the end of 9th grade. College Board studies have shown that students who complete algebra and geometry tend to score well on the SAT's and attend college at higher rates than those who take the courses later.

For more information about the March 22 test administration and workshops, the public should call Carol D. Birks, (203) 576-4214 or Kathy Gombos at (203) 339-8857.

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