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Published: Monday, September 21, 2015

## **Rivier won't require SAT, ACT scores**

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NASHUA - Joining a growing movement in higher education, Rivier University will no longer require SAT or ACT scores for admission, starting with students applying for the fall 2016 semester.

Rivier President Sister Paula Marie Buley, said the change allows the school to use a more "holistic" approach in the admissions process.

"This decision supports the university's mission to acknowledge, respect, and educate the whole person and to increase opportunities for educational enrichment," Buley said in a statement.

School officials also say the change will level the playing field for students of all economic backgrounds. "Removing the SAT/ACT application requirement makes our admissions policy more inclusive," said Karen Schedin, Vice President for Enrollment Management in a statement.

Research conducted by College Board, the nonprofit organization that administers the SAT and Advanced Placement exams, says test scores correlate to socio-economic status. According to The National Center for Fair and Open Testing, so-called test-optional policies "promote both equity and excellence" in college admissions.

More than 800 four-year colleges and universities have switched to test-optional policies, including Bryn Mawr College, Wesleyan University and Smith College.

"We consider high school academic performance the most reliable indicator of college preparedness, as well as the student's extracurricular activities, volunteerism and employment. Adopting the test-optional policy will offer admission to a more diverse population of qualified students," Schedin said.

The test-optional policy applies to all majors, except nursing, which must include standardized testing to meet licensing requirements. Students can still choose to submit test scores as part of their application. High school students planning to apply to Rivier next fall will also pay no application fee.

The Rivier announcement comes on the heels of new state legislation that allows students to take the SAT or ACT exam for free instead of the New Hampshire standardized test, the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

The bill, HB 323, was signed by Gov. Maggie Hassan July 13, and went into effect Sept. 11.

Typically, students either apply for a fee waiver or pay for the tests themselves at \$54.50 for the SAT and \$39.50 for the ACT exam without the optional writing portion, or \$56.50 for the full test.

Both the SAT and ACT are administered in all 50 states.

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