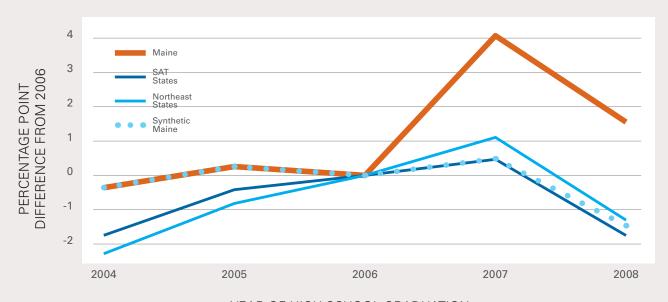
# Universal SAT<sup>®</sup> Policy **Boosts 4-Year** College Enrollment

By Michael Hurwitz, Jonathan Smith, Sunny Niu, and Jessica Howell

Maine replaced its existing high school statewide assessment with the SAT® and administered the exam to almost all public high school juniors. A primary goal of this policy change was to increase 4-year college enrollment by public school students in Maine.

**OVERVIEW** 

## **4-YEAR COLLEGE-GOING RATES (SAT STATES)**



YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

## THE RESEARCH **METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED**

**ENABLES CAUSAL STATEMENTS** 

Changes in 4-year college-going rates in Maine were compared to changes in three control groups: (1) all SAT-dominant states, (2) New England states, and (3) a synthetically-constructed Maine. Maine's actual change in 4-year college-going after the policy change is statistically larger than all three control groups.



**STATES** 





#### **RESULTS**

The mandatory SAT policy in Maine increased 4-year college-going rates among Maine public high school graduates by at least 2-3 percentage points overall, and by 10 percentage points among those students who took the SAT only because it was made universal.







IN MAINE'S RURAL AND SMALL-TOWN **PUBLIC SCHOOLS** 

#### **BENEFITS**

Maine's SAT policy is a relatively cost effective state strategy for increasing 4-year college enrollment. To achieve a similar increase in enrollment, Maine would have needed to spend more than four times as much on increased financial aid.

**UNIVERSAL SAT IS A LESS** COSTLY OPTION THAN OTHER MEANS OF BOOSTING 4-YEAR COLLEGE **FNROLLMENT.** 





## STUDENTS WHO ATTEND COLLEGE **EXPERIENCE HIGHER EARNINGS**

THAN THOSE WHO ONLY GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.



### **POSITIVE SPILLOVERS**

FROM ADDITIONAL YEARS OF EDUCATION INCLUDE:



**GREATER JOB SATISFACTION** 



BETTER HEALTH AND HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE



IMPROVED CIVIC **ENGAGEMENT** 

#### SOURCE

Adapted from: Michael Hurwitz, Jonathan Smith, Sunny Nin, and Jessica Howell, "The Maine Question: How Is 4-Year College Enrollment Affected by Mandatory College Entrance Exams?" Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, March 37 (2015): 138-159. http://epa.sagepub.com/content/37/1/138

