

SAT Scholarship Guidelines - FAQ – November 21, 2025

What is Sponsors for Academic Talent, Inc. (SAT)?

Sponsors for Academic Talent, Inc. (SAT) is a private foundation formed in 1984 by a group of educators and businesspeople in Onslow County. Its primary goal is to encourage and promote academic excellence by offering scholarships to worthy students. The organization is unique in that it guarantees scholarships to all eligible students who meet specific requirements, without considering financial need, gender, race, or religious affiliation. It is funded by donations from individuals, businesses, and civic groups within Onslow County, viewing investment in students' futures as an investment in the future of the county.

Who is eligible for an SAT Scholarship?

Any student enrolled in one of Onslow County Schools' nine local public high schools is eligible for an SAT Scholarship, provided they meet the specific academic and community service requirements. This includes students from Dixon High, Jacksonville High, Northside High, Onslow Early College High, Onslow Virtual School, Richlands High, Southwest High, Swansboro High, and White Oak High.

How do transfer students and early graduates qualify for an SAT scholarship?

Both transfer students and early graduates must fulfill **all established requirements** to qualify for an SAT scholarship.

Specifically:

- **Transfer Students:** If a student transfers from a high school outside the Onslow County School System prior to their final year of high school, they must meet the full requirements for the scholarship.
- **Early Graduates:** A student who graduates early from a high school within the Onslow County School System must meet the full requirements for the scholarship prior to their graduation.

What are the academic requirements for the SAT Scholarship?

To be considered for an SAT Scholarship, students must fulfill several academic criteria:

1. **GPA:** Have a cumulative high school GPA of 3.5 on a weighted scale by the end of the first semester of their senior year.
2. **Test Scores:** Students with a weighted cumulative high school GPA of 3.5-3.99 will be required to submit SAT or ACT scores.
 - a. **SAT** - Students must earn a composite score of 1100 or higher on the SAT in reading and math only. The composite score may be determined by combining the math test score from one test date and the verbal test score from another test date if the composite score is at or above the required level of 1100. **The SAT administered in January of the senior year is the last score accepted to qualify for this scholarship.**

SAT Scholarship Guidelines - FAQ – November 21, 2025

- b. **ACT** - Students must have a composite score of 23. *This may be a “Superscore Composite.”*
 - c. **GPA Threshold** - Students with a **weighted cumulative high school GPA of 4.0 or higher** will not be required to submit SAT or ACT scores.
3. **Coursework:** Complete the required English (4), math (4), science (3), social studies (4), and foreign language (2) courses necessary for the NC Academic Scholars Endorsement. While this endorsement is encouraged, it is *not* a requirement for the SAT Scholarship itself, but rather the *completion of the courses that lead to it* is required.

What are the community service requirements for the SAT Scholarship?

Students must complete a minimum of 75 hours of community service for a \$750 scholarship and 100 hours for a \$1,500 scholarship. All service must be volunteer based for a non-profit organization based in Onslow County approved by the SAT Board of Directors. Prior approval from the Executive Director is mandatory for all activities at any agency which is not on the pre-approved list.

Key community service guidelines include:

- Hours can be accumulated starting the summer before 9th grade.
- A maximum of 8 hours per 24-hour non-school day and 4 hours per 24-hour school day are accepted.
- At least 20 hours must be completed during the senior year (starting the day after junior year ends).
- Hours must be submitted to the school SAT Coordinator within 30 days of completion (or within one week of returning to school for summer hours).
- A maximum of 35 combined hours from school-related and church-related activities can be counted, and these activities must benefit the general public.
- Hours must be verified by a non-relative adult supervisor.

What limitations are there on how school- and church-related activities are counted towards an SAT Scholarship?

- Volunteer hours from church and school activities **may only be used for either the \$750 or the \$1,500 scholarship.**
- There is a **maximum total of 35 hours of combined service** that may be awarded for school-related service and church-related service.
- For school-sponsored and church-related events or activities to count, they **must be for the good of the general public.**

What are the additional criteria for my volunteer hours to qualify for an SAT scholarship?

Community service activities must meet specific criteria regarding location and beneficiaries to qualify for an SAT scholarship.

SAT Scholarship Guidelines - FAQ – November 21, 2025

Here are the key criteria:

- The community service activity must **take place in Onslow County**. Unless a student has prior approval from the Executive Director, it is important to note that **Camp Lejeune is not considered part of Onslow County** for this purpose.
- The community service should be for the **benefit of the general community**, rather than an individual. All service must be performed on a volunteer basis for a **non-profit organization based in Onslow County**.

Always seek prior approval for any community service activity through your Sponsors for Academic Talent, Inc. Coordinator and the Executive Director if you are unsure if an activity will be considered.

What types of activities are generally accepted or not accepted for community service hours?

Accepted examples often include activities that benefit the general public and are for non-profit organizations, such as:

- Cleaning up highways, visiting nursing homes.
- Serving as an usher at school plays or concerts.
- Performing with the Community Band or Chorus.
- Directing traffic or working concessions at athletic events (if a school/Booster's Club project, limited to 35 hours).
- Running booths at community festivals.
- Volunteer work for service agencies (e.g., Council on Aging, Women's Shelter).

Unacceptable examples typically involve personal gain, school-day activities, practice hours, or work for individuals:

- Announcing games, keeping statistics for school-based athletic events.
- Selling items for club activities.
- Working for individual teachers, counselors, or administrators.
- Activities that earn class credit, merit badges, or club membership.
- Practice hours for performances or charity events (actual event hours count).
- Teaching or assisting in Sunday school, singing in church/youth choir (unless part of an approved general public benefit activity, limited to 35 hours).
- Unsupervised work.
- Participation in pageants.
- ***Always seek prior approval from the SAT Coordinator and Executive Director if unsure about an activity's eligibility.***

How is the scholarship awarded and when can it be used?

SAT Scholarship Guidelines - FAQ – November 21, 2025

The scholarship amount is either \$750 or \$1,500, depending on the community service hours completed. The award is sent directly to the accredited college of the student's choice in August of their graduation year. The scholarship must be used if the student matriculates in August or January following high school graduation. Students who choose to take a gap year not mandated by their college curriculum will forfeit the scholarship.

What are the important deadlines for seniors regarding community service hours?

Seniors must submit all volunteer service hours to their SAT Coordinator by the **last day of January** of their senior year. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to this deadline and to ensure that hours are submitted in a timely manner, as late submissions will not be accepted. The SAT Coordinator maintains records of hours and forwards them to the Executive Director.

What is the appeal process if a student believes an error occurred or has extenuating circumstances?

Students can appeal decisions if they have extenuating circumstances preventing matriculation within two semesters post-graduation. If a student believes there was an error in calculating SAT scores or GPA, or an error in computing community service hours. An appeal must be presented to the Executive Director within thirty (30) days of the decision being appealed. The Executive Director will arrange an Appeals Committee, consisting of three randomly selected members of the Sponsors for Academic Talent, Inc. Board of Directors who are not involved with the student's circumstances. The decision of this Appeals Committee is final.