Juniors: Begin Your SAT and ACT Prep Right Away

By Mick Rosenblum

All too often, parents will wait until the spring semester of a high school student's eleventh grade year to subscribe to an SAT or ACT crash course. By "crash course" I mean any SAT or ACT program that promises to prep a student in a few short weeks. In all likelihood, students and parents will be profoundly disappointed in such a course or will simply give up after earning a less than desirable test score.

While no course can promise success to all of its students, it certainly should offer that which is necessary to increase a student's probability of at least achieving reasonably acceptable scores. In my experience, SAT and ACT crash courses, while arguably compelling to prospective customers, are very often remarkably destructive to the very students they attract.

Many of these courses are close-ended; that is they are limited to a certain number of weeks or lessons. Any student who has not mastered the test by the end of the course, may be simply sent on his or her way with little or no progress verification on the part of the course.

This is why it is absolutely imperative that students begin prepping well in advance, (no later than the fall of the eleventh grade year) and that they subscribe to an open-ended preparation course that will allow the student to absorb the necessary skills without having to do so in a limited, prescribed period of time. Furthermore, an SAT course must be aware of both a student's progress and his or her probable scores before sending that student out into the wilderness. Quite simply some students take longer than others to master the skills necessary to produce decent SAT and ACT scores. One size does not fit all!

As always, if you have any questions or would like any advice during your search for a suitable SAT or ACT program, please do not hesitate to call me. And please resist the temptation to take an official SAT or ACT test prior to preparation simply in an effort to get a "base-line score."