College Board keeps apologizing for screwing up digital SAT and AP tests

Don’t worry about the “mission-driven not-for-profit” College Board—it’s drowning in cash. The US group, which administers the SAT and AP tests to college-bound students, paid its CEO $2.38 million in total compensation in 2023 (the most recent year data is available). The senior VP in charge of AP programs made $694,662 in total compensation, while the senior VP for Technology Strategy made $765,267 in total compensation.

Given such eye-popping numbers, one would have expected the College Board’s transition to digital exams to go smoothly, but it continues to have issues.

Just last week, the group’s AP Psychology exam was disrupted nationally when the required “Bluebook” testing app couldn’t be accessed by many students. Because the College Board shifted to digital-only exams for 28 of its 36 AP courses beginning this year, no paper-based backup options were available. The only “solution” was to wait quietly in a freezing gymnasium, surrounded by a hundred other stressed-out students, to see if College Board could get its digital act together.

I speak, as you may have gathered, from family experience; one of my kids got to experience the incident first-hand. I was first clued into the problem by an e-mail from my school, which announced “a nationwide Bluebook outage (the testing application used for all digital AP exams)” for all AP Psych testers. Within an hour, many students were finally able to

log in and begin the test, but other students had scheduling conflicts and were therefore “dismissed from the testing room” and given slots during the “late test day” or “during the exception testing window.”

On Reddit, the r/APStudents board melted down in predictable fashion. One post asked the question on everyone’s mind:

> *HOW DO U NOT PREPARE THE SERVERS FOR THE EXAM WHEN U KNOW WE’RE TAKING THE EXAM HELLO?????? BE SO FR*
>
> *i was locked in and studied like hell for this ap psych exam ts pmo like what the actual f—nugget???*

Now, I’m old enough not to know what “BE SO FR,” “TS,” or “PMO” mean, but the term “f—nugget” comes through loud and clear, and I plan to add it to my vocabulary.

https://arstechnica.com/culture/2025/05/college-board-keeps-apologizing-for-screwing-up-digital-sat-and-ap-tests/