

# The Condition of Future Educators 2014

ACT has conducted groundbreaking research on college and career readiness since its founding in 1959. Over the past decade in particular, ACT research has provided data and information guiding some of the nation's most important education and workforce issues and related initiatives. Each August, we release *The Condition of College & Career Readiness* (www.act.org/newsroom/data/2014), our annual report on the achievement of the ACT-tested graduating class relative to college readiness.

In 2014, a record 57% of the US graduating class took the ACT® test. The steady increase in ACT test takers in recent years has enhanced the breadth and depth of our data pool, providing a more comprehensive picture of the college readiness levels of the graduating class while giving us a deeper look into the data. Our data review from this year's graduating class has offered a glimpse into new areas of study, including emerging educational pipelines.

In this report, ACT looks specifically at students expressing an interest in education as a profession. ACT-defined education majors are categorized into four areas:

- Administration/Student Services—non-teaching education majors such as counseling, curriculum, and administration
- Teacher Education, General—a single major considered by individuals who have an interest in teaching but have not yet determined a student population and/or subject area focus
- Teacher Education—Specific Student Population majors defined by the type of student being served, such as early childhood education and postsecondary education
- Teacher Education—Subject Specific—majors defined by the type of subject taught, such as art education, foreign languages, and mathematics education

#### Our Commitment to Educators

ACT conducts its exclusive ACT National Curriculum Survey® every three to five years, surveying thousands of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary instructors to keep abreast of the specific skills and knowledge taught in America's schools and expected of first-year college students. We use these empirical data to inform the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards, which align with our assessments. These standards help ACT to give students, educators, schools, and states the insights they need to determine whether students are on track for college and career readiness and to help improve educational outcomes.

ACT believes it is imperative to properly validate all learning standards. Educational standards should be constantly validated in two meaningful ways. The first is **content validity research**, designed to answer whether a test measures what it purports to measure. The second is **predictive validity research**, designed to answer whether a test correctly predicts performance. ACT is committed to both types of validity research, and constant monitoring allows ACT to ensure that its assessments are valid measures of academic achievement. The ACT College and Career Readiness Standards are built on a foundation of years of empirical data and are continually validated through the ACT National Curriculum Survey as well as frequent external standards reviews.

Any initiative that serves to develop a set of properly validated, curriculum-aligned learning standards must also have at its core an implementation strategy that will engage the educational community, particularly teachers, in turning higher standards into a curriculum that impacts students. Indeed, the Common Core State Standards Initiative considered teachers to be the critical link in implementing college and career readiness standards that were developed and adopted by more than 40 states.

The bottom line: we can talk at length about what should be taught, but the reality is that we must have quality teachers to breathe life into any standards that are developed.

ACT research (*The 20 Non-Negotiable Characteristics of Higher Performing School Systems, 2011*) consistently shows that the one constant in the highest-performing schools is high-quality teachers. This is especially true for schools serving high numbers of underserved students. To have the real and meaningful impact needed for student success, we must ensure the most supportive environment possible for our teachers—from initial training to onboarding and mentorship to continued high-quality professional development.

ACT research (*Use of Data to Support Teaching and Learning: A Case Study of Two School Districts, 2015*) also shows the positive nature of the intersection between quality assessment and teaching. ACT stands ready to provide data and insights to help new and existing teachers better understand how to use assessment data to inform instruction.

The goal of this report is to provide current educators and policymakers a glimpse inside the pipeline of future educators. If the United States hopes to reclaim its perch as the world's leader in education, we must first address some of the key findings highlighted in this report.

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### **Key Findings**

### from the National Condition of Future Educators 2014 Report

 The number of students interested in becoming educators continues to drop significantly—From 2010 to 2014, the number of ACT-tested high school graduates interested in education majors or professions decreased by more than 16%, while the number of all graduates who took the ACT increased by nearly 18%.

A teacher shortage already exists in many states and subject areas. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the total number of elementary and secondary school teaching positions needed in the United States is projected to increase by 14% between 2010 and 2021. Coupled with the expected retirement of many "baby boomer" educators, the fact that fewer students are interested in becoming educators will likely magnify the teacher shortage.

Research continues to validate the critical role of quality teaching in student success. However, quantity is also important: the nation must fill the pipeline to alleviate the expected shortfall in the number of available teachers. Our inability to do so will force educational systems to think differently about how we deliver education—which might, in turn, have a negative impact on student success.

 Students interested in education have lower-thanaverage achievement levels, particularly in STEM areas—

The percentage of aspiring educators who meet the ACT College and Career Readiness Benchmarks are lower than the national average in every subject area except

English. In science and math, the gaps are significant. In short, not only are fewer students interested in becoming educators, but those who are interested have lower-than-average achievement levels in three of the four subject areas measured by the ACT. These findings raise a key question: how can the education field capture the interest and attention of more students, particularly the best and brightest students?

3. Interest in pursuing an education career is low among males—Almost three-quarters of the ACT-tested graduates interested in an education career are female. This number rises to nearly 95% among students interested in early childhood and elementary education. The subject area of largest interest for males is physical education, but males in this category have very low benchmark attainment percentages.

Females tend to have higher benchmark attainment levels in English and reading than in math and science. However, females in the *subject-specific* group (page 12) show significant increases in benchmark attainment levels over other categories of educators.

4. In general, there is a lack of diversity among students interested in education—Seventy-one percent of ACT-tested 2014 graduates who are interested in becoming educators are white. In comparison, 56% of all ACT-tested graduates are white. The percentage of future educators is lower than the overall percentage of tested students in each minority racial/ethnic category.

ACT-Tested 2014 Graduates	African American	American Indian	Asian	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races
All ACT-Tested Graduates	13.1%	0.8%	4.4%	15.2%	56.3%	3.8%
Future Educators	9.9%	0.8%	1.8%	12.5%	71.8%	3.3%

#### Recommendations

To help drive greater interest in the teaching profession among a diverse population of high-achieving students, ACT recommends the following:

Recruit high-achieving college students who are undecided about their future careers. Postsecondary institutions should focus on identifying high-achieving students who are undecided about their college majors and encourage them to consider pursuing the teaching profession. In particular, because ACT data indicate that relatively few minority students are interested in education as a career, recruitment efforts should target more minority students to enter the teaching pipeline. A more diverse teacher population may also lead to greater achievement among minority students. Recent research shows that K–12 students—particularly African American and Asian American students—benefit from being taught by a teacher of the same race,¹ while ACT data indicate that few minority students are interested in education.

Promote alternative pathways to teaching. Teacher preparation programs play a critical role in developing quality teachers. However, given the expected need for more teachers than are currently available in certain areas and subjects, states and districts should remove barriers that prevent qualified individuals—such as mid-career professionals or recent talented college graduates—from entering the profession via alternative certification routes.

Improve educator benefits to attract and retain quality teachers. Teachers are the most important school-based factor in a student's achievement, so states and districts should advance policies that make the teaching profession more attractive. For example, beginning teacher salaries should be comparable to entry-level salaries for recent college graduates in other fields, and effective teaching should be supported and awarded over the number of years spent in the classroom.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Egalite, Anna J., Brian Kisida, and Marcus A. Winters. *Representation in the Classroom: The Effect of Own-race Teachers on Student Achievement.* Economics of Education Review 45 (2015): 44–52.



### **National Future Educators Report**

#### Attainment of College and Career Readiness

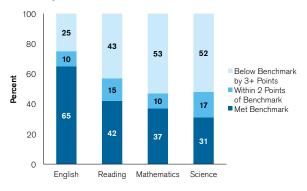
#### Trends of Student Interest in Education Majors: 2010-2014

• Between 2010 and 2014, the percent of all ACT-tested graduates who expressed an interest in education majors decreased by 2%.

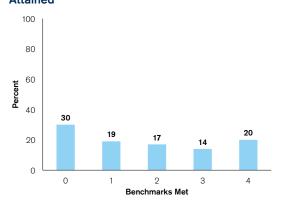
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nation	Percent	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
	N Count	106,478	103,932	94,458	91,186	89,192

#### All Students Planning Education Majors

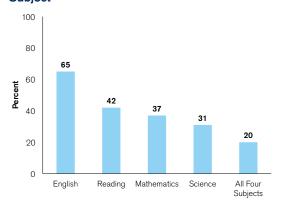
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks **Attained**



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by **Subject**



#### **Number and Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested** High School Graduates by Area of Planned Major

Education Area	N Count	Percent
Administration/Student Services	3,818	4
General Teacher Education	10,678	12
Student Population Specific	47,247	53
Subject Specific	27,449	31
Total	89,192	100

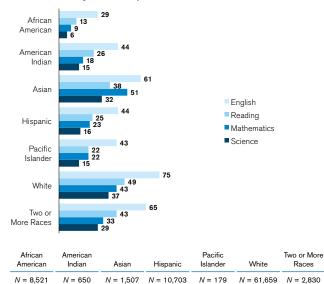
Note: Percents in this report may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

# **National Future Educators Report**

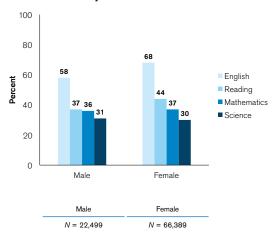
#### Attainment of College and Career Readiness

#### All Students Planning Education Majors

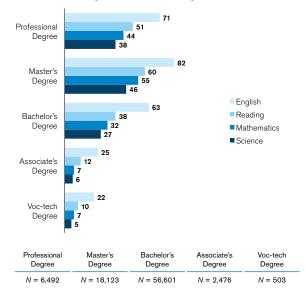
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject\*

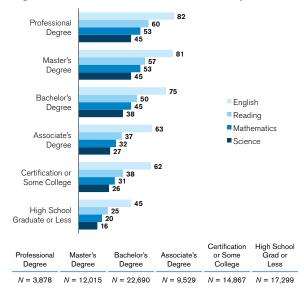


#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Gender and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Educational Aspirations and Subject





<sup>\*</sup> Race/ethnicity categories changed for the 2010-2011 academic year to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements.



### **Administration/Student Services Majors**

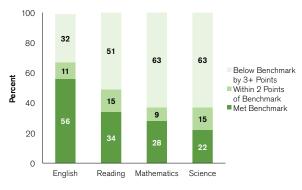
#### Trends of Student Interest in Administration/Student Services Majors: 2010-2014

· Between 2010 and 2014, the percent of students interested in education majors increased by 2%.

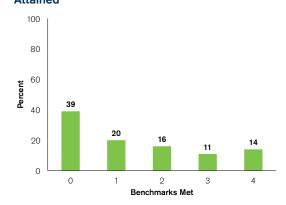
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nation	Percent	2%	2%	4%	4%	4%
	N Count	2,184	2,524	3,638	3,786	3,818

#### All Students Planning Administration/Student Services Majors

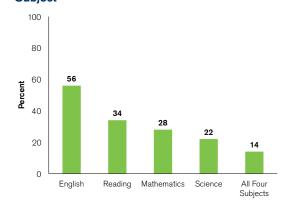
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks **Attained**



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by **Subject**



#### **Number and Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested** High School Graduates by Planned Major

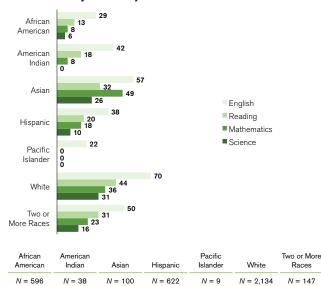
Education Majors	N Count	Percent
Counseling and Student Services	2,829	74
Curriculum and Instruction	304	8
Educational Administration	685	18
Total	3,818	100

Note: Reporting achievement by combinations of student characteristics may give rise to small N counts. As a result, outcomes reported in this section should be interpreted with caution.

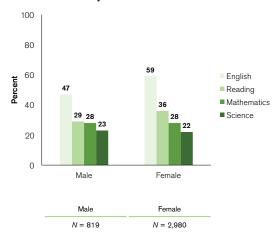
### **Administration/Student Services Majors**

#### All Students Planning Administration/Student Services Majors

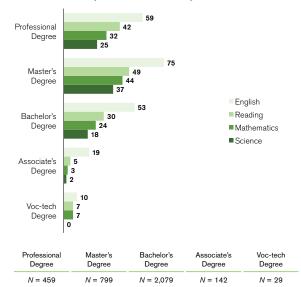
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject\*

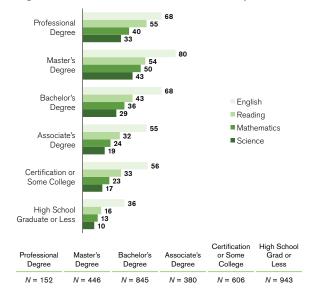


#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Gender and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Educational Aspirations and Subject





<sup>\*</sup> Race/ethnicity categories changed for the 2010–2011 academic year to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements. Note: Reporting achievement by combinations of student characteristics may give rise to small N counts. As a result, outcomes reported in this section should be interpreted with caution.



### **General Teacher Education Majors**

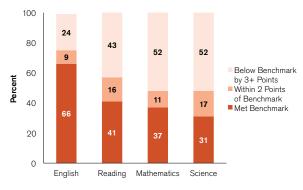
#### Trends of Student Interest in General Teacher Education Majors: 2010-2014

· Between 2010 and 2014, the percent of students interested in education majors decreased by 3%.

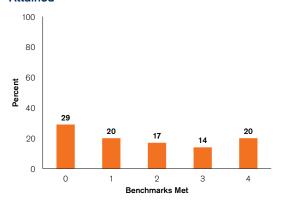
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nation	Percent	15%	13%	12%	12%	12%
	N Count	15,595	13,754	11,347	11,089	10,678

#### All Students Planning General Teacher Education Majors

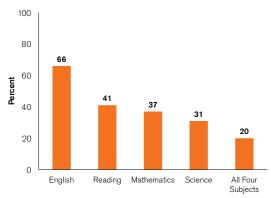
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks **Attained**



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by **Subject**



#### Number and Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Planned Major

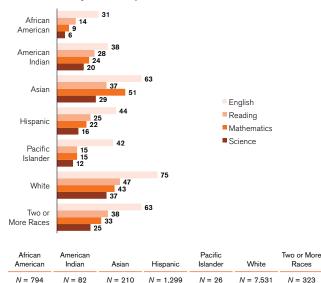
Education Majors	N Count	Percent
General Teacher Education	10,678	100
Total	10,678	100

Note: Reporting achievement by combinations of student characteristics may give rise to small N counts. As a result, outcomes reported in this section should be interpreted with caution.

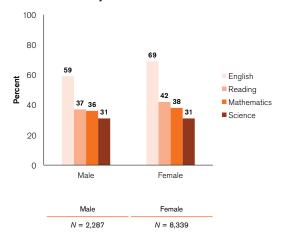
### **General Teacher Education Majors**

#### All Students Planning General Teacher Education Majors

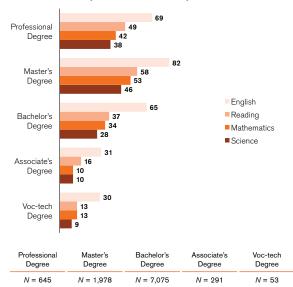
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject\*

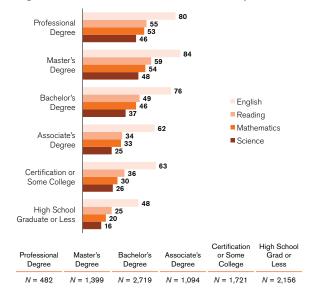


#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Gender and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Educational Aspirations and Subject





<sup>\*</sup> Race/ethnicity categories changed for the 2010–2011 academic year to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements. Note: Reporting achievement by combinations of student characteristics may give rise to small N counts. As a result, outcomes reported in this section should be interpreted with caution.



### **Student Population-Specific Majors**

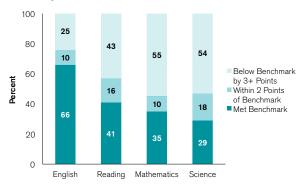
#### Trends of Student Interest in Student Population-Specific Teacher Education *Majors: 2010–2014*

• Between 2010 and 2014, the percent of students interested in education majors increased by 9%.

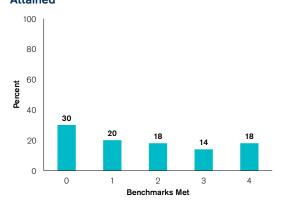
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nation	Percent	44%	47%	52%	52%	53%
	N Count	46,609	48,739	49,437	47,393	47,247

#### All Students Planning Student Population-Specific Teacher Education Majors

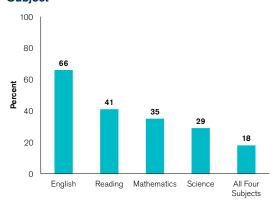
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks **Attained**



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Subject



#### **Number and Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested** High School Graduates by Planned Major

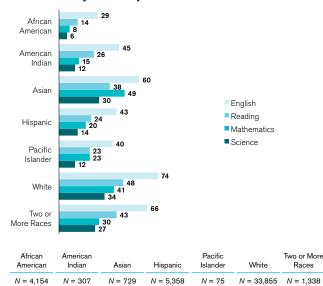
Education Majors	N Count	Percent
Early Childhood Education	11,192	24
Elementary Education	19,279	41
Junior High/Middle School Education	4,441	9
Postsecondary Education	984	2
Secondary Education	4,752	10
Special Education	6,599	14
Total	47,247	100

Note: Reporting achievement by combinations of student characteristics may give rise to small N counts. As a result, outcomes reported in this section should be interpreted with caution.

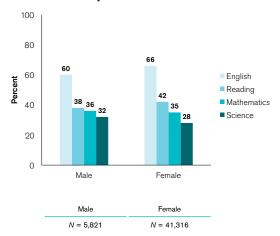
### **Student Population-Specific Majors**

#### All Students Planning Student Population-Specific Teacher Education Majors

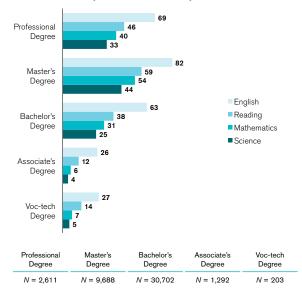
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject\*

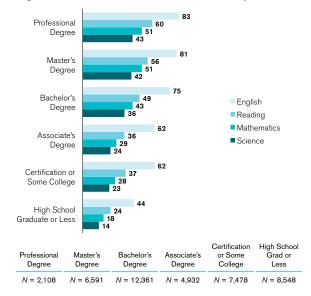


#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Gender and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Educational Aspirations and Subject





<sup>\*</sup> Race/ethnicity categories changed for the 2010–2011 academic year to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements. Note: Reporting achievement by combinations of student characteristics may give rise to small N counts. As a result, outcomes reported in this section should be interpreted with caution.



### **Subject-Specific Majors**

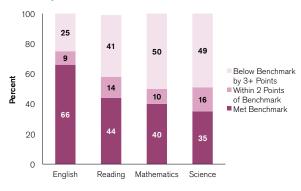
#### Trends of Student Interest in Subject-Specific Teacher Education Majors: 2010-2014

· Between 2010 and 2014, the percent of students interested in education majors decreased by 9%.

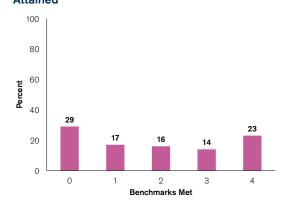
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Nation	Percent	40%	37%	32%	32%	31%
	N Count	42,090	38,915	30,036	28,918	27,449

#### All Students Planning Subject-Specific Teacher Education Majors

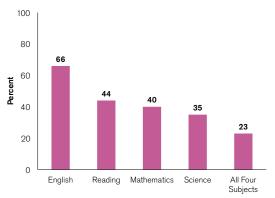
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks **Attained**



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by **Subject**



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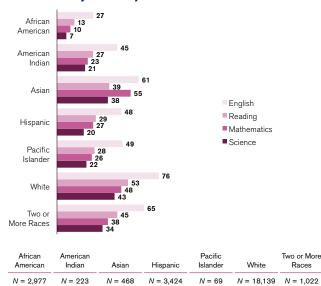
#### **Number and Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested** High School Graduates by Planned Major

Education Majors	N Count	Percent
Agricultural Education	403	1
Art Education	1,385	5
Business Education	319	1
Career and Technical Education	224	1
English-as-a-Second-Language Education	434	2
English/Language Arts Education	2,638	10
Foreign Languages Education	835	3
Health Education	594	2
Mathematics Education	3,117	11
Music Education	4,187	15
Physical Education and Coaching	6,115	22
Science Education	750	3
Social Studies/Sciences Education	3,357	12
Subject Specific	3,091	11
Total	27,449	100

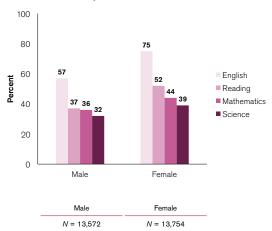
### **Subject-Specific Majors**

#### All Students Planning Subject-Specific Teacher Education Majors

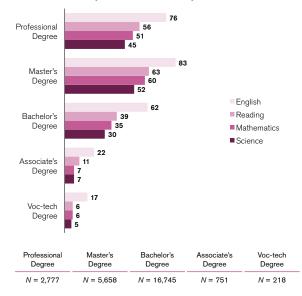
#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject\*

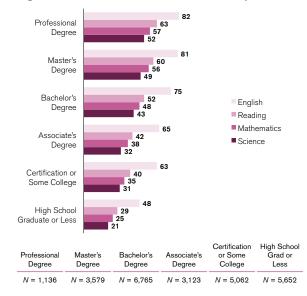


#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Gender and Subject



#### Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Educational Aspirations and Subject





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### **Future Educators**

### **Interest and Achievement by State**

	Percent of All	Percent of All ACT-Tested Graduates Interested	Number of All ACT-Tested Graduates Interested in		nt of Studen ajors Meeting		
State	Graduates Tested*	in Education Majors	Education Majors	English	Reading	Math	Science
Colorado	100	4	2,121	69	45	37	34
Illinois	100	5	8,202	70	43	41	34
Kentucky	100	6	2,842	68	41	30	30
Louisiana	100	4	1,870	65	36	27	24
Michigan	100	4	5,012	65	39	36	32
Mississippi	100	5	1,490	52	28	17	16
Montana	100	6	556	60	43	35	30
North Carolina	100	4	3,873	53	32	32	20
North Dakota	100	6	431	68	43	40	32
Tennessee	100	4	3,118	67	40	29	27
Utah	100	5	1,647	71	48	39	35
Wyoming	100	8	478	66	41	35	35
Arkansas	93	7	1,848	68	41	35	30
Hawaii	90	3	345	45	27	23	18
Nebraska	86	8	1,466	71	44	36	34
Florida	81	3	4,228	51	36	24	20
Alabama	80	6	2,229	65	38	25	26
South Dakota	78	7	441	69	44	44	37
Minnesota	76	6	2,649	74	51	52	44
Missouri	76	7	3,511	71	47	37	33
Kansas	75	7	1,569	69	47	42	35
Oklahoma	75	5	1,454	64	44	27	28
Wisconsin	73	6	2,747	75	48	46	41
Ohio	72	6	5,503	73	49	44	38
New Mexico	69	4	477	54	32	24	22
lowa	68	8	1,785	74	48	38	38
West Virginia	65	9	953	68	42	22	26
South Carolina	58	7	1,670	60	36	30	24
Arizona	55	3	1,083	55	37	33	23
Georgia	53	5	2,624	59	38	28	24
Idaho	45	5	381	80	58	51	41

### **Future Educators**

### **Interest and Achievement by State**

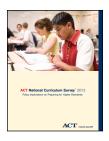
	Percent of All Graduates Tested*	Percent of All ACT-Tested Graduates Interested in Education Majors	Number of All ACT-Tested Graduates Interested in Education Majors	Percent of Students with Education Majors Meeting Benchmarks			
State				English	Reading	Math	Science
Indiana	40	5	1,402	68	47	42	32
Texas	40	5	6,055	53	33	34	25
Alaska	37	4	100	60	40	35	26
District of Columbia	37	2	35	34	26	26	14
Nevada	36	4	314	60	44	35	30
Oregon	36	4	484	69	46	38	30
California	29	3	3,139	63	41	42	27
Connecticut	29	4	530	80	56	52	41
Vermont	29	6	116	68	50	47	34
Virginia	28	5	1,043	69	47	40	35
New York	27	5	2,542	73	51	54	43
New Jersey	25	5	1,270	69	40	47	31
Massachusetts	23	4	727	76	50	51	37
Maryland	22	4	612	66	43	36	32
Washington	22	4	591	70	54	51	40
New Hampshire	20	4	128	80	61	51	42
Pennsylvania	19	5	1,318	65	41	41	31
Delaware	18	4	66	59	38	39	30
Rhode Island	16	5	82	67	45	30	29
Maine	9	3	35	80	60	46	54
Nation	57	5	89,192	65	42	37	31

<sup>\*</sup> Totals for graduating seniors were obtained from *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*, 8th edition. © December 2012 by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.



### **ACT** Research

As a nonprofit educational research organization, ACT is committed to producing research that focuses on key issues in education and workforce development. Our goal is to serve as a data resource. We strive to provide policymakers with the information they need to inform education and workforce development policy and to give educators the tools they need to lead more students toward college and career success. What follows are some of ACT's recent and most groundbreaking research studies related to STEM. To review these studies, go to www.act.org/research/summary



#### **ACT National Curriculum** Survey®

The ACT National Curriculum Survey is a nationwide survey of educational practices and expectations. Conducted every three to five years by ACT, the

survey collects data about what entering college students should know and be able to do to be ready for college-level coursework in English, math, reading, and science. The survey can be found at www.act.org/research-policy/nationalcurriculum-survey.



#### **STEM Educator Pipeline: Doing** the Math on Recruiting Math and **Science Teachers**

This report uses data from the ACT college readiness assessment to examine the feasibility of producing 100,000 high-quality math and

science teachers in the next decade and finds that there is an insufficient number of graduates interested in and capable of math and science teaching to meet the 100,000 high-quality teacher goal. The report can be found at www.act.org/research/policymakers/ reports/stempipeline.html.



#### The Condition of College & **Career Readiness**

Using ACT scores and the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2014 provides data highlighting the college and career

readiness of the ACT-tested high school class of 2014. This report is updated annually, and the 2014 report can be found at www.act.org/newsroom/ data/2014.



#### **Broadening the Definition of College and Career Readiness**

The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2014 report revealed that only 26% of 2014 ACT-tested high school graduates met all four ACT College Readiness

Benchmarks. A more holistic approach to college and career readiness is in order. ACT will outline this new approach in a series of reports beginning in October 2014. Key components include:

- A broader range of skills: While current approaches to measuring college and career readiness focus on measures of core academic skills, research shows that other noncognitive skills, including behavioral and career navigation skills, are also reliable predictors.
- Earlier measurement: Traditional academic assessments tend to measure students' college and career readiness in the 11th grade. Research confirms that outcomes can actually be predicted much earlier, allowing more time for intervention.

The ultimate goal in developing a more holistic view of college and career readiness is to empower counselors, educators, parents, and students by providing them with personalized and timely information to help individuals realize their potential.

The upcoming papers provide evidence that educators, policymakers, and employers embrace a wide variety of skills critical for success. The research also shows that the prediction of college and career readiness can be improved by measuring a broader range of skills.

Watch for the first report in October: Broadening the Definition of College and Career Readiness: A Holistic Approach. Sign up at www.act.org/newsroom/ alerts.php to receive an email alert when the reports are published.

# **ACT-Defined Education Majors**

**Administration/Student Services** 

Counseling and Student Services

**Educational Administration** 

Curriculum and Instruction

**General Teacher Education** 

Teacher Education—General

**Student Population Specific** 

Special Education

Early Childhood Education

**Elementary Education** 

Junior High/Middle School Education

Postsecondary Education

Secondary Education

**Subject Specific** 

Teacher Education—Subject Specific

Agricultural Education

Art Education

**Business Education** 

Career and Technical Education

English-as-a-Second-Language Education

English/Language Arts Education

Foreign Languages Education

Health Education

Mathematics Education

Music Education

Physical Education and Coaching

Science Education

Social Studies/Sciences Education



ACT is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides assessment, research, information, and program management services in the broad areas of education and workforce development. Each year, we serve millions of people in high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies, nationally and internationally. Though designed to meet a wide array of needs, all ACT programs and services have one guiding purpose—helping people achieve education and workplace success.

This report can be found at www.act.org/futureeducators

