

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

South Carolina Key Findings

Performance of 2019 Graduates

- In the 2019 South Carolina graduating class, 36,430 graduates (an estimated 78 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 18.8. This compares to 25,151 (an estimated 62 percent) with an average of 20.4 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - There were 9,642 African American graduates from South Carolina who took the ACT (26 percent) with an average Composite score of 15.6. This compares to 15,384 (29 percent) with an average of 15.3, and 7,105 (28 percent) with an average of 16.7, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 18,359 White graduates from South Carolina who took the ACT (50 percent) with an average Composite score of 20.8. This compares to 26,686 (50 percent) with an average of 20.1, and 14,333 (57 percent) with an average of 22.2, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 2,934 Hispanic graduates from South Carolina who took the ACT (8 percent) with an average Composite score of 18.0. This compares to 4,204 (8 percent) with an average of 17.4, and 1,240 (5 percent) with an average of 20.0, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - The 2019 South Carolina graduating class average English score was 18.0. This compares to 17.3 and 19.8 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 South Carolina graduating class average math score was 18.7. This compares to 18.2 and 20.2 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 South Carolina graduating class average reading score was 19.4. This compares to 18.6 and 20.9 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 South Carolina graduating class average science score was 18.9. This compares to 18.5 and 20.4 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
- In 2019, 16 percent of South Carolina graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 14 and 23 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 46 percent of South Carolina graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 42 and 61 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 27 percent of South Carolina graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 24 and 38 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 33 percent of South Carolina graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 30 and 43 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 25 percent of South Carolina graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 20 and 34 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 9,330 (26 percent) of South Carolina graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 11,895 and 8,993 (22 and 36 percent) out of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively. For reference, the national percentage of 2019 graduates meeting three or four benchmarks was 37 percent.

STEM

- In 2019, 16,328 South Carolina graduates (45 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
 - Nationally, 43 percent of graduates indicated having an interest in STEM.
- Compared to a 2019 South Carolina graduating class average ACT STEM score of 19.0, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 18.6 and 20.6, respectively.
- Compared to 11 percent of 2019 South Carolina graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 9 and 16, respectively.
- In 2019, 12,405 South Carolina graduates (34 percent) indicated taking physics. This compares to 37 and 45 percent for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - 2019 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 20.2, compared to 18.5 for students not taking physics.
 - 34 percent of 2019 South Carolina graduates taking physics met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark, compared to 21 for students not taking physics.

Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 21,734 South Carolina graduates (60 percent) were likely to attain the Silver ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 1,273,362 (71 percent) nationally.
 - The ACT Composite scores associated with a 50% chance of earning each ACT WorkKeys NCRC level or higher are: 13 for Bronze, 17 for Silver, 22 for Gold, and 27 for Platinum. Based on those cut scores, students who earned an ACT Composite score of less than 13 would be classified as “Needs Improvement,” 13 to 16 as “Bronze,” 17 to 21 as “Silver,” and 22 or above as “Gold or Higher.”

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2019 ACT-tested South Carolina high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2019 graduating class would result in:
 - 94 more students enrolling in college.
 - 103 more students persisting to year two.
 - 77 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - 120 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - 107 more students persisting to year four.
 - 111 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In South Carolina, 10,193 of the 2019 graduates (28.0 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 21.4, compared to an average of 17.8 for 26,237 of the 2019 graduates (72.0 percent) who took the ACT only once.
- 93,433 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 South Carolina ACT-tested graduates.
 - 50,762 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 South Carolina ACT-tested graduates.
 - For South Carolina’s 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were the University of South Carolina - Columbia, Clemson University, the College of Charleston, Coastal Carolina University, and Winthrop University.
 - For South Carolina’s 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were the University of Georgia, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

- Compared to 66 percent of 2019 graduates nationally, 76 percent of South Carolina graduates opted into the ACT Educational Opportunity Service (EOS). EOS is a free service that allows students to gain exposure to recruitment, scholarship agencies, colleges, and universities that students may not have accessed on their own. The ACT Get Your Name in the Game initiative encourages colleges and universities to recruit underserved EOS participants to increase access and opportunity for all.
 - Compared to 75 percent of African American students nationally, 84 percent of South Carolina African American 2019 graduates opted into EOS.
 - Compared to 64 percent of White students nationally, 77 percent of South Carolina White 2019 graduates opted into EOS.
 - Compared to 76 percent of Hispanic students nationally, 83 percent of South Carolina Hispanic 2019 graduates opted into EOS.
- In the 2018-2019 academic year, ACT issued 6,226 ACT fee waivers to qualified South Carolina students across all grades. However, 1,607 students (25.8 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 487,749 waivers issued nationally, of which 135,569 (27.8 percent) students did not take advantage. This represents a great opportunity for high schools within the state to increase the socioeconomic diversity of its students tested.

Postsecondary Aspirations

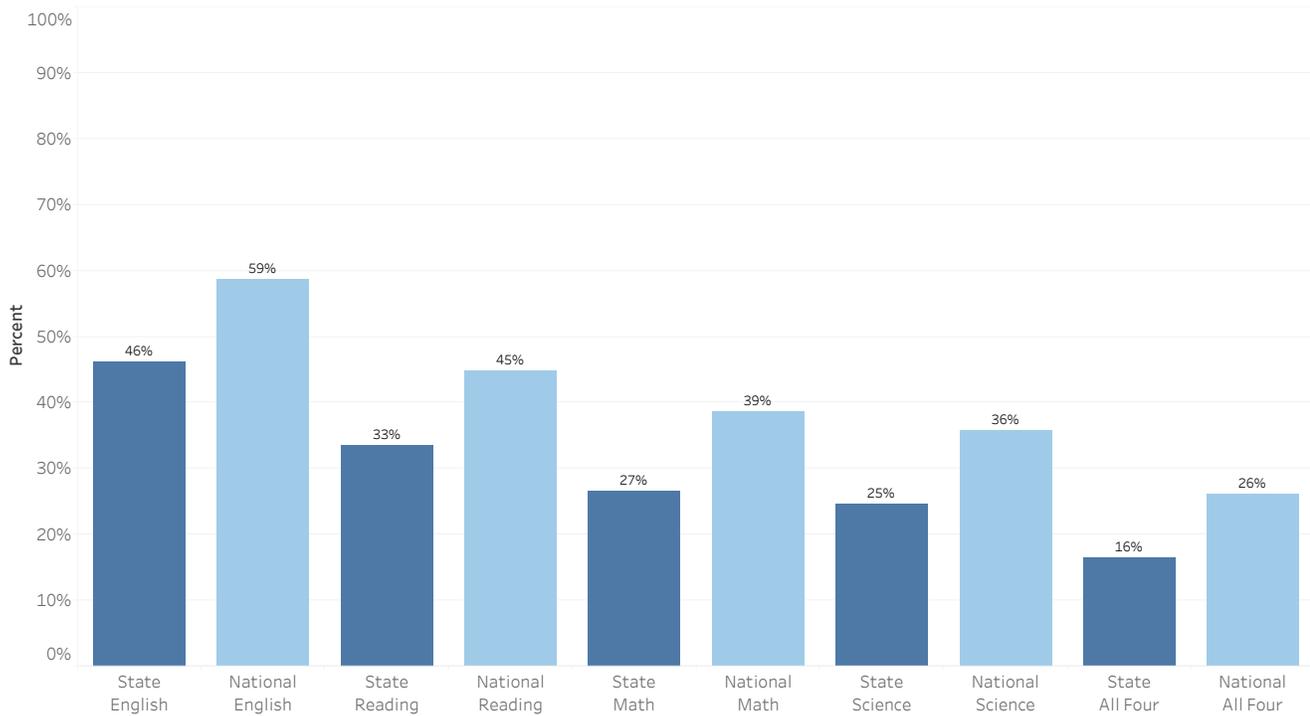
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - 10,407 students (29 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.0.
 - 14,425 students (40 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 18.5.
 - 3,236 students (9 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 15.0.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 South Carolina graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Biology, General.
 - In the South Carolina graduating class of 2019, 1,635 (4 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 18.8.

Additional Points

- The South Carolina ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with roughly 440 members from across the state. The membership includes educators from state agencies, K-12, access, and postsecondary institutions, as well as members involved in workforce development. Each year, ACT hosts a state summit that brings together professionals representing each of these areas, providing a unique and diverse professional development opportunity.
- In 2019, ACT honored College and Career Readiness Champions in most states. The South Carolina honorees were:
 - High school senior: Joy Bernal, Ashley Ridge High School; K-12 professional: Kristen Starcher, Certified High School Counselor, Rock Hill High School; postsecondary professional: James Ladd, Academic Program Coordinator, Piedmont Technical College; and workforce professional: Melinda Ammerman, Product Safety Engineering Technical Leader, GE Power.

SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data From Graph Above

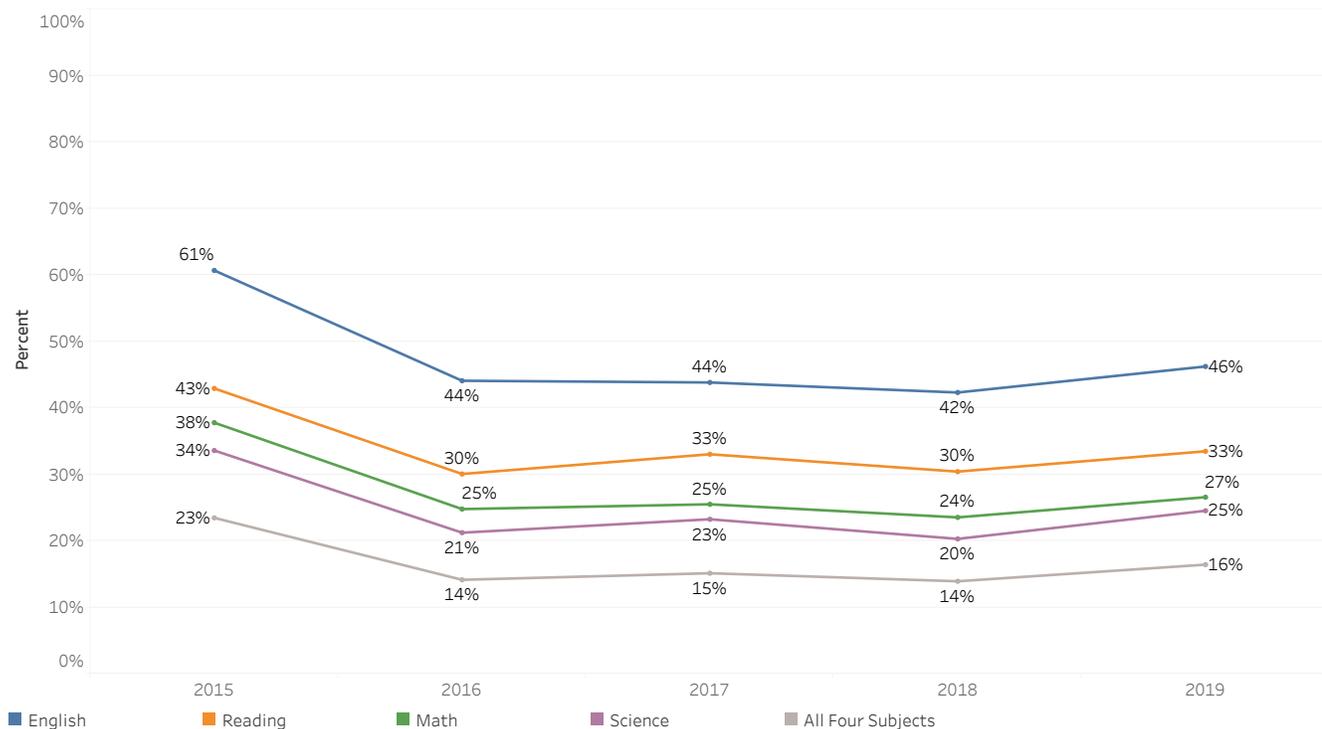
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
46%	59%	33%	45%	27%	39%	25%	36%	16%	26%

*The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are scores on the ACT subject area tests that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses. Throughout this report, benchmark attainment corresponds with students meeting or exceeding 18 in English, 22 in Reading, 22 in Math and 23 in Science.

Note, missing data points in tables and graphs reflect insufficient data for reporting.

SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015–2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



Data From Graph Above

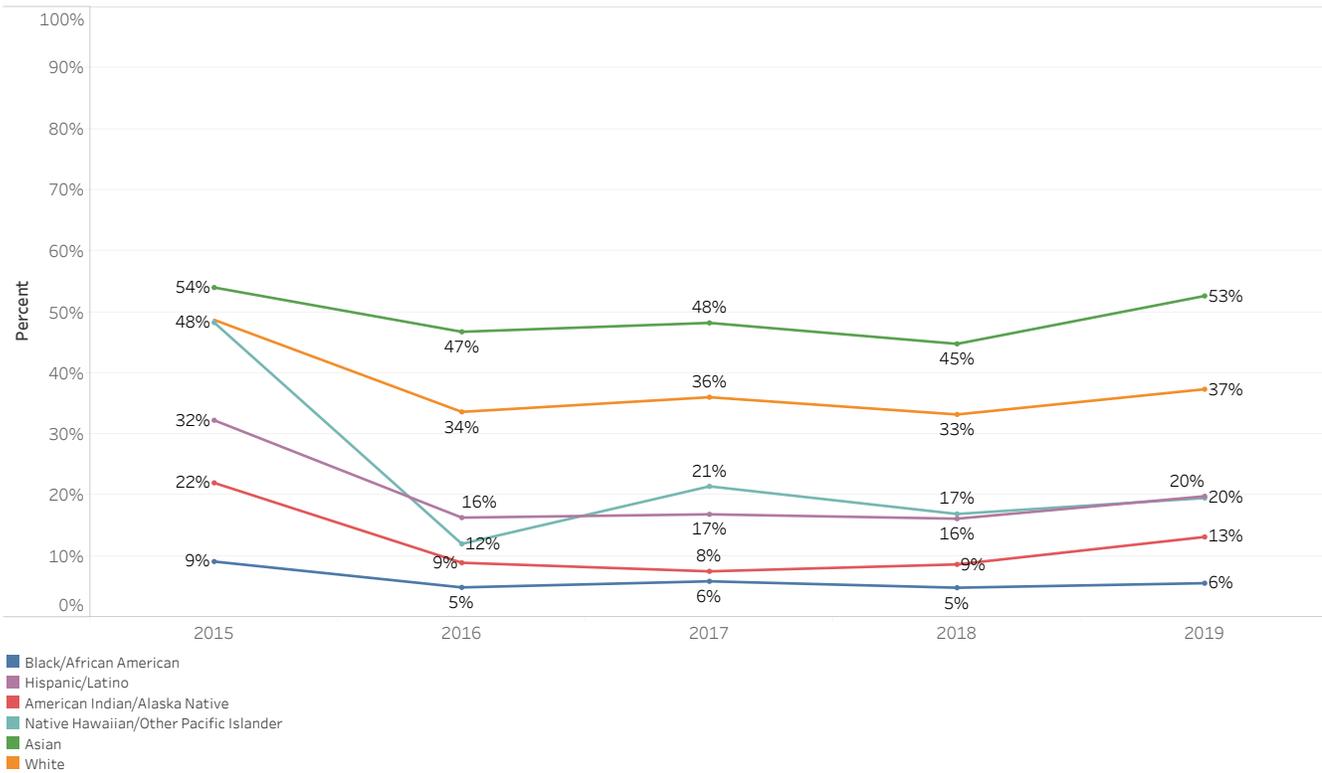
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	61%	43%	38%	34%	23%
2016	44%	30%	25%	21%	14%
2017	44%	33%	25%	23%	15%
2018	42%	30%	24%	20%	14%
2019	46%	33%	27%	25%	16%

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SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015-2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity



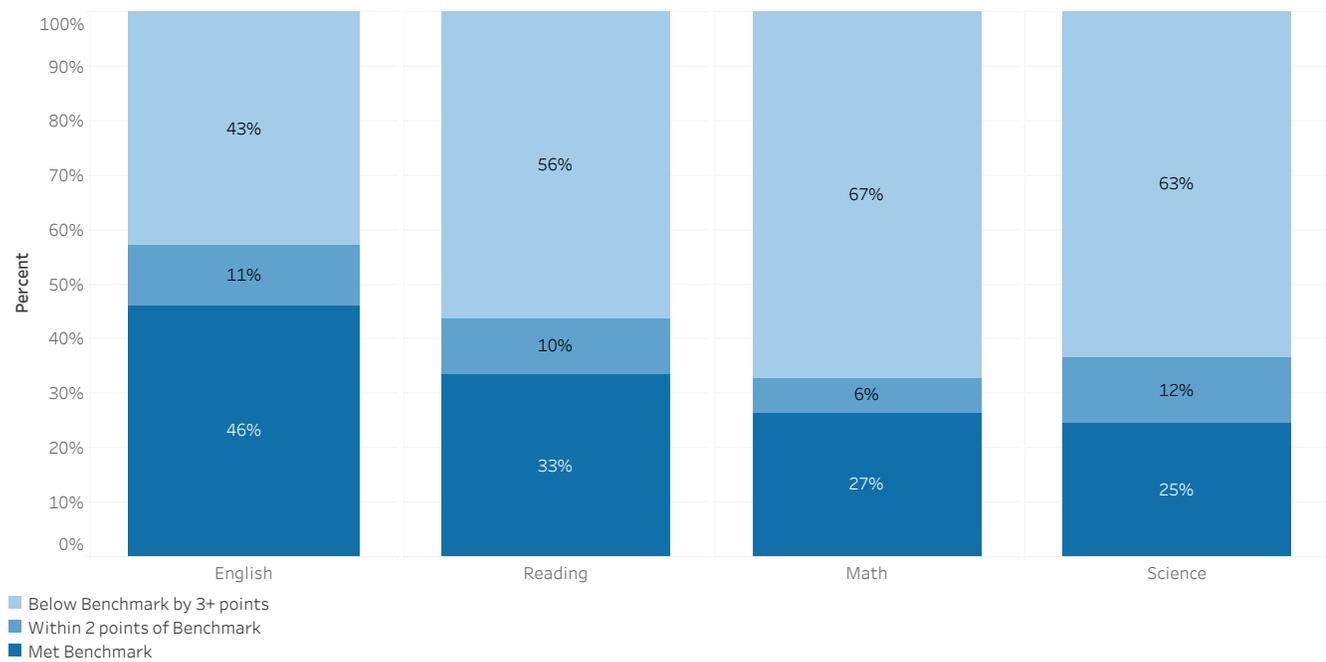
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	9%	32%	22%	48%	54%	49%
2016	5%	16%	9%	12%	47%	34%
2017	6%	17%	8%	21%	48%	36%
2018	5%	16%	9%	17%	45%	33%
2019	6%	20%	13%	20%	53%	37%

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SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



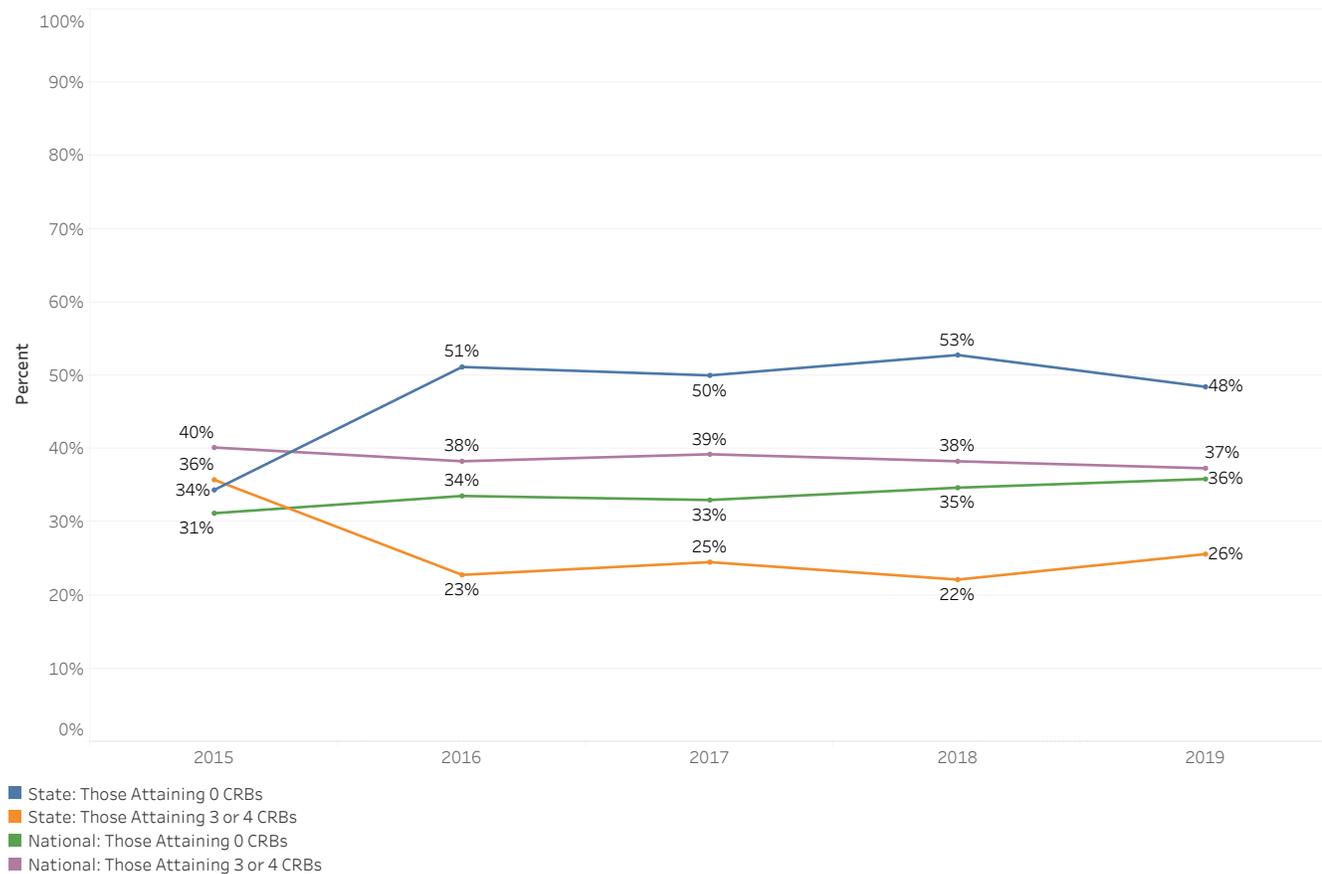
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	43%	11%	46%
Math	67%	6%	27%
Reading	56%	10%	33%
Science	63%	12%	25%

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Percent of 2015–2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



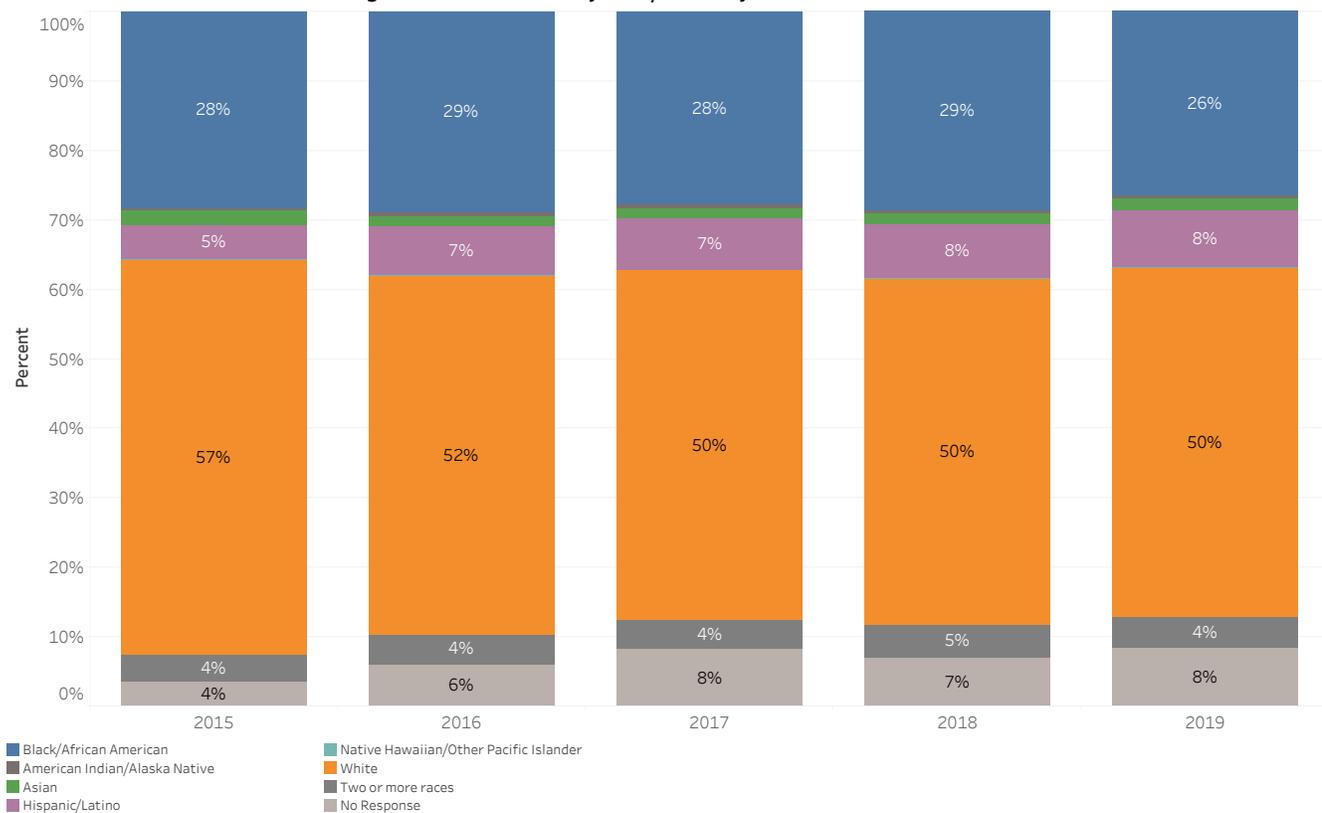
Data from Graph Above

	State: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	State: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs
2015	34%	36%	31%	40%
2016	51%	23%	34%	38%
2017	50%	25%	33%	39%
2018	53%	22%	35%	38%
2019	48%	26%	36%	37%

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SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015-2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity



Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or more races	No Response
2015	28%	0%	2%	5%	0%	57%	4%	4%
2016	29%	0%	1%	7%	0%	52%	4%	6%
2017	28%	0%	2%	7%	0%	50%	4%	8%
2018	29%	0%	2%	8%	0%	50%	5%	7%
2019	26%	0%	2%	8%	0%	50%	4%	8%

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SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

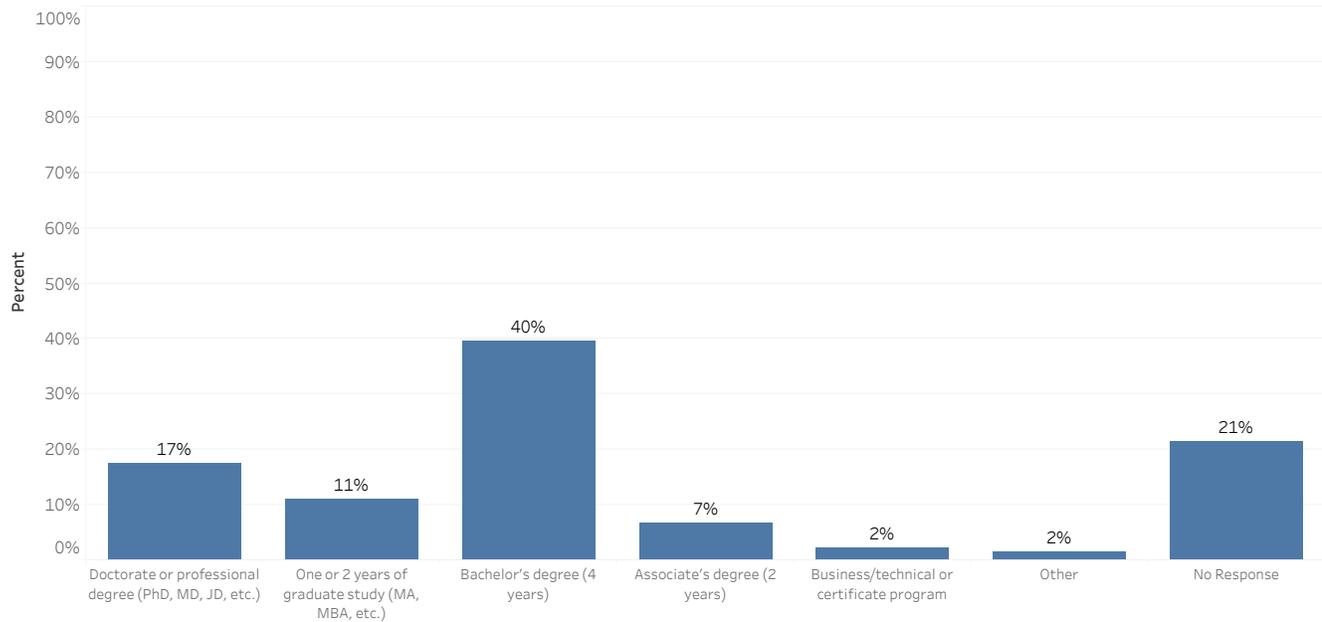
Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	25,151	51,098	50,936	53,743	36,430
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	19.8	17.3	17.5	17.3	18.0
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	20.9	19.0	19.1	18.6	19.4
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	20.2	18.5	18.6	18.2	18.7
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	20.4	18.6	18.9	18.5	18.9
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	20.4	18.5	18.7	18.3	18.8
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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SOUTH CAROLINA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations



Data From Graph Above

	% of Graduates
Doctorate or professional degree (PhD, MD, JD, etc.)	17%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	11%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	40%
Associate's degree (2 years)	7%
Business/technical or certificate program	2%
Other	2%
No Response	21%

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