

The Condition of College & Career Readiness

This report looks at the achievement of the ACT®-tested 2017 graduating class relative to college and career readiness. A total of 60% of students in the 2017 US graduating class took the ACT® test, compared to 64% last year, 54% in 2013, and 42% in 2007. The growing percentage of the nation's graduates taking the ACT over the past decade has enhanced the breadth and depth of the data pool, providing a comprehensive picture of the current graduating class in the context of college readiness.

As a research-based nonprofit organization, ACT is committed to providing information and solutions to support the following:

- **Holistic view of readiness.** The ACT report, *Broadening the Definition of College and Career Readiness: A Holistic Approach*, shows academic readiness is only one of multiple domains critical in determining an individual's readiness for success in college and career. Social and emotional learning skills (SEL) are also vital. Behavioral skills, cross-cutting capabilities, and navigational skills should be measured and addressed. Together, these elements provide a comprehensive picture of student readiness for success after high school.
- **Meaningful data for better decisions.** ACT is focused on providing better data to students, parents, schools, districts, and states so that all can make more informed decisions to improve educational outcomes. We accomplish this goal by taking a holistic view and using consistent and reliable historical information so that individuals and institutions have a better context to make critical decisions about the journey they have undertaken.

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2017

Florida Key Findings

Performance

- In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 129,320 graduates took the ACT® test, compared to 124,131 in 2013.
 - ~ In 2017, there were 26,651 African American graduates from Florida who took the ACT (21 percent). This compares to 28,188 (21 percent) and 27,024 (22 percent) for 2016 and 2013 graduating classes, respectively.
 - Florida African American 2017 graduates who took the ACT had an average Composite score of 16.6. This compares to average Composite scores of 16.9 and 16.4 for graduating classes from 2016 and 2013, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, there were 38,668 Hispanic graduates from Florida who took the ACT (30 percent). This compares to 38,863 (30 percent) and 33,860 (27 percent) for 2016 and 2013 graduating classes, respectively.
 - Florida Hispanic 2017 graduates who took the ACT had an average Composite score of 19.1. This compares to average Composite scores of 19.1 and 18.9 for graduating classes from 2016 and 2013, respectively.
- In Florida, 73 percent of 2017 graduates took the ACT, compared to 60 percent nationally.
- Florida graduates of 2017 had an average Composite score of 19.8, compared to the national average of 21.0.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 Florida graduating class Composite average of 19.8, Florida graduates in 2016 and 2013 had Composite averages of 19.9 and 19.6, respectively.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 Florida graduating class reading average of 21.0, Florida graduates in 2016 and 2013 had reading averages of 21.1 and 20.4, respectively.
- In 2017, 43 percent of Florida graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 42 and 38 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ 45 percent of Florida 2017 graduates taking three or more years of social studies met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 27 percent of students taking less than three years of social studies.

STEM

- In 2017, 60,232 Florida graduates (47 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.

Career Readiness

- In 2017, 26,946 Florida graduates (21 percent) were likely to attain the Gold ACT WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate® or higher, based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 538,392 (27 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, 25 for Gold, and 35 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 24 as "Silver," and 25 or above as "Gold or Higher." For comparison, individual student score reports classify those who scored 12 to 13, 14 to 17, and 18 and higher as making progress toward Bronze, Silver, and Gold certificates.

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2016 ACT-tested Florida high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2017 graduating class would result in:
 - ~ 271 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 324 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 272 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 491 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 364 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 391 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Florida, 2017 graduates taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 20.6, compared to 19.1 for single-time testers.
- Florida test takers are more diverse than the national sample. Of particular interest, the new English learner supports on the ACT test may benefit the Florida student population in significant ways.
- Of Florida's 2017 graduating class, there were 26,651 (21 percent) African American students taking the ACT. This compares to 256,756 (13 percent) nationally.
- Of Florida's 2017 graduating class, there were 38,668 (30 percent) Hispanic students taking the ACT. This compares to 347,906 (17 percent) nationally.
- Of Florida's 2017 graduating class, there were 47,551 (37 percent) White students taking the ACT. This compares to 1,062,439 (52 percent) nationally.
- For Florida's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were University of Central Florida, Florida State University, University of Florida, University of South Florida, and Florida International University.
- Of Florida's 2017 graduating class, there were 3,806 (3 percent) Asian students taking the ACT. This compares to 96,097 (5 percent) nationally.
- For Florida's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were University of Alabama, Auburn University, and New York University.
- Compared to 73 percent of 2017 graduates nationally, 75 percent of Florida graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 85 percent of African American students nationally, 83 percent of Florida African American 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 69 percent of White students nationally, 67 percent of Florida White 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 83 percent of Hispanic students nationally, 81 percent of Florida Hispanic 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
- ACT issued 99,701 ACT fee waivers to Florida students who qualify. However, 26,802 students (27 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This represents a great opportunity for high schools within the state to increase the socio-economic diversity of their students tested.

Pipeline

- In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 24,740 (19 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
 - ~ Nationally, 18 percent of the tested population had parents who did not attend college.
- In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 30,956 (24 percent) aspired to attain a professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.2.
- In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 17,626 (14 percent) aspired to attain a graduate degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.3.
- In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 48,520 (38 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 19.1.
- In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 4,452 (3 percent) aspired to attain an associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 15.7.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2017 Florida graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Business Administration and Management, General; and Criminology.
 - ~ In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 24,713 (19 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 19.1.
 - ~ In the Florida graduating class of 2017, 3,450 (3 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 18.8.

ACT Footprint

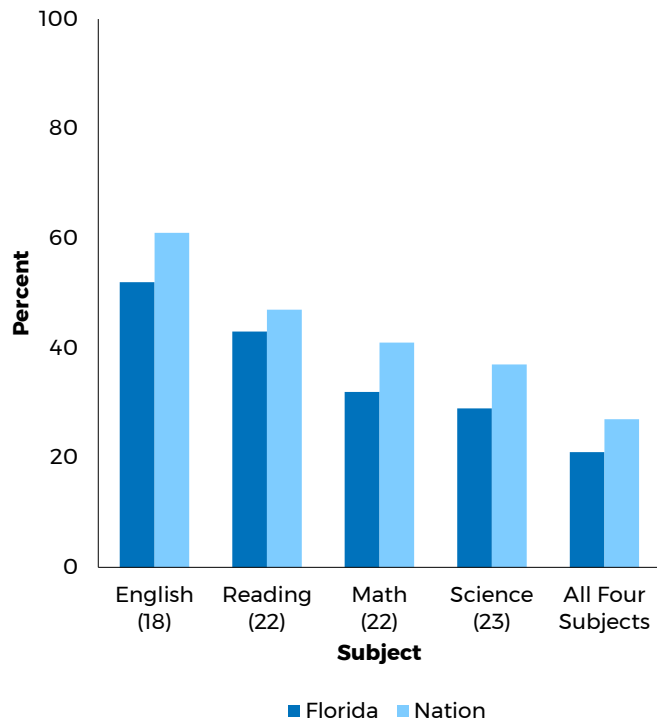
- Number of administrations:
 - ~ ACT Aspire® Summative: 54,311 Tests Administered
 - ~ ACT Aspire Periodic: 7,649
 - ~ ACT Engage®: 966
 - ~ PreACT®: 7,525
 - ~ ACT WorkKeys: 1,523

Additional Points

- More than 45,200 students were enrolled for ACT in-school testing in 2016-17 (an increase from 27,880 in 2015-16).
 - ~ There were 14 districts that participated in the District Testing program, and four districts tested in both fall and spring. A total of 5,470 students enrolled for ACT school-day testing were in non-public schools.
- ACT growth in Florida is in part due to increased participation by "at-risk" students trying to meet graduation concordance scores. Many districts have targeted these students with intensive reading preparation and multiple ACT test-taking attempts, including school-day testing opportunities. While the goal is good, intense focus on reading with diminished attention to English, math, and science preparation may be skewing the overall data.
 - ~ The percent meeting the benchmark in Reading is only 4 points below the national average, while other subjects remain 6 to 9 percentage points below. The focus is positively impacting reading scores over the last five years.
 - ~ Actual reports from educators and from students indicate that many students are not taking the other tests seriously. This may be negatively impacting average scores and benchmark attainment in English, math, and reading.

Florida College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

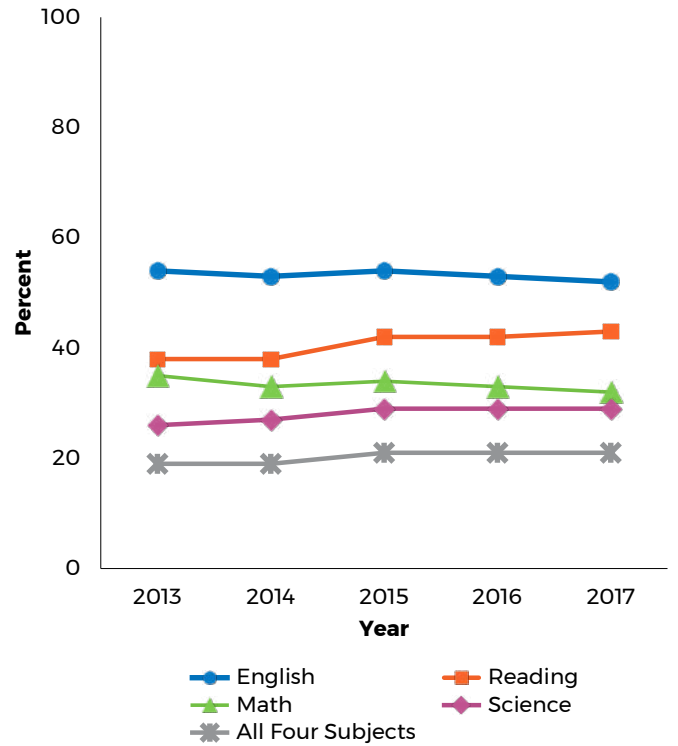
Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data from graph above:

State / Nation	English (18)	Reading (22)	Math (22)	Science (23)	All Four
Florida	52	43	32	29	21
Nation	61	47	41	37	27

Percent of 2013–2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

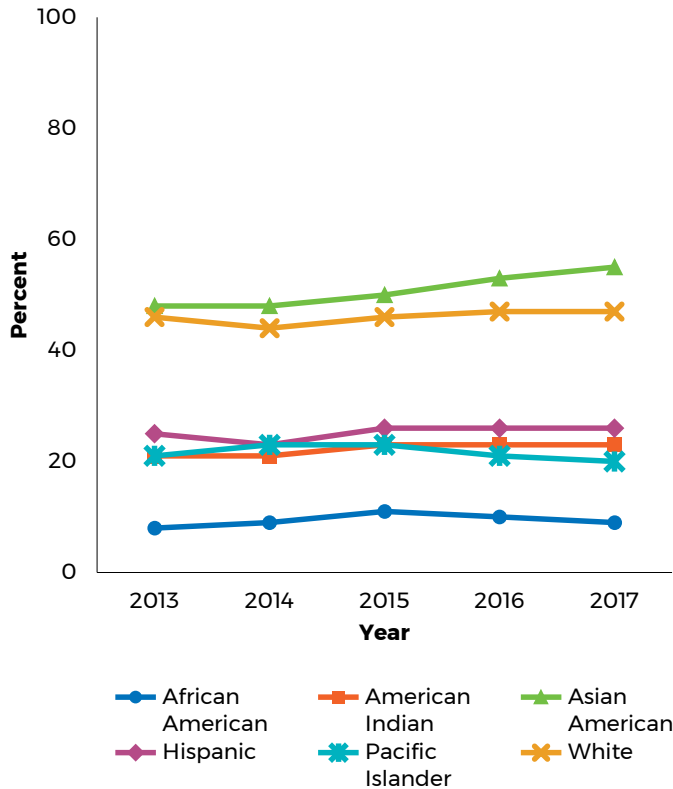


Data from graph above:

Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
English	54	53	54	53	52
Reading	38	38	42	42	43
Math	35	33	34	33	32
Science	26	27	29	29	29
All Four Subjects	19	19	21	21	21

* 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 score values in parentheses ().

Percent of 2013–2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity*



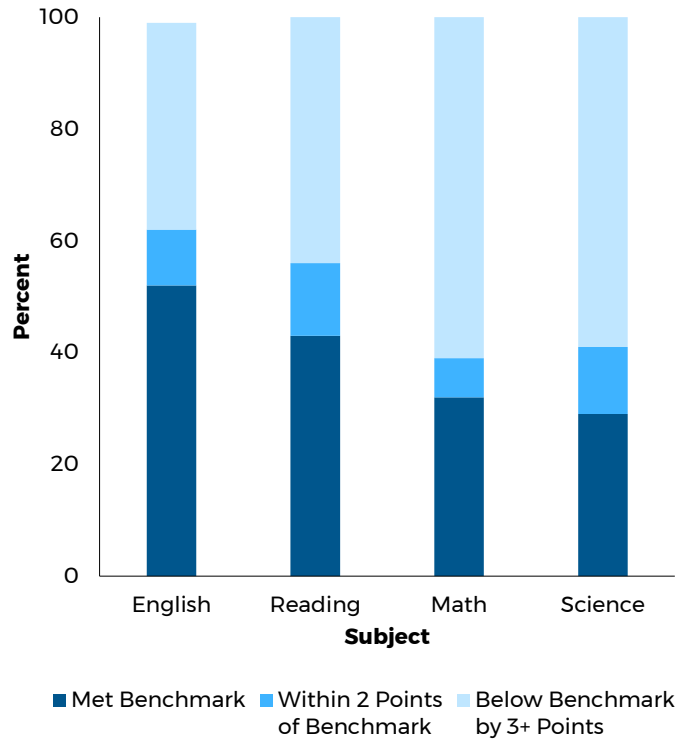
Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	8	9	11	10	9
American Indian	21	21	23	23	23
Asian American	48	48	50	53	55
Hispanic	25	23	26	26	26
Pacific Islander	21	23	23	21	20
White	46	44	46	47	47

* Percentages for groups with insufficient counts will be missing.

Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject

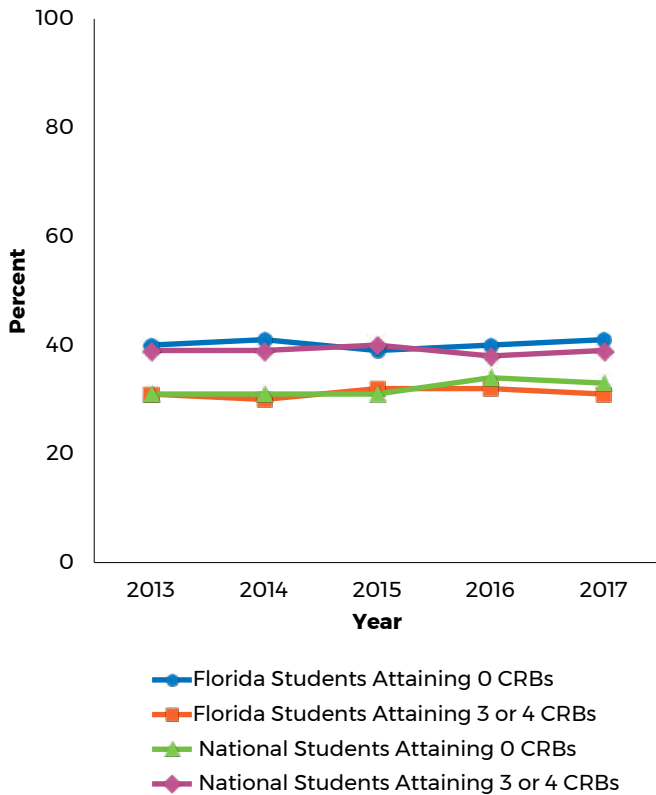
Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Values less than 0.5% will not appear.



Data from graph above:

Attainment	English	Reading	Math	Science
Met Benchmark	52	43	32	29
Within 2 Points of Benchmark	10	13	7	12
Below Benchmark by 3+ Points	37	45	61	59

Trends in Percent of ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks (CRBs) Attained

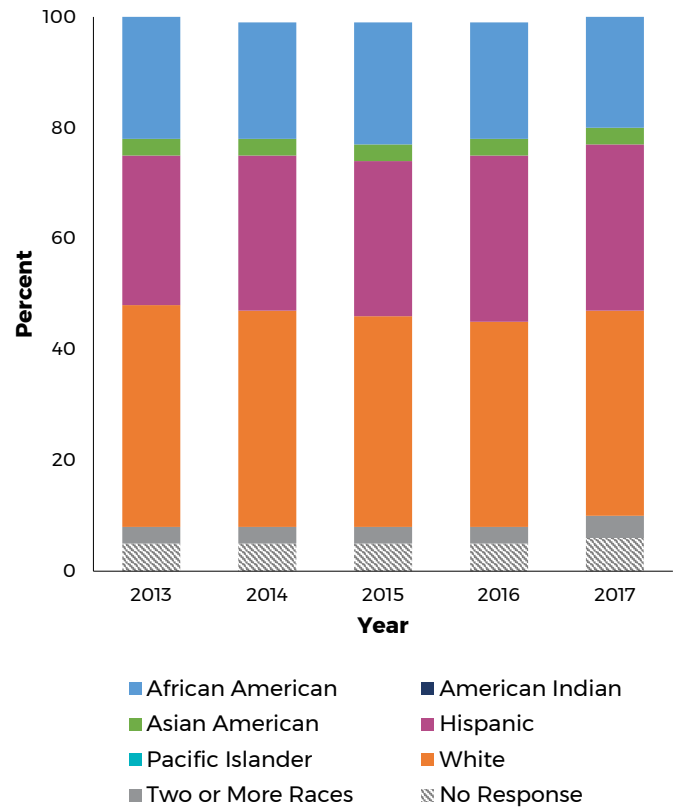


Data from graph above:

Attainment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Florida Students Attaining 0 CRBs	40	41	39	40	41
Florida Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	31	30	32	32	31
National Students Attaining 0 CRBs	31	31	31	34	33
National Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	39	39	40	38	39

Percent of 2013–2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Values less than 0.5% will not appear.



Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	22	21	22	21	21
American Indian	0	0	0	0	0
Asian American	3	3	3	3	3
Hispanic	27	28	28	30	30
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
White	40	39	38	37	37
Two or More Races	3	3	3	3	4
No Response	5	5	5	5	6

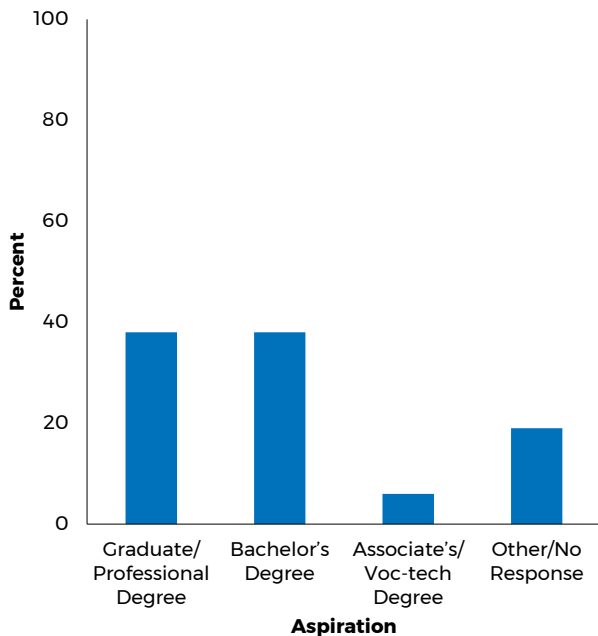
Florida: Between 2013 and 2017, the number of students taking the ACT in Florida increased by 5,189 students (4 percent).

Student Data Trends: 2013-2017, State vs. Nation

Outcome	Cohort	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent Tested	Florida	74	81	79	81	73
	Nation	54	57	59	64	60
N Tested	Florida	124,131	129,676	130,798	131,621	129,320
	Nation	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038
Average English Score	Florida	18.7	18.7	18.9	18.9	19.0
	Nation	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3
Average Reading Score	Florida	20.4	20.7	21.0	21.1	21.0
	Nation	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4
Average Math Score	Florida	19.7	19.5	19.6	19.5	19.4
	Nation	20.9	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7
Average Science Score	Florida	19.1	19.1	19.5	19.5	19.4
	Nation	20.7	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0
Average Composite Score	Florida	19.6	19.6	19.9	19.9	19.8
	Nation	20.9	21.0	21.0	20.8	21.0

Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations

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



There is good news in that 81% of Florida's 2017 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 82% of Florida's 2016 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 60% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 29,261 of the 2016 ACT-tested graduates from Florida would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

Data from graph

Aspiration	Percent
Graduate / Professional Degree	38
Bachelor's Degree	38
Associate's / Voc-tech Degree	6
Other / No Response	19



Florida State Exemplar 2017 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign

Mark Yen

Mast@FIU BBC, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

“In my post-secondary education, I will major in Aerospace Engineering to gain more knowledge to fulfill my dream. I can already envision my future: I will be at the control center in Houston, seeing my creation speeding out of Earth’s atmosphere and into the endless space.”

Mark has persevered to overcome struggles in English classes in order to succeed in high school and beyond. At seven years old, Mark had already realized that his dream was to design rockets for NASA. In addition to improving his skills in English, he has worked hard in science and mathematics, including taking college-level physics in high school through a dual enrollment program, joining the robotics club, and studying computer programming.

Information and products for further review

	Knowledge & Skills	Social & Emotional
Assessments	ACT Aspire®	ACT Tessera™
	PreACT®	ACT Engage®
	The ACT® Test	
	ACT WorkKeys®	
Research	Condition of College & Career Readiness	A Rosetta Stone for Noncognitive Skills
	ACT® National Curriculum Survey®	
	The Forgotten Middle	Tessera Comprehensive Theory of Action
	Rigor at Risk	
	ACT Holistic Framework™	
Resources	PLDs Learning Description Review	Tessera Teacher Playbook
	Curriculum Review Worksheets	
	OpenEd Learning Resources	
	Test Prep	
Training	Professional Learning Sessions	
	College & Career Readiness Workshops	
	Holistic Framework Webinars	

We are more than just the ACT test. ACT products and services encompass a variety of research- and assessment-based solutions.

As research leaders, we continue to innovate education and workforce solutions to help guide individuals to education and career success.

Find out more at www.act.org.

Key ACT Research

As students navigate their education and career journeys, it is critical for them to be ready for college and career success. College and career readiness is supported by the ACT Holistic Framework, a research-based, multidimensional model for understanding the essential knowledge and skills needed for success, and the solutions that can meet students' navigation needs. Visit act.org/condition2017 to access key reports listed below.

- Serving students' navigation needs from kindergarten to career requires a holistic approach:
 - ~ *Beyond Academics: A Holistic Framework for Enhancing Education and Workplace Success*
 - ~ *The Importance of Behavioral Skills and Navigation Factors for Education and Workforce Success*
- The ACT Holistic Framework is supported by prolific research:
 - ~ Core Academic Skills:
 - 2017 State and National Condition Reports
 - *Profiles of STEM Students: Persisters, Joiners, Changers, and Departers*
 - *ACT Composite Score by Parental Education Level, 2012-2016*
 - *Comparisons of Student Achievement Levels by District Performance and Poverty*
 - ~ Behavioral Skills (also called Social and Emotional Learning):
 - *The Development of Behavioral Performance Level Descriptors*
 - ~ Cross-Cutting Capabilities:
 - *ACT National Curriculum Survey 2016*
 - ~ Student journeys continue into postsecondary education and careers:
 - *Higher Education Research Digest*
 - *Predicted Attainment of ACT National Career Readiness Certificates for the 2016 ACT-tested High School Cohort*

Recommendations

- 1. Use a holistic assessment model for school accountability that measures student readiness for college and career across multiple domains.** While it is essential to measure students' academic achievement in assessing college and career readiness, it is not enough. Social and emotional learning skills are important and measurable, and they can be impacted. Assessment models should take into account core academic skills, behavioral skills, cross-cutting capabilities, and education and career navigation skills to provide an integrated picture of college and work readiness.
- 2. Make special efforts to ensure that underrepresented students have equal access and opportunity to pursue postsecondary education.** According to ACT research, most underrepresented students want to continue their education after high school, but they face many barriers. Ensuring they have access to the same rigorous core curriculum as others is just one step. Many also lack the resources, information, and familial and peer support they need to prepare for success after high school. Special efforts must be made to level the playing field for underrepresented students so they have equal opportunity to succeed.
- 3. Increase emphasis on STEM readiness initiatives, measures, and programs.** With technology advancing rapidly, the importance of STEM readiness is only increasing. The threat of robotic and computer-assisted technologies eliminating jobs is growing while the remaining and emerging jobs will likely require higher-level skills. ACT data continue to show that many graduates are not ready. Without improvement in STEM readiness, far too many will be ill-prepared for the future workforce.
- 4. Focus on fewer, higher, and clearer learning standards in K-12 schools.** Far too many students continue to graduate from high school without all of the core skills they will need to ably succeed at the next level. Many will struggle, and many will likely fail to realize their aspirations. The push toward raising the bar on learning standards and focusing on the essential skills necessary for success must continue.
- 5. Begin assessing learning and implementing intervention strategies early.** Early assessment and intervention are critical to improving educational outcomes. If students are not on track for college and career readiness by the time they reach middle school, it may be too late. Assessing learning and implementing intervention strategies to help students get on the right path for college and career readiness must begin in elementary school.