

## 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

## New York Key Findings

### Performance

- In the New York graduating class of 2017, 63,322 graduates took the ACT® test, compared to 53,287 in 2013.
  - ~ In New York, 31 percent of 2017 graduates took the ACT, compared to 60 percent nationally.
- New York graduates of 2017 had an average Composite score of 24.2, compared to the national average of 21.0.
  - ~ New York African American 2017 graduates who took the ACT had an average Composite score of 19.9. This compares to average Composite scores of 19.6 and 19.2 for graduating classes from 2016 and 2013, respectively.
  - ~ New York White 2017 graduates who took the ACT had an average Composite score of 24.8. This compares to average Composite scores of 24.6 and 24.0 for graduating classes from 2016 and 2013, respectively.
  - ~ New York Hispanic 2017 graduates who took the ACT had an average Composite score of 22.0. This compares to average Composite scores of 21.5 and 21.0 for graduating classes from 2016 and 2013, respectively.
- In 2017, 48 percent of New York graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 47 and 43 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
  - ~ In 2017, 63 percent of New York graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 62 and 60 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
  - ~ In 2017, 13 percent of New York graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 15 and 14 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.

### STEM

- In 2017, 31,280 New York graduates (49 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
- Students taking more advanced math coursework demonstrate markedly higher average math scores than those who do not.
- The ACT is the only college entrance exam with a dedicated Science assessment, making the ACT a great fit for the New York State STEM Incentive Program.

### Career Readiness

- In 2017, 29,468 New York graduates (47 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 New York 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:
  - ~ 112 more students enrolling in college.
  - ~ 137 more students persisting to year two.
  - ~ 84 fewer students needing remedial English.
  - ~ 144 fewer students needing remedial math.
  - ~ 164 more students persisting to year four.
  - ~ 190 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

## Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In New York, 2017 graduates taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.8, compared to 23.0 for single-time testers.
  - ~ 44 percent (27,915) of the 2017 New York graduating class took the ACT more than once, compared to 45 percent nationally.
  - ~ Compared to the 2013 graduating class, the percentage of 2017 New York graduates taking the ACT more than once increased from 28 percent to 44 percent.
- Of New York's 2017 graduating class, there were 4,531 (7 percent) African American students taking the ACT. This compares to 256,756 (13 percent) nationally.
- Of New York's 2017 graduating class, there were 36,536 (58 percent) White students taking the ACT. This compares to 1,062,439 (52 percent) nationally.
- Of New York's 2017 graduating class, there were 8,026 (13 percent) Hispanic students taking the ACT. This compares to 347,906 (17 percent) nationally.
- Of New York's 2017 graduating class, there were 5,610 (9 percent) Asian students taking the ACT. This compares to 96,097 (5 percent) nationally.
- For New York's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were University at Buffalo-SUNY, Stony Brook University-SUNY, Binghamton University-SUNY, City University of New York, and University at Albany-SUNY.
  - ~ For New York's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were Boston University, Northeastern University, and Penn State-University Park Campus.
- Compared to 73 percent of 2017 graduates nationally, 66 percent of New York graduates opted into EOS.
  - ~ Compared to 85 percent of African American students nationally, 86 percent of New York African American 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
  - ~ Compared to 69 percent of White students nationally, 61 percent of New York White 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
  - ~ Compared to 83 percent of Hispanic students nationally, 81 percent of New York Hispanic 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
  - ~ Compared to 76 percent of Asian students nationally, 74 percent of New York Asian 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
  - ~ The ACT "Get Your Name in the Game" initiative allows colleges and universities access to underserved students' names free of charge. Twenty-seven colleges and universities in New York acquired 316,186 students' names using "Get Your Name in the Game."

- ACT issued 16,012 ACT fee waivers to qualified New York students. However, 4,638 students (29 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 656,061 issued nationally, of which 181,092 (28 percent) did not take advantage. This represents a great opportunity for high schools within the state to increase the socio-economic diversity of their students tested. Note: This is the number of fee waivers issued for the state, not specific to this graduating class.

## Pipeline

- In the New York graduating class of 2017, 5,706 (9 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In the New York graduating class of 2017, 15,920 (25 percent) aspired to attain a professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 25.7.
- In the New York graduating class of 2017, 15,305 (24 percent) aspired to attain a graduate degree. They had an average Composite score of 25.2.
- In the New York graduating class of 2017, 21,082 (33 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.4.
- In the New York graduating class of 2017, 433 (1 percent) aspired to attain an associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 18.7.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2017 New York graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Biology, General; Business Administration and Management, General; and Nursing, Registered (BS/RN).
  - ~ In the New York graduating class of 2017, 13,771 (22 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 24.8.
  - ~ In the New York graduating class of 2017, 2,466 (4 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 21.9.

## ACT Footprint

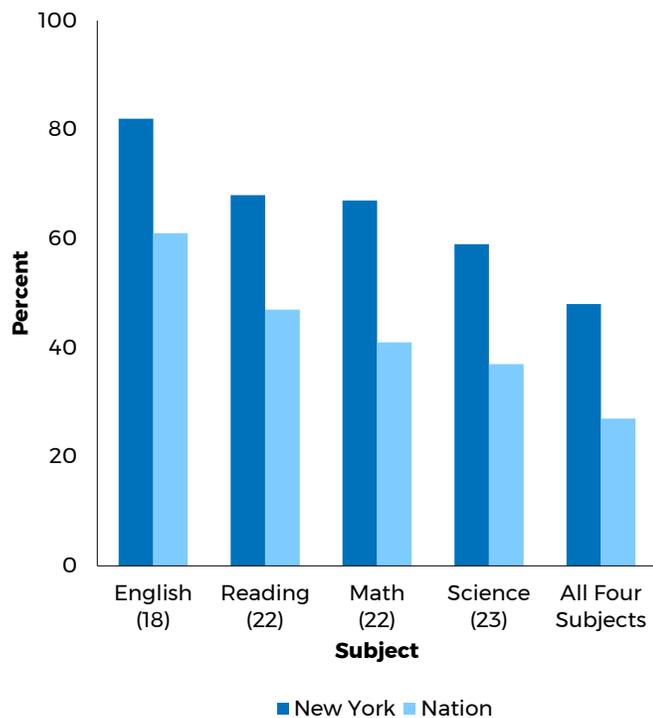
- Number of administrations:
  - ~ ACT Aspire® Summative: 1,934
  - ~ ACT Engage®: 1,423
  - ~ PreACT®: 10,512
  - ~ ACT WorkKeys: 4,295

## Additional Points

- The ACT NCRC can be used as an alternative graduation pathway with the New York State Education Department Career Development Occupational Studies Graduation Pathway Option.
- ACT will host eight ACT College and Career Readiness Workshops this fall in New York. The theme for this year's workshop is "Preparing Students for Success: A Holistic Approach."
- In the 2017 New York graduating class, 203 students earned a 36 Composite score on the ACT. This compares to 128 students in 2016.

# New York College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

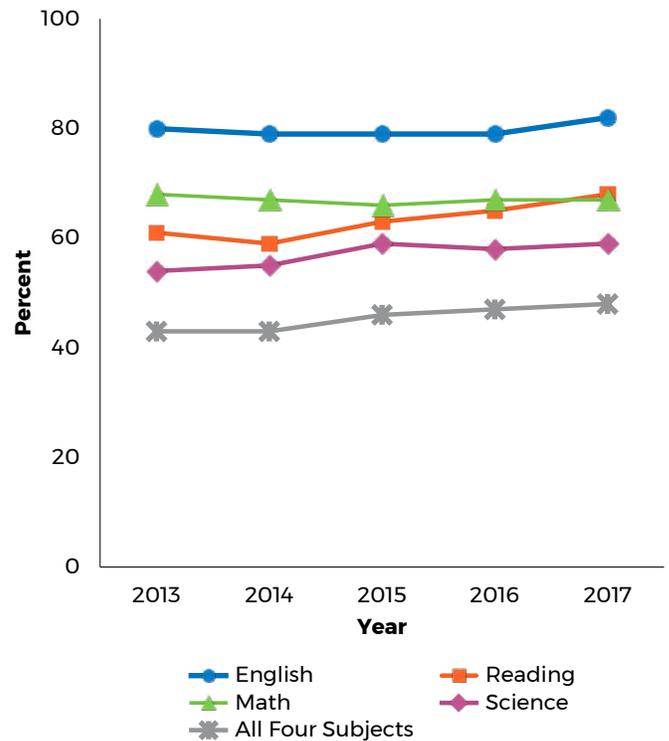
Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks\* by Subject



Data from graph above:

State / Nation	English (18)	Reading (22)	Math (22)	Science (23)	All Four
New York	82	68	67	59	48
Nation	61	47	41	37	27

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

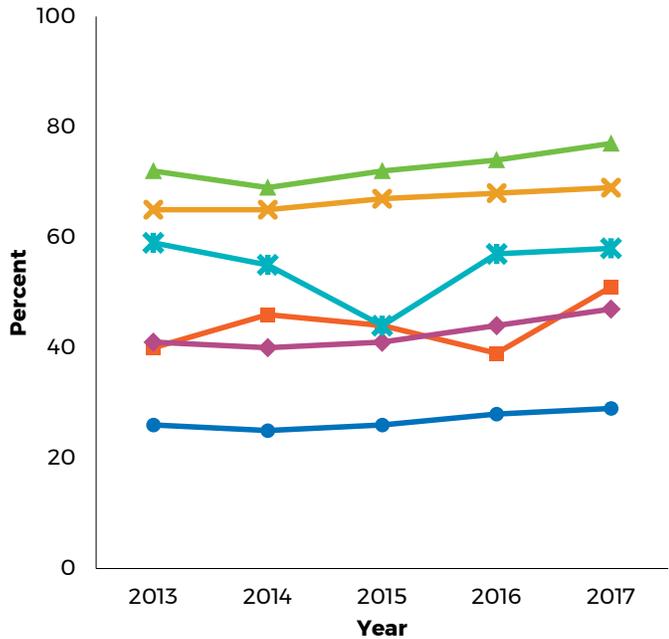


Data from graph above:

Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
English	80	79	79	79	82
Reading	61	59	63	65	68
Math	68	67	66	67	67
Science	54	55	59	58	59
All Four Subjects	43	43	46	47	48

\* 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\***



● African American  
■ American Indian  
▲ Asian American  
◆ Hispanic  
✱ Pacific Islander  
✕ White

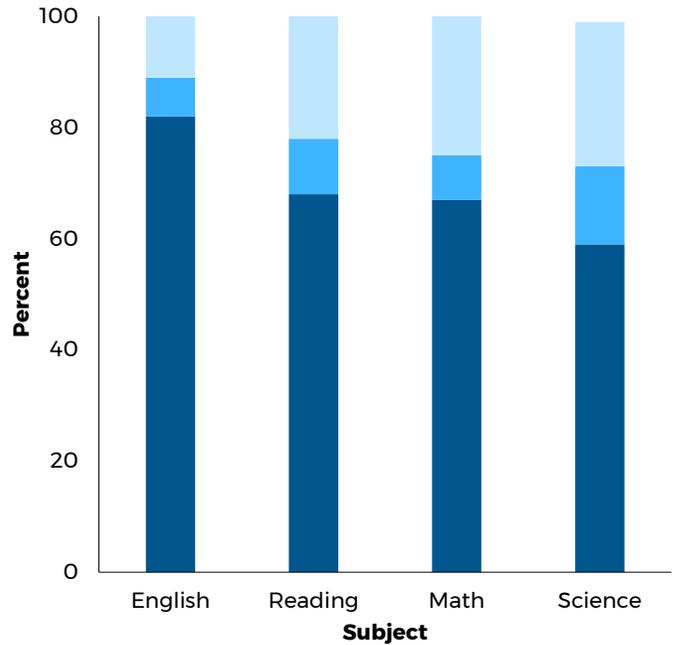
Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	26	25	26	28	29
American Indian	40	46	44	39	51
Asian American	72	69	72	74	77
Hispanic	41	40	41	44	47
Pacific Islander	59	55	44	57	58
White	65	65	67	68	69

\* 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.

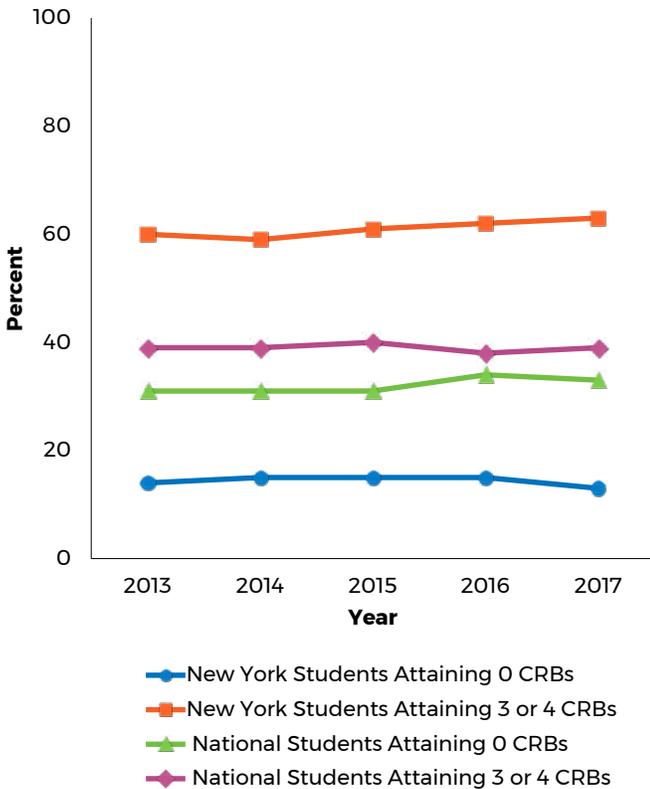


■ Met Benchmark  
■ Within 2 Points of Benchmark  
■ Below Benchmark by 3+ Points

Data from graph above:

Attainment	English	Reading	Math	Science
Met Benchmark	82	68	67	59
Within 2 Points of Benchmark	7	10	8	14
Below Benchmark by 3+ Points	11	22	26	26

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

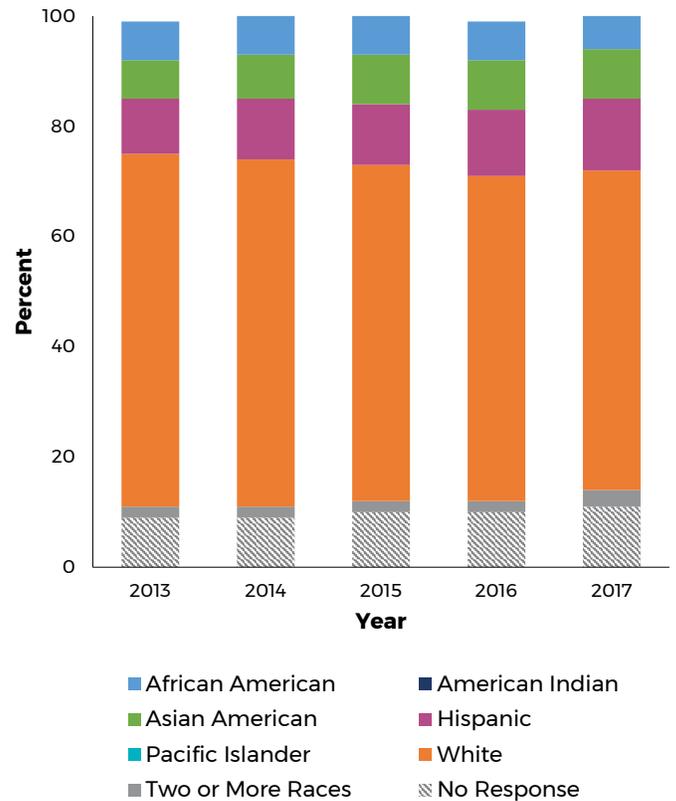


Data from graph above:

Attainment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
New York Students Attaining 0 CRBs	14	15	15	15	13
New York Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	60	59	61	62	63
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	7	7	7	7	7
American Indian	0	0	0	0	0
Asian American	7	8	9	9	9
Hispanic	10	11	11	12	13
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
White	64	63	61	59	58
Two or More Races	2	2	2	2	3
No Response	9	9	10	10	11

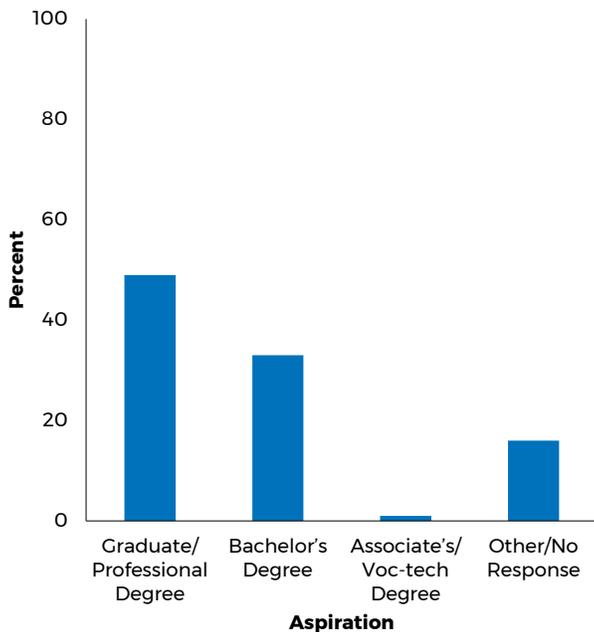
**New York:** Between 2013 and 2017, the number of students taking the ACT in New York increased by 10,035 students (19 percent).

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

Outcome	Cohort	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent Tested	New York	26	27	28	29	31
	Nation	54	57	59	64	60
N Tested	New York	53,287	54,496	58,136	60,628	63,322
	Nation	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038
Average English Score	New York	22.6	22.7	23.0	23.2	23.8
	Nation	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3
Average Reading Score	New York	23.7	23.6	23.9	24.4	24.6
	Nation	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4
Average Math Score	New York	23.8	23.8	23.8	23.9	24.0
	Nation	20.9	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7
Average Science Score	New York	23.1	23.2	23.5	23.7	23.9
	Nation	20.7	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0
Average Composite Score	New York	23.4	23.4	23.7	23.9	24.2
	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 84% of New York's 2017 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 83% of New York's 2016 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 85% who actually did enroll. A positive note is that more 2016 New York ACT-tested graduates enrolled in postsecondary education than initially aspired to do so.

*Data from graph*

Aspiration	Percent
Graduate / Professional Degree	49
Bachelor's Degree	33
Associate's / Voc-tech Degree	1
Other / No Response	16



## National Student Exemplar 2017 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign

### Jayne Hanna, Alaska

Nuniarmiut School, Lower Kuskokwim School District

*“Living in an isolated Alaskan village with only 11 high school students, I have faced many obstacles in my pursuit of success. Our area has few opportunities and a relatively low interest in academics.”*

Jayne has not let her isolation affect her drive for learning. She participated in her robotics team via Skype and bush plane, played the sports available at her school, and took college classes online when those offered at her high school were not challenging enough.

She has been taking dual enrollment classes since her sophomore year of high school, so she will enter Biola University in California with a substantial number of college credits. This will allow her to get her BA and MA in education earlier and return to Alaska to teach Alaskan Natives like herself in rural communities, showing through her own example what success can look like.

## Information and products for further review

	Knowledge & Skills	Social & Emotional
<b>Assessments</b>	ACT Aspire®	ACT Tessera™
	PreACT®	ACT Engage®
	The ACT® Test	
	ACT WorkKeys®	
<b>Research</b>	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™	
<b>Resources</b>	PLDs Learning Description Review	Tessera Teacher Playbook
	Curriculum Review Worksheets	
	OpenEd Learning Resources	
	Test Prep	
<b>Training</b>	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](http://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](http://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.