

# The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2018

## New Jersey Key Findings

### Performance

- In the 2018 New Jersey graduating class, 32,590 graduates (31 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 23.7. This compares to 26,182 (25 percent) with an average of 23.1 in 2014. Nationally, 55% of 2018 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.8.
  - ~ There were 2,998 African American graduates from New Jersey who took the ACT (9 percent) with an average Composite score of 18.3. This compares to 3,090 (9 percent) with an average of 18.4, and 2,666 (10 percent) with an average of 17.5, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
  - ~ There were 16,960 White graduates from New Jersey who took the ACT (52 percent) with an average Composite score of 24.8. This compares to 19,506 (55 percent) with an average of 24.7, and 15,125 (58 percent) with an average of 24.1, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
  - ~ There were 4,650 Hispanic graduates from New Jersey who took the ACT (14 percent) with an average Composite score of 20.5. This compares to 4,668 (13 percent) with an average of 21.2, and 3,072 (12 percent) with an average of 20.5, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
  - ~ There were 3,241 Asian graduates from New Jersey who took the ACT (10 percent) with an average Composite score of 27.5. This compares to 3,485 (10 percent) with an average of 27.0, and 2,147 (8 percent) with an average of 26.4, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
- The 2018 New Jersey graduating class average English score was 23.8. This compares to 23.8 and 22.8 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- The 2018 New Jersey graduating class average math score was 23.6. This compares to 23.8 and 23.7 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- The 2018 New Jersey graduating class average reading score was 24.0. This compares to 24.1 and 23.1 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- The 2018 New Jersey graduating class average science score was 23.0. This compares to 23.2 and 22.4 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- In 2018, 44 percent of New Jersey graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 45 and 40 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
  - ~ In 2018, 18 percent of New Jersey graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 16 and 18 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
  - ~ In 2018, 79 percent of New Jersey graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 80 and 77 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
    - 2018 New Jersey graduates taking more advanced English coursework demonstrated markedly higher average English scores than those who did not. In fact, 81 percent of New Jersey 2018 graduates taking four or more years of English met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 46 percent of students taking less than four years of English meeting the benchmark.

- ~ In 2018, 62 percent of New Jersey graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 64 and 64 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
  - 2018 New Jersey graduates taking more advanced math coursework demonstrated markedly higher average math scores than those who did not. In fact, 64 percent of New Jersey 2018 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 17 percent of students taking less than three years of math meeting the benchmark.
- ~ In 2018, 53 percent of New Jersey graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 54 and 50 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
  - 2018 New Jersey graduates taking more advanced science coursework demonstrated markedly higher average science scores than those who did not. In fact, 56 percent of New Jersey 2018 graduates taking three or more years of science met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 24 percent of students taking less than three years of science meeting the benchmark.
- In 2018, 19,101 (59 percent) of New Jersey graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 21,105 and 14,738 (60 and 56 percent) out of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively. For reference, the national percentage of 2018 graduates meeting three or four benchmarks was 38%.
- 64 percent of 2018 New Jersey graduates were Proficient or Above Proficient in understanding complex texts.

## STEM

- In 2018, 15,323 New Jersey graduates (47 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
  - ~ Nationally, 45 percent of graduates indicated having an interest in STEM.
- Compared to a 2018 New Jersey graduating class average ACT STEM score of 23.5, graduates in 2017 and 2014 had STEM averages of 23.8 and 23.3, respectively.
- Compared to 37 percent of 2018 New Jersey graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2017 and 2014 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 38 and 34, respectively.
- In 2018, 24,438 New Jersey graduates (75 percent) indicated taking physics. This compares to 76 and 77 percent for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
  - ~ 2018 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 24.1, compared to 19.6 for students not taking physics.
- In 2018, 30,253 New Jersey graduates (93 percent) indicated taking three or more years of math. This compares to 96 and 97 percent for 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
  - ~ 2018 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 23.9, compared to 17.3 for students taking less than three years of math.
  - ~ 64 percent of 2018 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark, compared to 17 percent for students taking less than three years of math.

## Career Readiness

- In 2018, 14,658 New Jersey graduates (45 percent) were likely to attain the Gold ACT WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate® or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 499,653 (26 percent) nationally.
  - ~ The ACT Composite scores associated with a 50% chance of earning each 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.”

## Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2018 ACT-tested New Jersey high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2018 graduating class would result in:
  - ~ 67 more students enrolling in college.
  - ~ 78 more students persisting to year two.
  - ~ 45 fewer students needing remedial English.
  - ~ 74 fewer students needing remedial math.
  - ~ 90 more students persisting to year four.
  - ~ 98 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

## Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In New Jersey, 14,768 of the 2018 graduates (45.3%) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.3, compared to an average of 22.5 for 17,822 of the 2018 graduates (54.7%) who took the ACT only once.
  - ~ Nationwide, 847,940 of the 2018 graduates (44.3%) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 22.7, compared to an average of 19.3 for 1,066,877 of the 2018 graduates (55.7%) who took the ACT only once.
- 27,905 score reports were sent to colleges by 2018 New Jersey ACT-tested graduates.
  - ~ 9,076 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2018 New Jersey ACT-tested graduates.
  - ~ For New Jersey's 2018 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Rutgers - The State University of New Jersey, Montclair State University, Rowan University, Kean University, and the College of New Jersey.
  - ~ For New Jersey's 2018 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were Penn State-University Park Campus, University of Delaware, and New York University.
- Compared to 68 percent of 2018 graduates nationally, 64 percent of New Jersey 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.
- In the 2017-2018 academic year, ACT issued 4,900 ACT fee waivers to qualified New Jersey students. However, 1,423 students (29.0 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 542,506 waivers issued nationally, of which 152,227 (28.1 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. Note: this is the number of fee waivers issued for the state, not specific to this graduating class.

## Pipeline

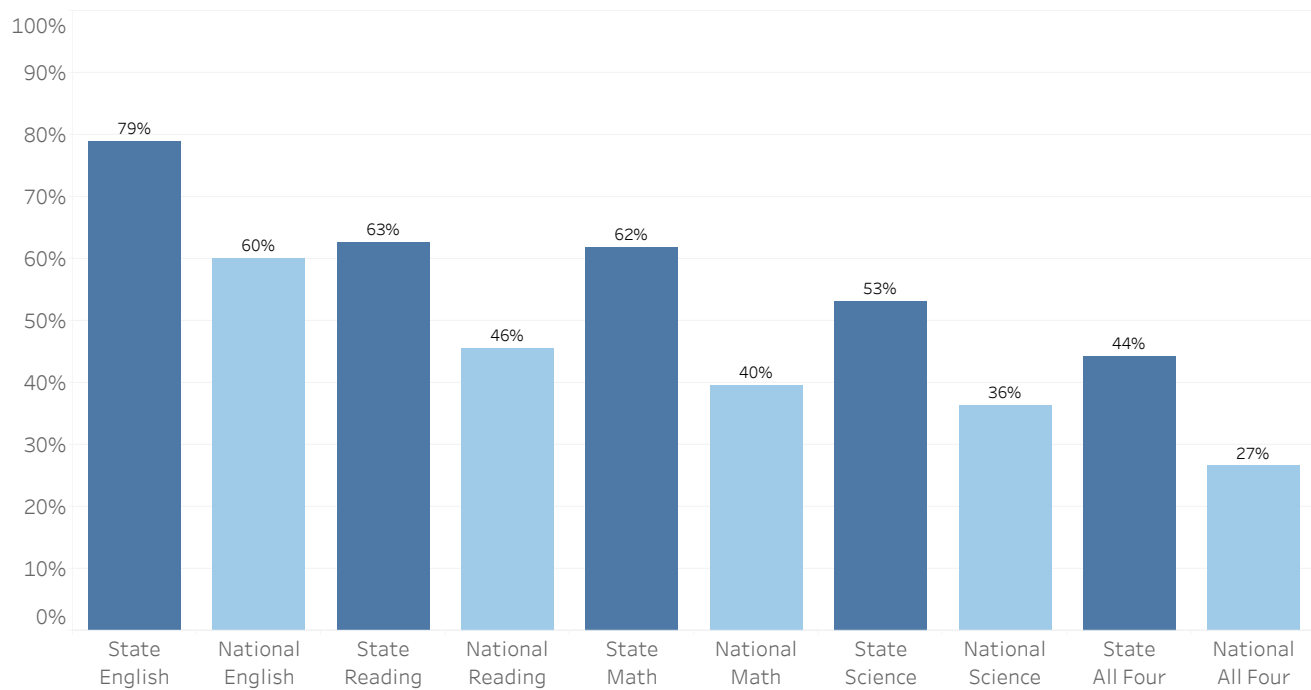
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
  - ~ 15,681 students (48 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 25.5.
- In the New Jersey graduating class of 2018, 2,988 students (9 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2018 New Jersey graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; Biology, General; and Nursing, Registered (BS/RN).
  - ~ In the New Jersey graduating class of 2018, 1,012 (3 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 21.0.

## Additional Points

- According to the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the fastest-growing careers in New Jersey requiring education beyond high school are: Home Health and Personal Care Aides, Software Developers, Computer Systems Analysts and Medical Assistants.
- The ACT College and Career Readiness Champions are individuals across the country who support ACT's mission of education and workplace success. Congratulations to New Jersey Champion Anthony Avila (High School Senior).
- ACT is offering College and Career Readiness Workshops in New Jersey in October 2018.

# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks\* by Subject



Data From Graph Above

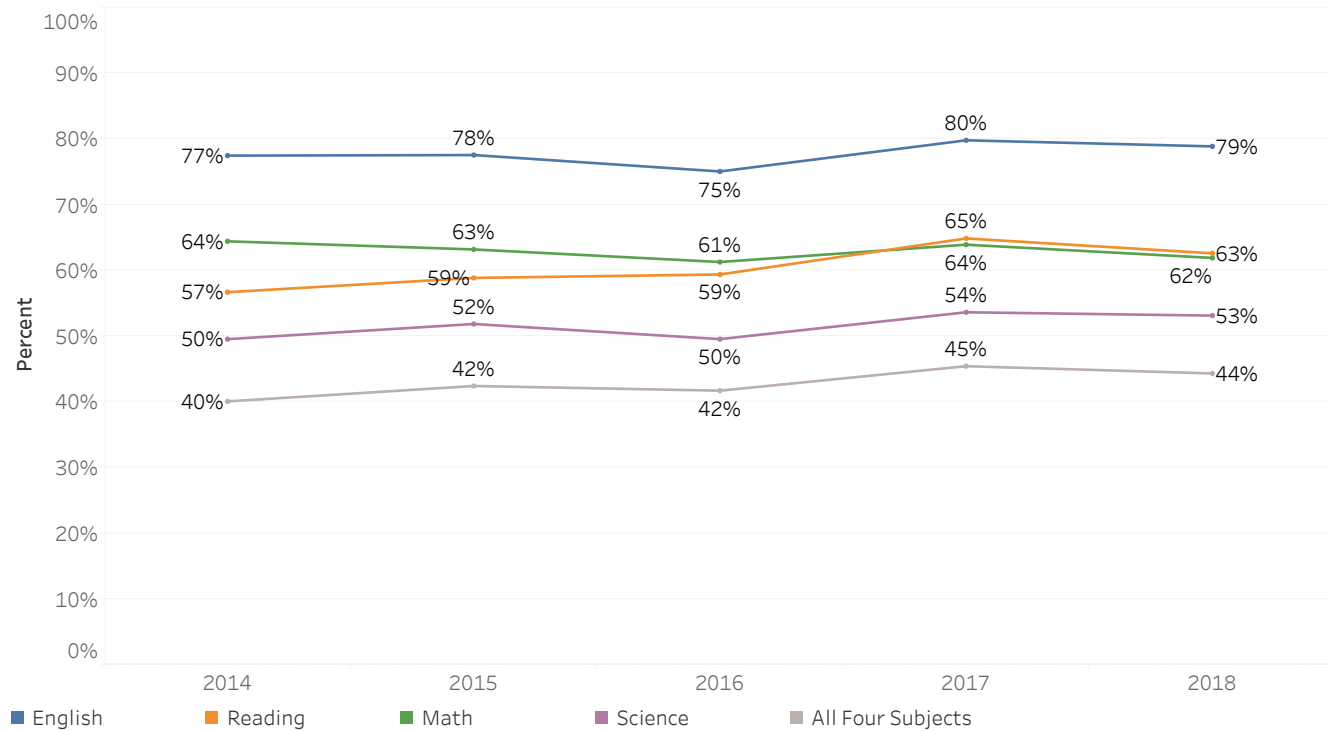
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
79%	60%	63%	46%	62%	40%	53%	36%	44%	27%

\* 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.

# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2014–2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks\*



## Data From Graph Above

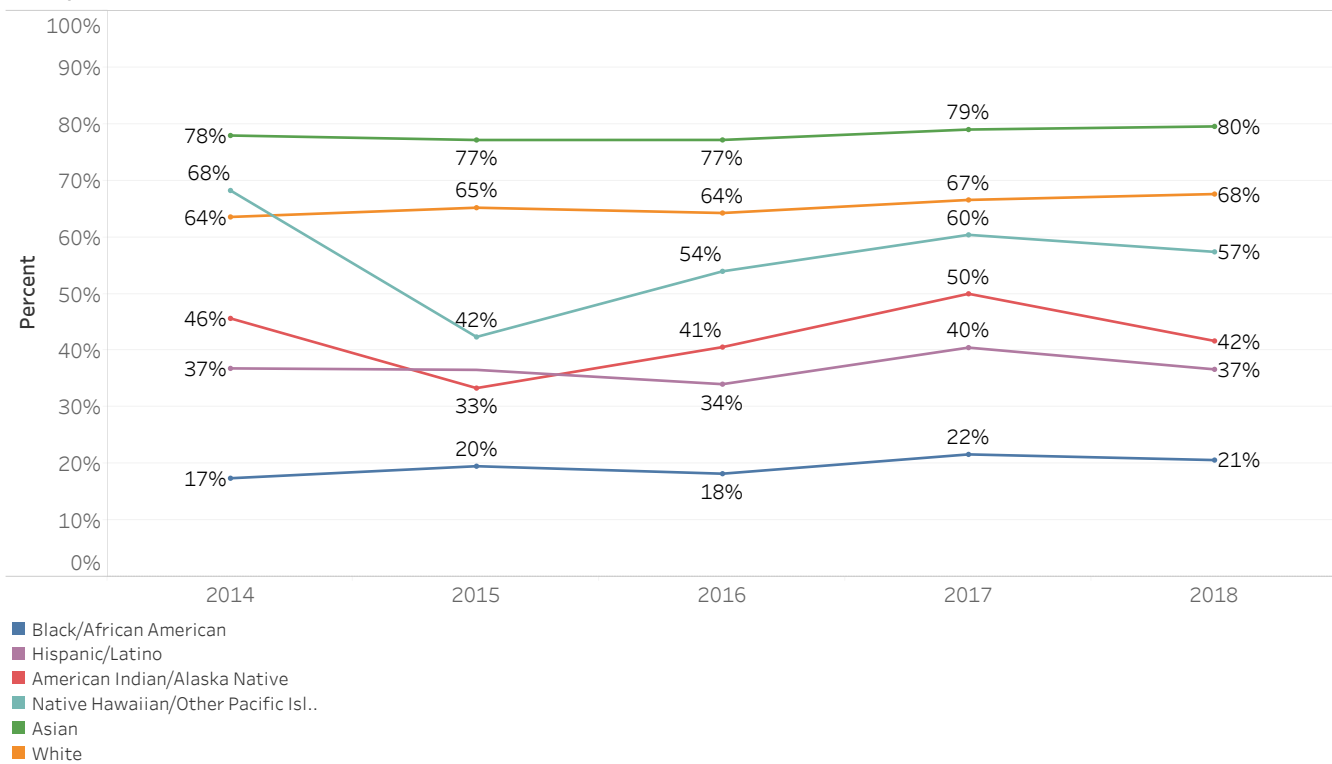
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2014	77%	57%	64%	50%	40%
2015	78%	59%	63%	52%	42%
2016	75%	59%	61%	50%	42%
2017	80%	65%	64%	54%	45%
2018	79%	63%	62%	53%	44%

\* 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.

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# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

## Percent of 2014-2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity



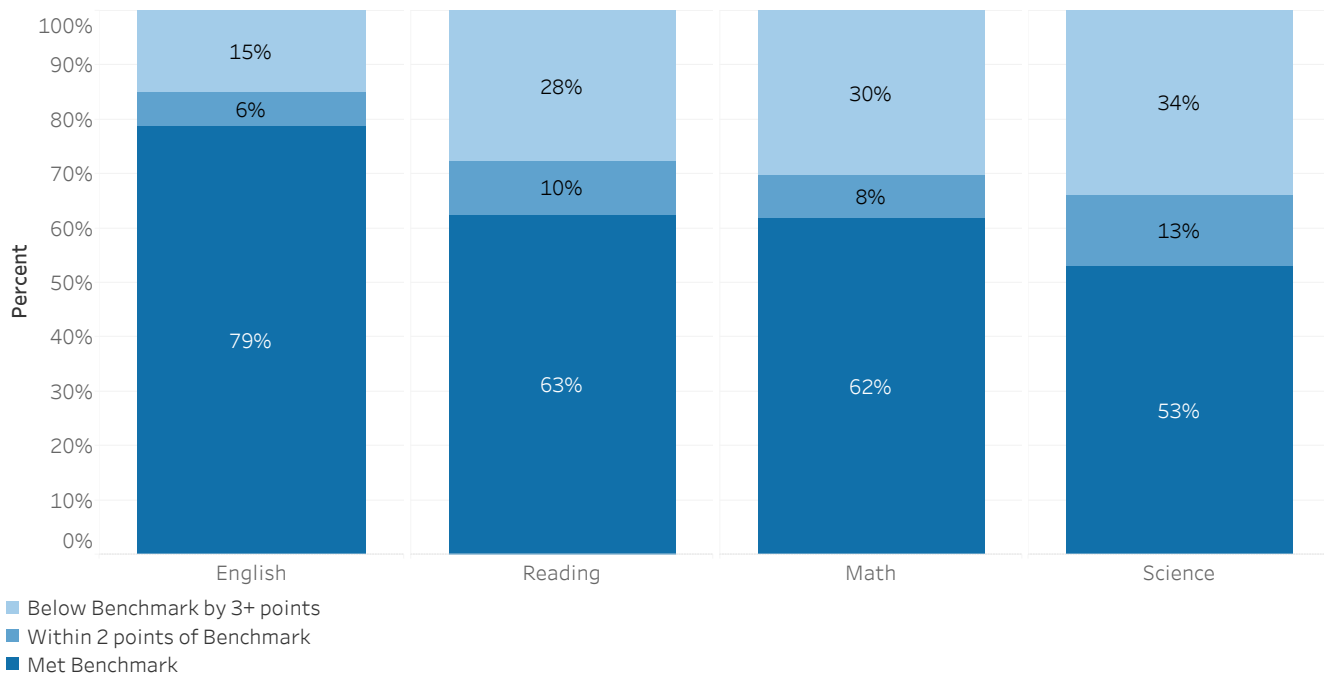
### Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2014	17%	37%	46%	68%	78%	64%
2015	20%	37%	33%	42%	77%	65%
2016	18%	34%	41%	54%	77%	64%
2017	22%	40%	50%	60%	79%	67%
2018	21%	37%	42%	57%	80%	68%

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# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



## Data From Graph Above

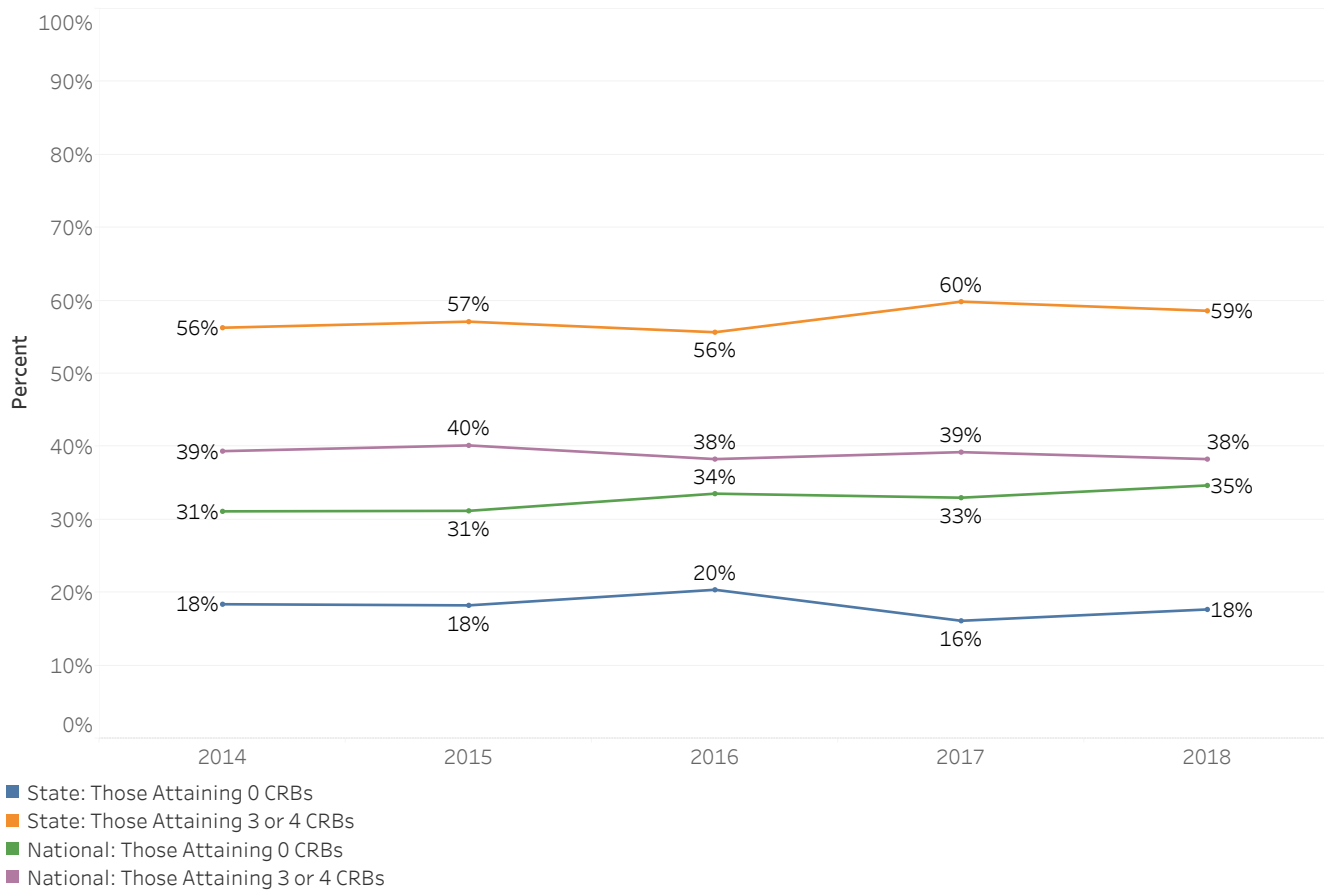
	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	15%	6%	79%
Math	30%	8%	62%
Reading	28%	10%	63%
Science	34%	13%	53%

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# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2014–2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks\*



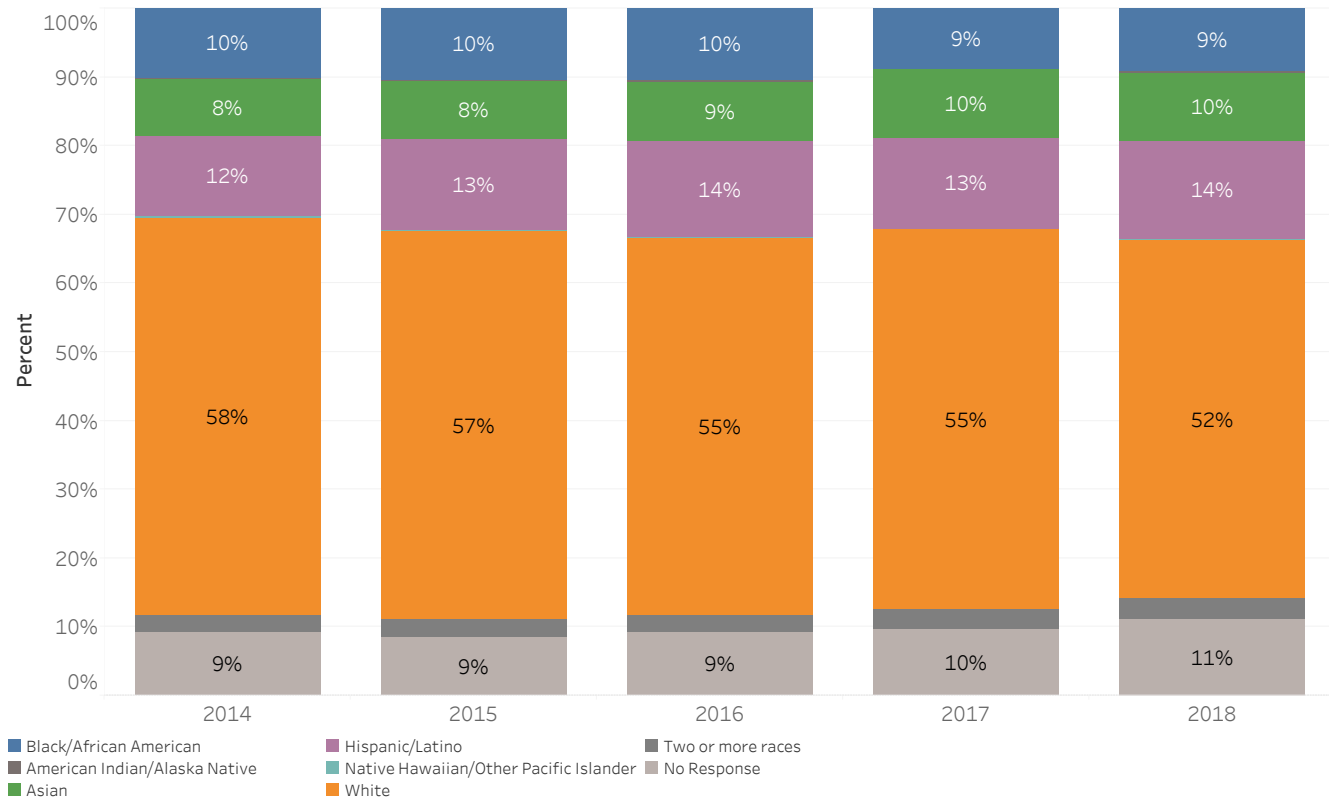
## Data from Graph Above

	State: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	State: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs
2014	18%	56%	31%	39%
2015	18%	57%	31%	40%
2016	20%	56%	34%	38%
2017	16%	60%	33%	39%
2018	18%	59%	35%	38%

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# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

## Percent of 2014-2018 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
2014	10%	0%	8%	12%	0%	58%	3%	9%
2015	10%	0%	8%	13%	0%	57%	3%	9%
2016	10%	0%	9%	14%	0%	55%	3%	9%
2017	9%	0%	10%	13%	0%	55%	3%	10%
2018	9%	0%	10%	14%	0%	52%	3%	11%

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# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

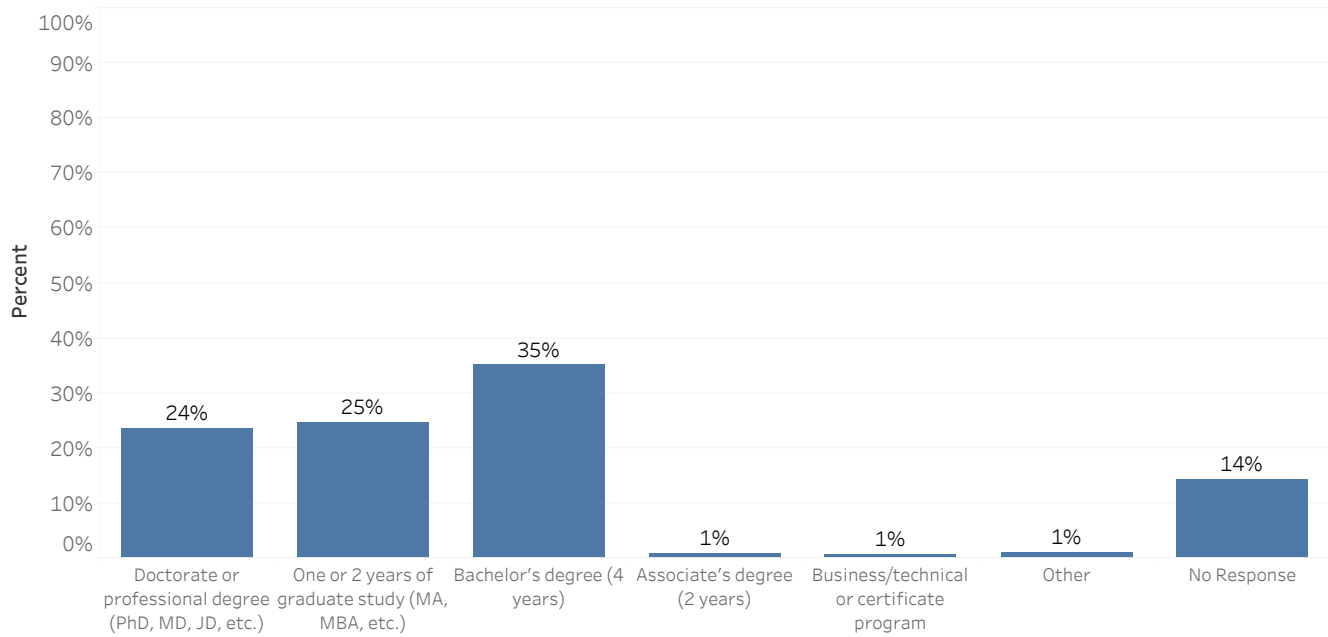
## Student Data Trends: 2014-2018, State vs. Nation

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
State N-count	26,182	30,263	33,646	35,257	32,590
National N-count	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817
Average ACT English Score - State	22.8	22.9	22.7	23.8	23.8
Average ACT English Score - National	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2
Average ACT Reading Score - State	23.1	23.3	23.5	24.1	24.0
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3
Average ACT Math Score - State	23.7	23.7	23.3	23.8	23.6
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5
Average ACT Science Score - State	22.4	22.6	22.5	23.2	23.0
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7
Average ACT Composite Score - State	23.1	23.2	23.1	23.9	23.7
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8

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# NEW JERSEY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations



## Data From Graph Above

	% of Graduates
Doctorate or professional degree (PhD, MD, JD, etc.)	24%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	25%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	35%
Associate's degree (2 years)	1%
Business/technical or certificate program	1%
Other	1%
No Response	14%

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