

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

District of Columbia Key Findings

Performance

- In the District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 1,723 graduates took the ACT® test, compared to 1,647 in 2013.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia, 32 percent of 2017 graduates took the ACT, compared to 60 percent nationally.
 - ~ In 2017, 18 percent of District of Columbia graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 15 and 11 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
- District of Columbia graduates of 2017 had an average Composite score of 24.2, compared to the national average of 21.0.
- Compared to the 2017 District of Columbia graduating class Composite average of 24.2, District of Columbia graduates in 2016 and 2013 had Composite averages of 22.2 and 20.4, respectively.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 District of Columbia graduating class English average of 24.4, District of Columbia graduates in 2016 and 2013 had English averages of 21.8 and 19.8, respectively.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 District of Columbia graduating class math average of 23.5, District of Columbia graduates in 2016 and 2013 had math averages of 21.8 and 20.5, respectively.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 District of Columbia graduating class reading average of 24.9, District of Columbia graduates in 2016 and 2013 had reading averages of 22.8 and 21.0, respectively.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 District of Columbia graduating class science average of 23.5, District of Columbia graduates in 2016 and 2013 had science averages of 21.7 and 19.7, respectively.
- In 2017, 48 percent of District of Columbia graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 38 and 29 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.

STEM

- In 2017, 603 District of Columbia graduates (35 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
 - ~ Students with an interest in STEM continue to show higher levels of college readiness than ACT-tested students as a whole.
- Compared to a 2017 District of Columbia graduating class STEM average of 23.7, graduates in 2016 and 2013 had STEM averages of 22.0 and 20.4, respectively.

Career Readiness

- In 2017, 862 District of Columbia graduates (50 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 District of Columbia 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:
 - ~ 3 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 4 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 2 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 4 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 4 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 5 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In the District of Columbia, 2017 graduates taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.8, compared to 22.6 for single-time testers.
- Of the District of Columbia's 2017 graduating class, there were 554 (32 percent) African American students taking the ACT. This compares to 256,756 (13 percent) nationally.
- Of the District of Columbia's 2017 graduating class, there were 550 (32 percent) White students taking the ACT. This compares to 1,062,439 (52 percent) nationally.
- Of the District of Columbia's 2017 graduating class, there were 173 (10 percent) Hispanic students taking the ACT. This compares to 347,906 (17 percent) nationally.
- Of the District of Columbia's 2017 graduating class, there were 44 (3 percent) Asian students taking the ACT. This compares to 96,097 (5 percent) nationally.
- For the District of Columbia's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were University Of Maryland-College Park, University Of Virginia, Gallaudet University, Virginia Tech, and Delaware State University.
 - ~ For the District of Columbia's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were University Of Maryland-College Park, University Of Virginia, and Virginia Tech.
- Compared to 73 percent of 2017 graduates nationally, 55 percent of District of Columbia graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 85 percent of African American students nationally, 81 percent of District of Columbia African American 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 76 percent of American Indian students nationally, 100 percent of District of Columbia American Indian 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 69 percent of White students nationally, 43 percent of District of Columbia White 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 83 percent of Hispanic students nationally, 67 percent of District of Columbia Hispanic 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. In the District of Columbia, 78,441 students' names were released through "Get Your Name in the Game."

- ACT issued 912 ACT fee waivers to qualified District of Columbia students. However, 374 students (41 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 District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 104 (6 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 403 (23 percent) aspired to attain a professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 26.7.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 354 (21 percent) aspired to attain a graduate degree. They had an average Composite score of 26.8.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 359 (21 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 21.5.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2017 District of Columbia graduates were: Undecided; Business Administration and Management, General; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Biology, General; and Computer Science and Programming.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 569 (33 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 24.4.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia graduating class of 2017, 15 (1 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 22.8.

ACT Footprint

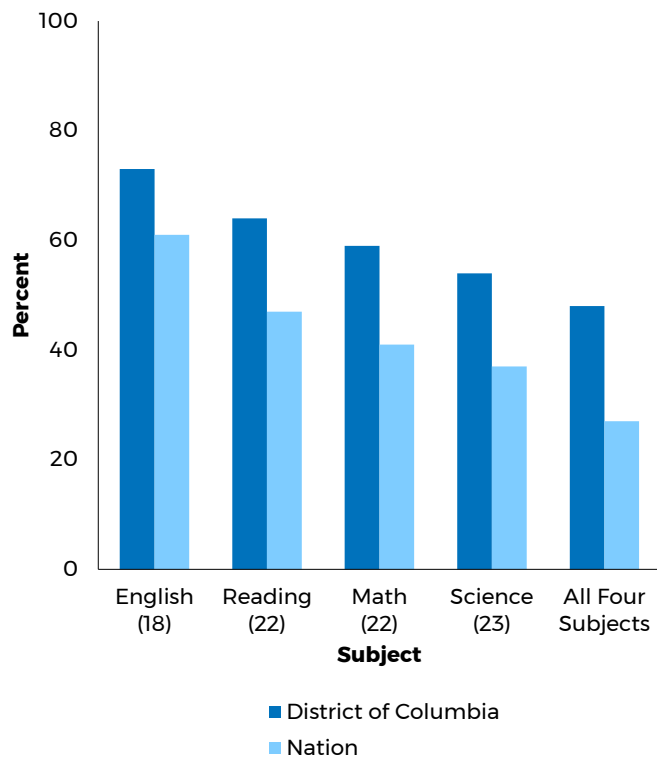
- Number of administrations:
 - ~ ACT Aspire® Summative: 729 assessments administered in the 2016-2017 school year.
 - ~ ACT Aspire Periodic: 1,937 assessments were administered in the 2016-17 school year.
 - ~
 - ~ PreACT®: 89 assessments were administered in the 2016-2017 school year.
 - ~ ACT WorkKeys: 151 assessments were administered in 2016-17.

Additional Points

- According to the US Department of Labor, the top five emerging professions in the District of Columbia are: Home Health Aide, Personal Care Aide, Occupational Therapist, Personal Financial Advisors, and Interpreters and Translators.
- More STEM Detail:
 - ~ For the years 2013 and 2017, District of Columbia graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had average math scores of 29.6 and 30.1, respectively.
 - ~ In the District of Columbia, 62 percent of 2017 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark, compared to 15 percent for students taking less than three years of math.

District of Columbia College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

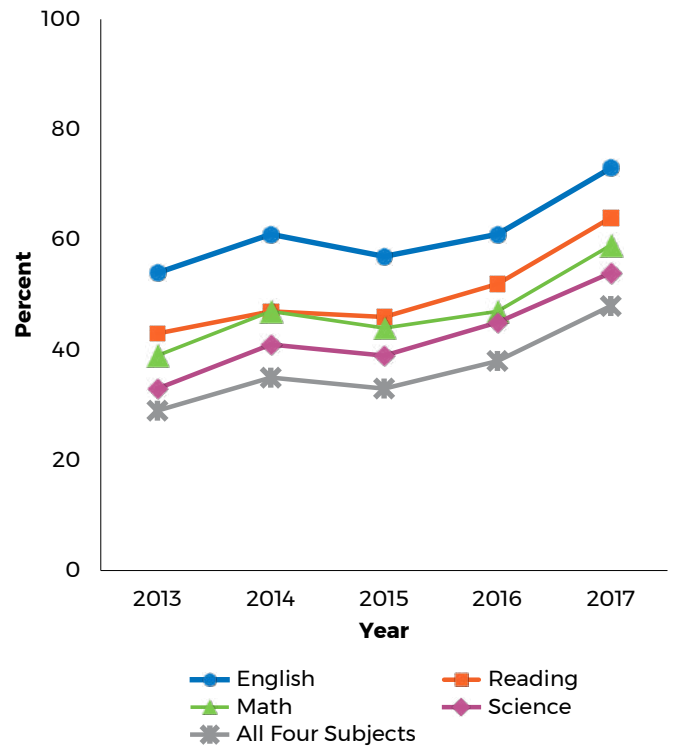
Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data from graph above:

State / Nation	English (18)	Reading (22)	Math (22)	Science (23)	All Four
District of Columbia	73	64	59	54	48
Nation	61	47	41	37	27

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

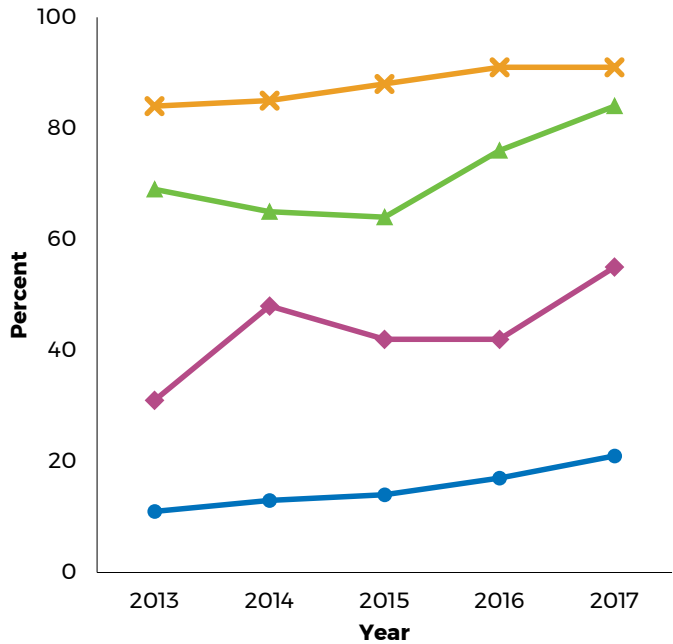


Data from graph above:

Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
English	54	61	57	61	73
Reading	43	47	46	52	64
Math	39	47	44	47	59
Science	33	41	39	45	54
All Four Subjects	29	35	33	38	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

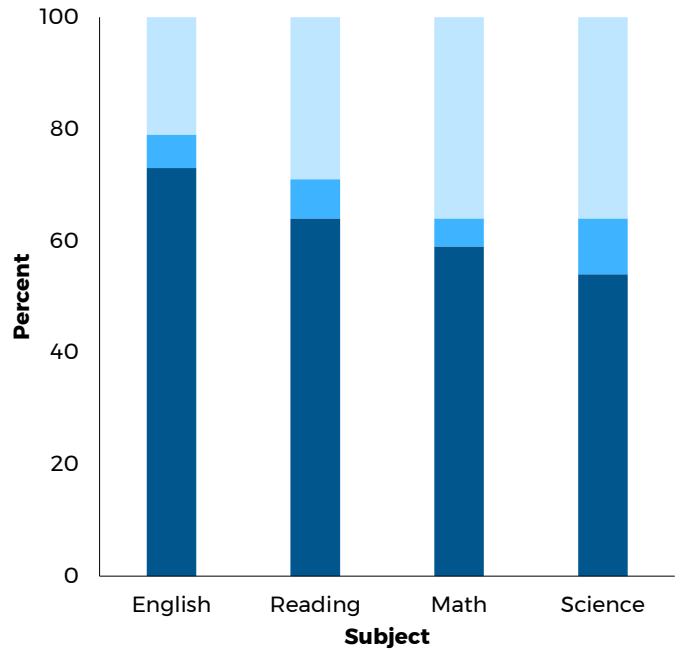
Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	11	13	14	17	21
American Indian					
Asian American	69	65	64	76	84
Hispanic	31	48	42	42	55
Pacific Islander					
White	84	85	88	91	91

* 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.

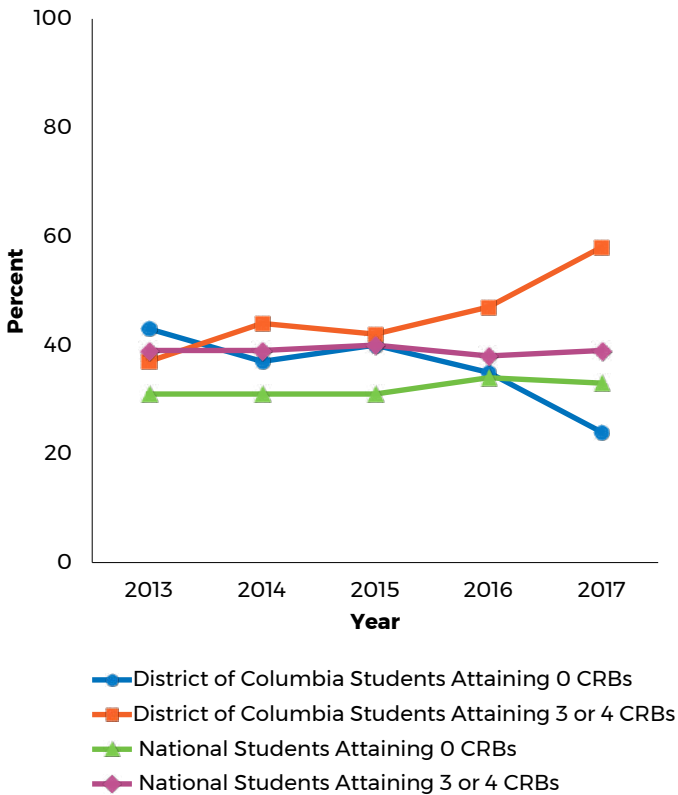


- Met Benchmark
- Within 2 Points of Benchmark
- Below Benchmark by 3+ Points

Data from graph above:

Attainment	English	Reading	Math	Science
Met Benchmark	73	64	59	54
Within 2 Points of Benchmark	6	7	5	10
Below Benchmark by 3+ Points	21	29	36	36

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

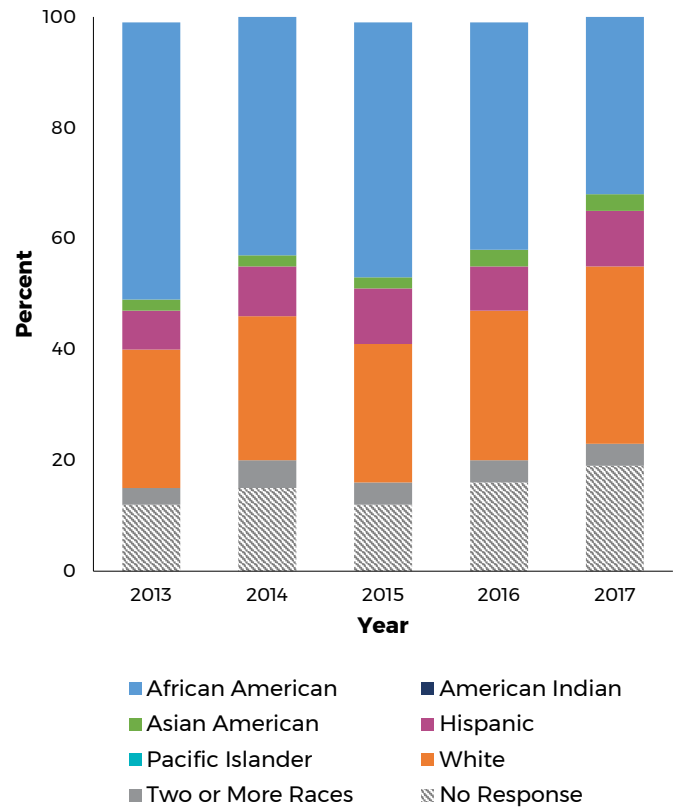


Data from graph above:

Attainment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
District of Columbia Students Attaining 0 CRBs	43	37	40	35	24
District of Columbia Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	37	44	42	47	58
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	50	43	46	41	32
American Indian	0	0	0	0	0
Asian American	2	2	2	3	3
Hispanic	7	9	10	8	10
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
White	25	26	25	27	32
Two or More Races	3	5	4	4	4
No Response	12	15	12	16	19

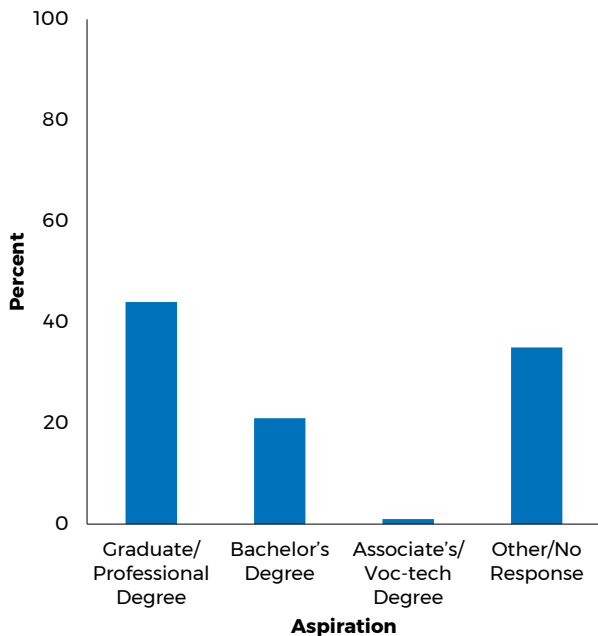
District of Columbia: Between 2013 and 2017, the number of students taking the ACT in District of Columbia increased by 76 students (5 percent).

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

Outcome	Cohort	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent Tested	District of Columbia	38	37	42	44	32
	Nation	54	57	59	64	60
N Tested	District of Columbia	1,647	1,492	1,602	1,692	1,723
	Nation	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038
Average English Score	District of Columbia	19.8	21.2	20.5	21.8	24.4
	Nation	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3
Average Reading Score	District of Columbia	21.0	22.0	21.5	22.8	24.9
	Nation	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4
Average Math Score	District of Columbia	20.5	21.5	21.1	21.8	23.5
	Nation	20.9	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7
Average Science Score	District of Columbia	19.7	21.1	20.7	21.7	23.5
	Nation	20.7	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0
Average Composite Score	District of Columbia	20.4	21.6	21.1	22.2	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 65% of District of Columbia's 2017 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 68% of District of Columbia's 2016 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 73% who actually did enroll. A positive note is that more 2016 District of Columbia ACT-tested graduates enrolled in postsecondary education than initially aspired to do so.

Data from graph

Aspiration	Percent
Graduate / Professional Degree	44
Bachelor's Degree	21
Associate's / Voc-tech Degree	1
Other / No Response	35



District of Columbia Exemplar 2017 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign

Dominique Landinez

Woodrow Wilson High, District of Columbia Public Schools

“Seeing my entire life crammed into brown cardboard boxes has taught me something about success. It has taught me to be tough and to always carry optimism and hope. It has taught me that hardship will approach people, challenging the strongest of them at one point in their lives.”

Dominique is the student president of her school’s Science, Mathematics, and Technology Academy, working to interest other students in areas ranging from aerospace engineering to marine science. Her family’s struggles with homelessness have only led her to focus even more on her goals.

With interests in medicine, research, and public health policy, Dominique is not yet exactly sure where her path will lead, but she plans to earn her bachelor’s degree in public health or another science field before attending medical school.

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.