

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

Kansas Key Findings

Performance

- In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 24,741 graduates took the ACT® test, compared to 24,268 in 2013.
 - ~ In Kansas, 73 percent of 2017 graduates took the ACT, compared to 60 percent nationally.
- Kansas graduates of 2017 had an average Composite score of 21.7, compared to the national average of 21.0.
 - ~ In 2016 and 2013, graduates had ACT Composite scores of 21.9 and 21.8, respectively.
- Graduates meeting benchmarks:
 - ~ In 2017, 44 percent of Kansas graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 46 and 46 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 25 percent of Kansas graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 24 and 22 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
- Impact of rigorous coursework:
 - ~ 71 percent of Kansas 2017 graduates taking four or more years of English met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 48 percent of students taking less than four years of English.
 - ~ 49 percent of Kansas 2017 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 11 percent of students taking less than three years of math.
 - ~ 56 percent of Kansas 2017 graduates taking three or more years of social studies met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 39 percent of students taking less than three years of social studies.
 - ~ 45 percent of Kansas 2017 graduates taking three or more years of science met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 21 percent of students taking less than three years of science.

STEM

- In 2017, 12,226 Kansas graduates (49 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
- For the years 2013 and 2017, Kansas graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had average science scores of 28.0 and 28.5, respectively; and average math scores of 28.3 and 28.2, respectively.

Career Readiness

- In 2017, 7,014 Kansas graduates (28 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 Kansas 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:
 - ~ 49 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 59 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 45 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 83 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 69 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 77 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Kansas, 2017 graduates taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 23.1, compared to 19.5 for single-time testers.
- Of Kansas's 2017 graduating class, there were 1,251 (5 percent) African American students taking the ACT. This compares to 256,756 (13 percent) nationally.
- Of Kansas's 2017 graduating class, there were 16,801 (68 percent) White students taking the ACT. This compares to 1,062,439 (52 percent) nationally.
- Of Kansas's 2017 graduating class, there were 3,341 (14 percent) Hispanic students taking the ACT. This compares to 347,906 (17 percent) nationally.
- Of Kansas's 2017 graduating class, there were 792 (3 percent) Asian students taking the ACT. This compares to 96,097 (5 percent) nationally.
- Of Kansas's 2017 graduating class, there were 149 (1 percent) American Indian students taking the ACT. This compares to 16,135 (1 percent) nationally.
- For Kansas's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Kansas State University, University of Kansas, Wichita State University, Emporia State University, and Pittsburg State University.
 - ~ For Kansas's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were University of Missouri-Kansas City, University of Arkansas, and Oklahoma State University.
- Compared to 73 percent of 2017 graduates nationally, 72 percent of Kansas graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 83 percent of Hispanic students nationally, 85 percent of Kansas Hispanic 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 85 percent of African American students nationally, 84 percent of Kansas African American 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 69 percent of White students nationally, 69 percent of Kansas White 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
- ACT issued 7,424 ACT fee waivers to qualified Kansas students. However, 1,685 students (23 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 Kansas graduating class of 2017, 3,465 (14 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 4,448 (18 percent) aspired to attain a professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.8.
- In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 3,282 (13 percent) aspired to attain a graduate degree. They had an average Composite score of 24.5.
- In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 13,309 (54 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 21.2.
- In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 1,047 (4 percent) aspired to attain an associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 17.7.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2017 Kansas graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Mechanical Engineering.
 - ~ In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 4,588 (19 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 22.1.
 - ~ In the Kansas graduating class of 2017, 1,494 (6 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 21.0.

ACT Footprint

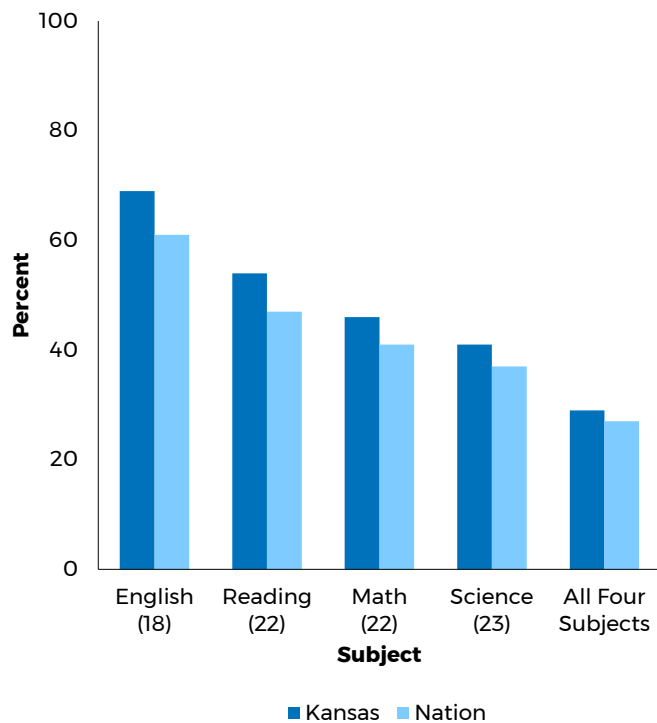
- Number of administrations:
 - ~ ACT Aspire® Summative: 66,706
 - ~ ACT Aspire Periodic: 46,099
 - ~ ACT Engage®: 3,360
 - ~ PreACT®: 5,119
 - ~ ACT WorkKeys: 26,566

Additional Points

- In 2017, ACT honored exemplars in 50 states and Washington, DC, as part of our ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign. In Kansas, three honorees include:
 - ~ Student Readiness Exemplar: Alycia Martin, Blue Valley North High School; College and Career Transition Exemplar (High School): Hays High School; Career Preparedness Exemplar (Postsecondary institution or program): Early College Academies at Butler Community College. This program was selected as a National Exemplar.
- In April 2017, 132 Kansans participated in the ACT State Organization Conference.
- There will be four ACT College and Career Readiness Workshops offered throughout the state in fall 2017 (Overland Park, Wichita, Salina, and Pittsburg).
- There are three certified ACT Work Ready Communities in Kansas: Cherokee, Labette, and Pottawatomie counties.

Kansas College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

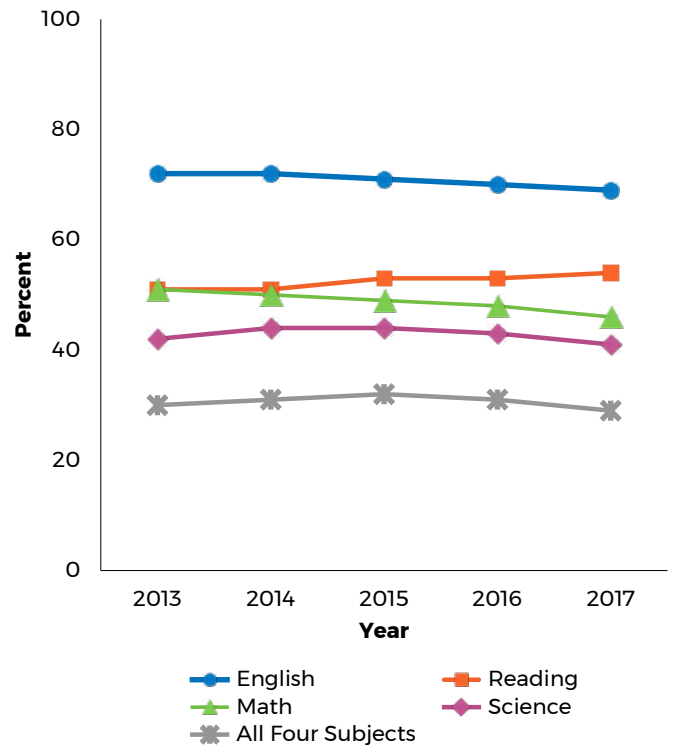
Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data from graph above:

State / Nation	English (18)	Reading (22)	Math (22)	Science (23)	All Four
Kansas	69	54	46	41	29
Nation	61	47	41	37	27

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

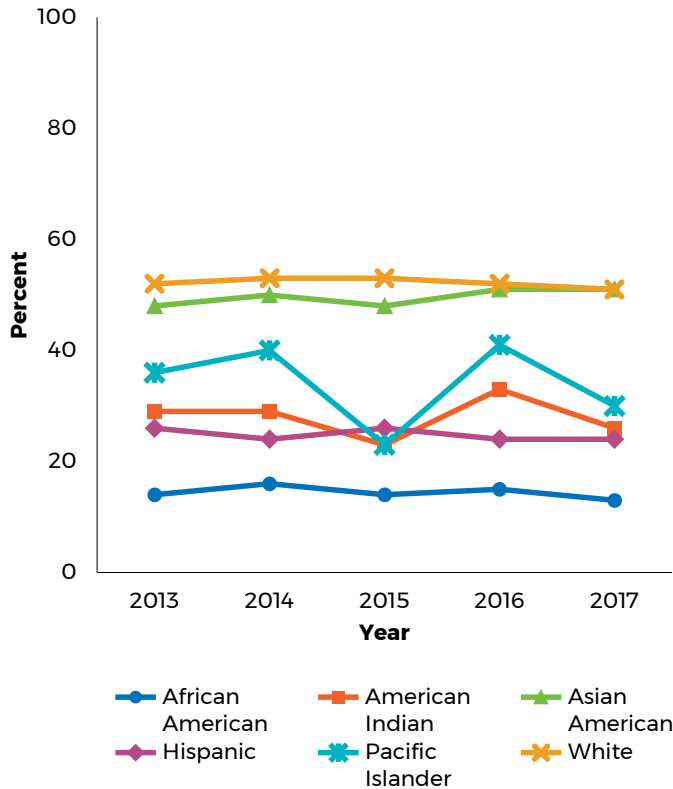


Data from graph above:

Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
English	72	72	71	70	69
Reading	51	51	53	53	54
Math	51	50	49	48	46
Science	42	44	44	43	41
All Four Subjects	30	31	32	31	29

* 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*



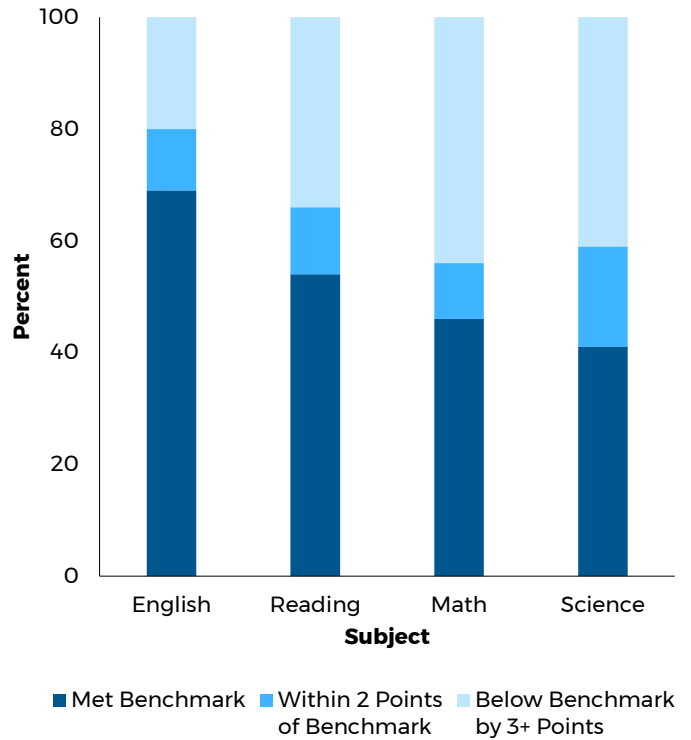
Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	14	16	14	15	13
American Indian	29	29	23	33	26
Asian American	48	50	48	51	51
Hispanic	26	24	26	24	24
Pacific Islander	36	40	23	41	30
White	52	53	53	52	51

* 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

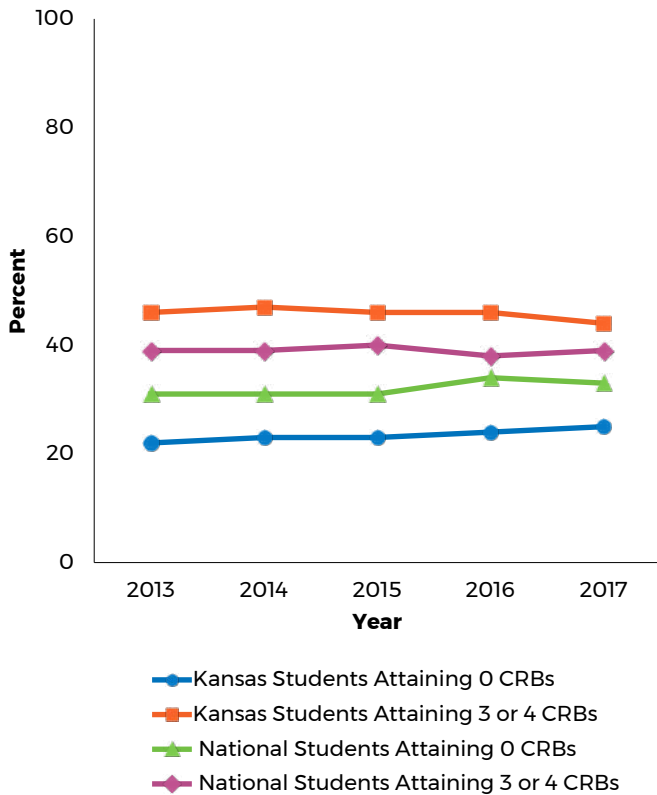
Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Values less than 0.5% will not appear.



Data from graph above:

Attainment	English	Reading	Math	Science
Met Benchmark	69	54	46	41
Within 2 Points of Benchmark	11	12	10	18
Below Benchmark by 3+ Points	20	34	44	41

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

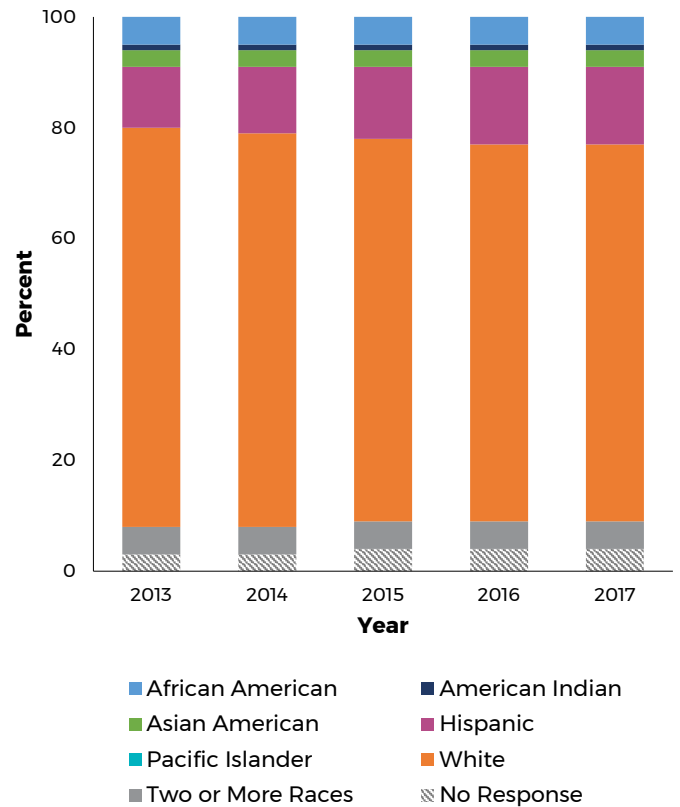


Data from graph above:

Attainment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Kansas Students Attaining 0 CRBs	22	23	23	24	25
Kansas Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	46	47	46	46	44
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	6	5	5	5	5
American Indian	1	1	1	1	1
Asian American	3	3	3	3	3
Hispanic	11	12	13	14	14
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
White	72	71	69	68	68
Two or More Races	5	5	5	5	5
No Response	3	3	4	4	4

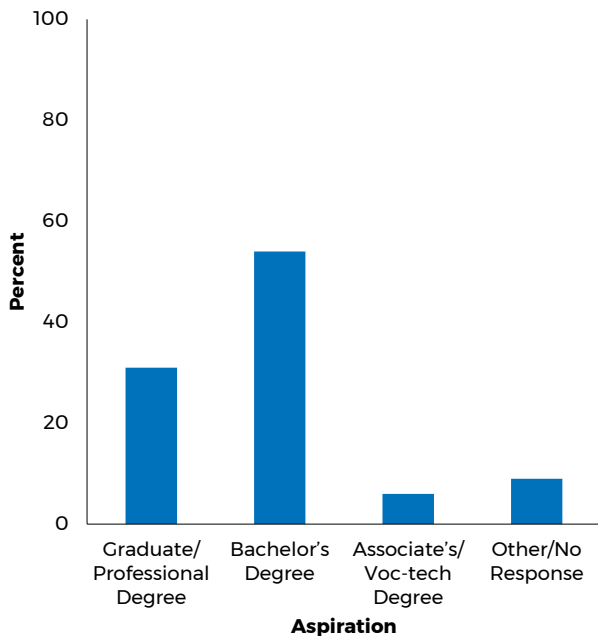
Kansas: Between 2013 and 2017, the number of students taking the ACT in Kansas increased by 473 students (2 percent).

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

Outcome	Cohort	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent Tested	Kansas	75	75	74	74	73
	Nation	54	57	59	64	60
N Tested	Kansas	24,268	23,924	23,708	24,488	24,741
	Nation	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038
Average English Score	Kansas	21.2	21.4	21.3	21.3	21.1
	Nation	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3
Average Reading Score	Kansas	22.3	22.5	22.4	22.5	22.3
	Nation	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4
Average Math Score	Kansas	21.7	21.7	21.6	21.5	21.3
	Nation	20.9	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7
Average Science Score	Kansas	21.7	21.8	21.8	21.8	21.7
	Nation	20.7	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0
Average Composite Score	Kansas	21.8	22.0	21.9	21.9	21.7
	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 91% of Kansas's 2017 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 91% of Kansas's 2016 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 72% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 4,762 of the 2016 ACT-tested graduates from Kansas would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

Data from graph

Aspiration	Percent
Graduate / Professional Degree	31
Bachelor's Degree	54
Associate's / Voc-tech Degree	6
Other / No Response	9



Kansas State Exemplar

2017 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign

Alycia Martin

Blue Valley North High School, Blue Valley School District

“Whenever I was having difficulties with school work, wanted to learn to play a new instrument, or join a new activity, I would be in charge of finding opportunities and self-teaching methods on my own.”

Alycia has had to take personal responsibility for her educational success as the only child of a single, immigrant mother who speaks little English. This has given her the confidence to advocate for herself and will help ensure her success in college and beyond.

In stage-managing theatre productions during high school, Alycia found her intended career path and now plans to attend a college with a conservatory program in order to earn her degree and become a professional stage manager.

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.