

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

Louisiana Key Findings

Performance

- In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 51,486 graduates took the ACT® test, compared to 45,305 in 2013.
 - ~ In Louisiana, 100 percent of 2017 graduates took the ACT, compared to 60 percent nationally.
- Louisiana graduates of 2017 had an average Composite score of 19.5, compared to the national average of 21.0.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 Louisiana graduating class Composite average of 19.5, Louisiana graduates in 2016 and 2013 had Composite averages of 19.5 and 19.5, respectively.
 - ~ Compared to the 2017 Louisiana graduating class math average of 18.8, Louisiana graduates in 2016 and 2013 had math averages of 18.8 and 19.2, respectively.
- In 2017, 16 percent of Louisiana graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 16 and 16 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 57 percent of Louisiana graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 58 and 60 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 26 percent of Louisiana graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 26 and 29 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 36 percent of Louisiana graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 35 and 33 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 27 percent of Louisiana graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 27 and 25 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 40 percent of Louisiana graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 39 and 37 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.

STEM

- In 2017, 26,104 Louisiana graduates (51 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
- 10 percent of Louisiana graduates met the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, compared 10 percent for 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
- For the years 2013 and 2017, Louisiana graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had average math scores of 27.9 and 27.7, respectively.

Career Readiness

- In 2017, 8,434 Louisiana graduates (16 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 Louisiana 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:
 - ~ 110 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 131 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 107 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 220 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 147 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 158 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Louisiana, 2017 graduates taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 20.9, compared to 17.0 for single-time testers.
- Of Louisiana's 2017 graduating class, there were 15,498 (30 percent) African American students taking the ACT. This compares to 256,756 (13 percent) nationally.
- Of Louisiana's 2017 graduating class, there were 373 (1 percent) American Indian students taking the ACT. This compares to 16,135 (1 percent) nationally.
- Of Louisiana's 2017 graduating class, there were 24,710 (48 percent) White students taking the ACT. This compares to 1,062,439 (52 percent) nationally.
- Of Louisiana's 2017 graduating class, there were 2,940 (6 percent) Hispanic students taking the ACT. This compares to 347,906 (17 percent) nationally.
- Of Louisiana's 2017 graduating class, there were 906 (2 percent) Asian students taking the ACT. This compares to 96,097 (5 percent) nationally.
- For Louisiana's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, Louisiana State University/A&M College-Baton Rouge, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Louisiana Tech University.
 - ~ For Louisiana's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi State University, and Texas A&M University-Main Campus.
- Compared to 73 percent of 2017 graduates nationally, 78 percent of Louisiana graduates opted into EOS.
- ACT issued 21,838 ACT fee waivers to Louisiana students who qualify. However, 5,237 students (24 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. Fee waivers represent a great opportunity for students with socio-economic challenges to retest without incurring any fees.

Pipeline

- In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 12,557 (24 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 4,014 (8 percent) aspired to attain an associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 16.1.
 - ~ Louisiana outpaces the nation in students aspiring to an associate's degree, in part due to its focus on two-year education, as well as students' realization that many highly paid jobs in the future will require a two-year degree.
- In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 21,559 (42 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 19.5.
- In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 4,714 (9 percent) aspired to attain a graduate degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.5.
- In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 9,736 (19 percent) aspired to attain a professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.2.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2017 Louisiana graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Mechanical Engineering.
 - ~ In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 1,586 (3 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 19.7.
 - ~ In the Louisiana graduating class of 2017, 4,710 (9 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 20.7.

ACT Footprint

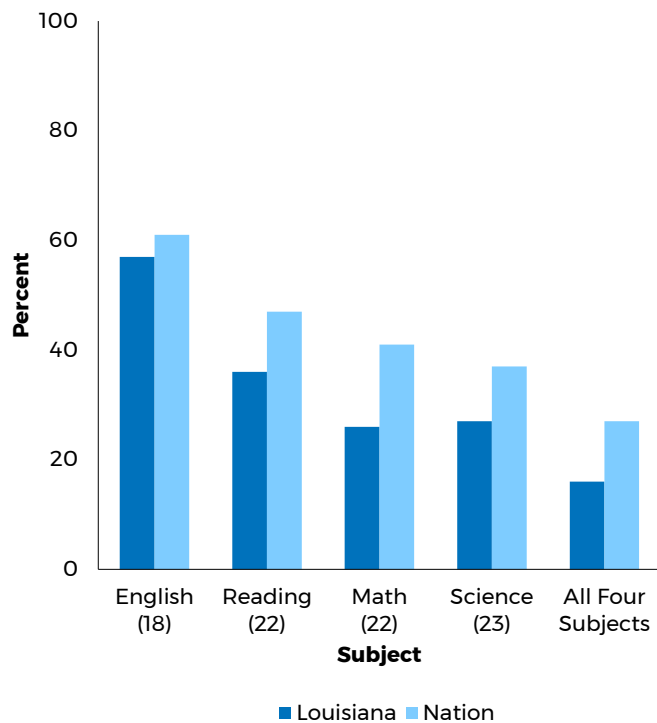
- Number of administrations:
 - ~ ACT Aspire® Summative: 157,683
 - ~ ACT Aspire Periodic: 100,343
 - ~ ACT Engage®: 1,003
 - ~ PreACT®: 21,793
 - ~ ACT WorkKeys: 96,578

Additional Points

- Five ACT College and Career Readiness Workshops were delivered in Louisiana in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lafayette, Monroe, and Shreveport. A total of 520 administrators, principals, teachers, and counselors attended the workshops. The CCRW workshop provides an opportunity for educators to understand what ACT scores really mean and if students are college and career ready.
- ACT Work Ready Communities in Louisiana are increasing: 13 parishes in Louisiana are certified ACT Work Ready Communities, and 305 Louisiana businesses are supporting job applicants with an ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate.

Louisiana College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

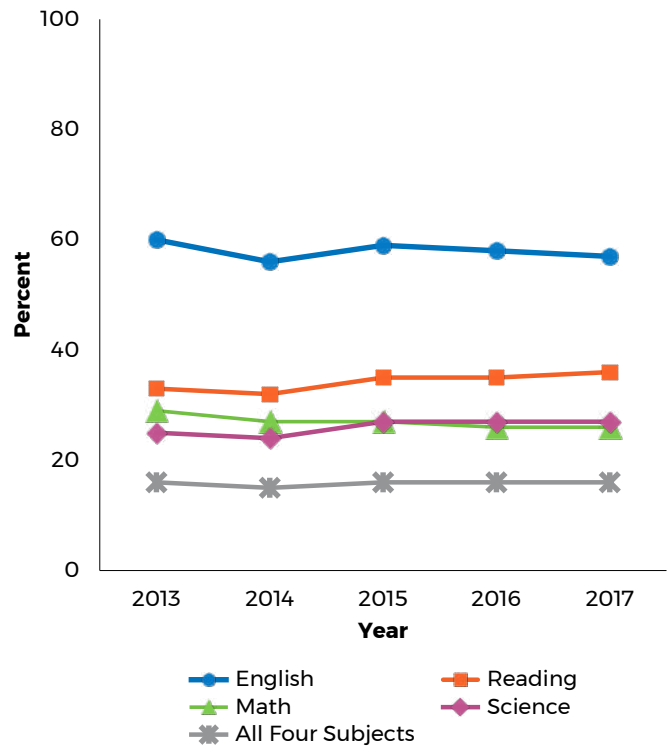
Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data from graph above:

State / Nation	English (18)	Reading (22)	Math (22)	Science (23)	All Four
Louisiana	57	36	26	27	16
Nation	61	47	41	37	27

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

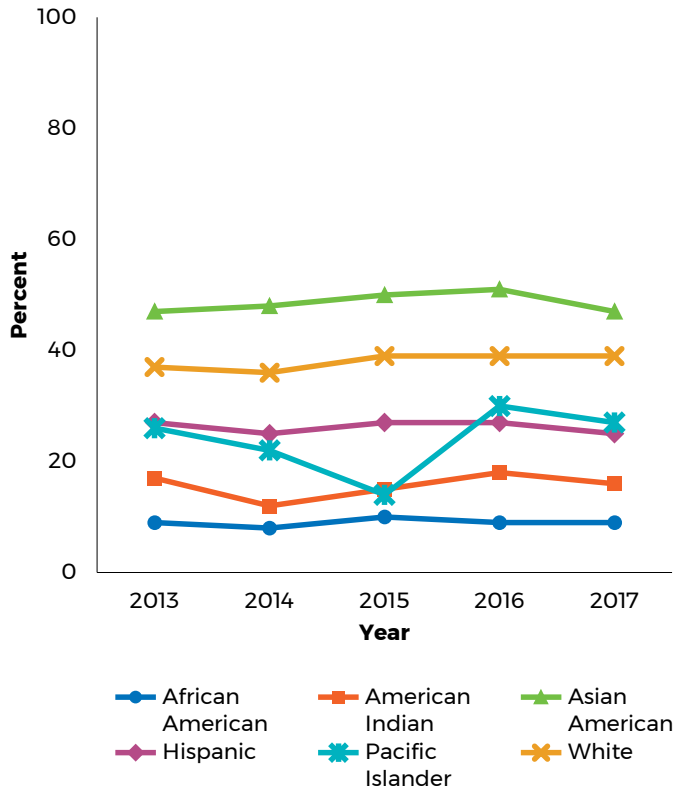


Data from graph above:

Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
English	60	56	59	58	57
Reading	33	32	35	35	36
Math	29	27	27	26	26
Science	25	24	27	27	27
All Four Subjects	16	15	16	16	16

* 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*



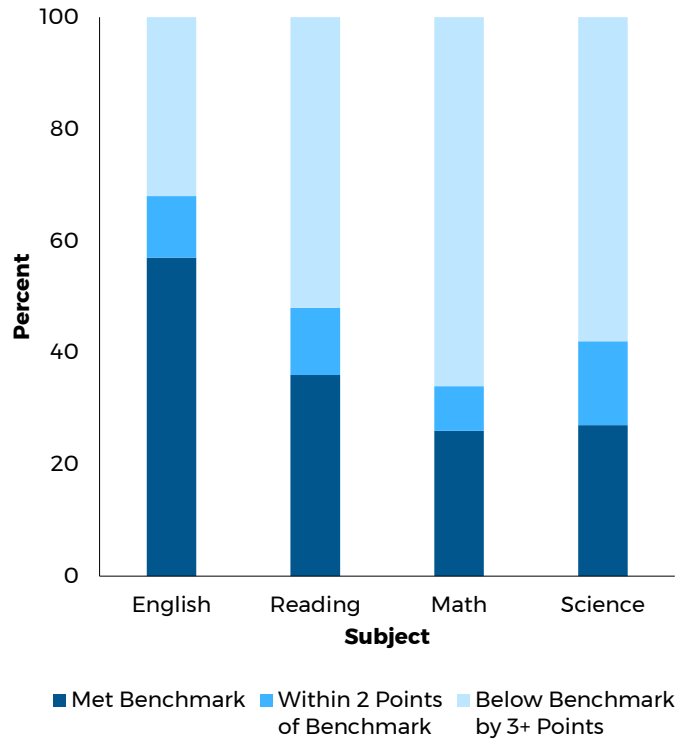
Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	9	8	10	9	9
American Indian	17	12	15	18	16
Asian American	47	48	50	51	47
Hispanic	27	25	27	27	25
Pacific Islander	26	22	14	30	27
White	37	36	39	39	39

* 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

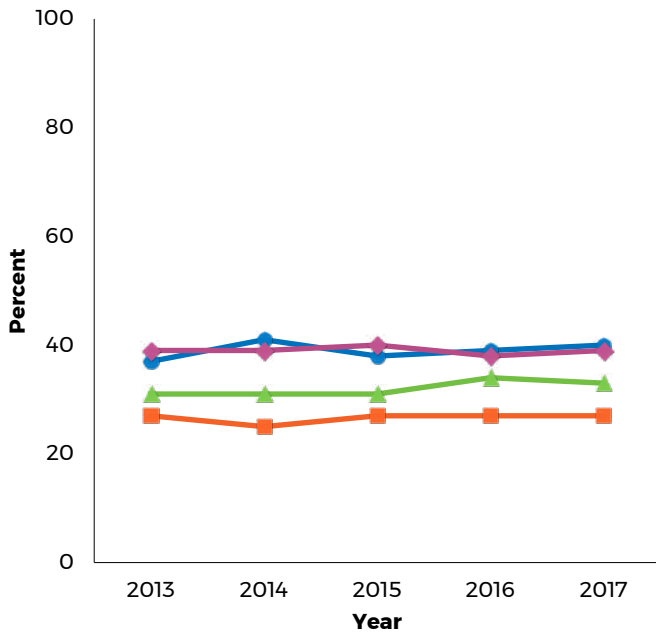
Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Values less than 0.5% will not appear.



Data from graph above:

Attainment	English	Reading	Math	Science
Met Benchmark	57	36	26	27
Within 2 Points of Benchmark	11	12	8	15
Below Benchmark by 3+ Points	33	52	66	59

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



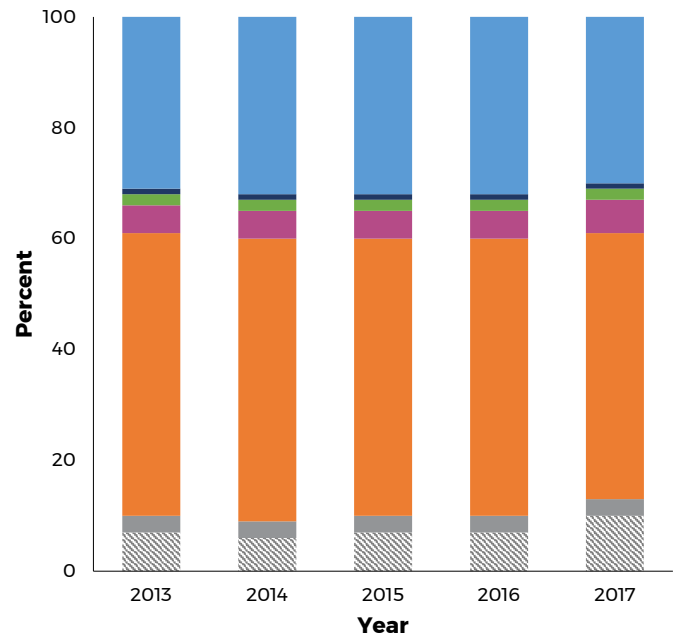
- Louisiana Students Attaining 0 CRBs
- Louisiana Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs
- National Students Attaining 0 CRBs
- National Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs

Data from graph above:

Attainment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Louisiana Students Attaining 0 CRBs	37	41	38	39	40
Louisiana Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	27	25	27	27	27
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.



- African American
- American Indian
- Asian American
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Two or More Races
- No Response

Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	32	32	32	32	30
American Indian	1	1	1	1	1
Asian American	2	2	2	2	2
Hispanic	5	5	5	5	6
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
White	51	51	50	50	48
Two or More Races	3	3	3	3	3
No Response	7	6	7	7	10

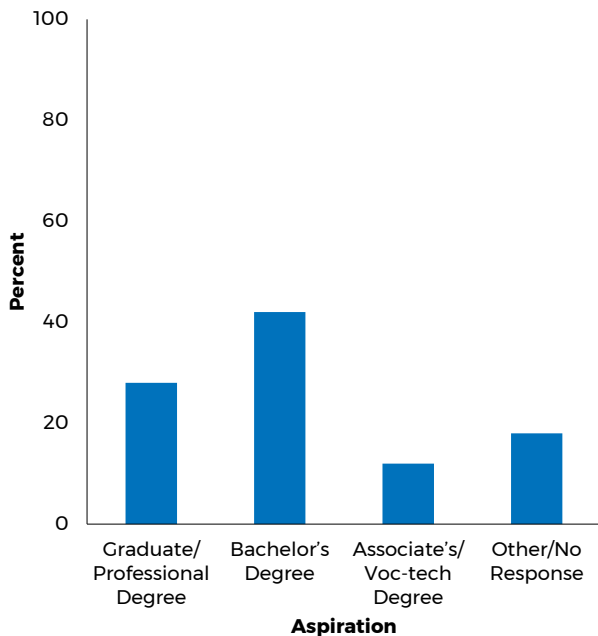
Louisiana: Between 2013 and 2017, the number of students taking the ACT in Louisiana increased by 6,181 students (14 percent).

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

Outcome	Cohort	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent Tested	Louisiana	100	100	100	100	100
	Nation	54	57	59	64	60
N Tested	Louisiana	45,305	49,178	49,082	48,692	51,486
	Nation	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038
Average English Score	Louisiana	19.4	18.9	19.2	19.3	19.4
	Nation	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3
Average Reading Score	Louisiana	19.7	19.5	19.7	19.9	19.8
	Nation	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4
Average Math Score	Louisiana	19.2	18.9	18.9	18.8	18.8
	Nation	20.9	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7
Average Science Score	Louisiana	19.2	19.1	19.4	19.6	19.6
	Nation	20.7	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0
Average Composite Score	Louisiana	19.5	19.2	19.4	19.5	19.5
	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 82% of Louisiana's 2017 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 84% of Louisiana's 2016 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 56% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 13,409 of the 2016 ACT-tested graduates from Louisiana would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

Data from graph

Aspiration	Percent
Graduate / Professional Degree	28
Bachelor's Degree	42
Associate's / Voc-tech Degree	12
Other / No Response	18

Louisiana State Exemplar 2017 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign



Olivia Simmons

C.E. Byrd High School, Caddo Public Schools

“Enjoying my job in the future will make all of the time and hard work pay off.”

Olivia plans to attend the University of Alabama in their Honors College and hopes to earn both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in chemical engineering in a condensed and challenging five-year program. She has prepared by taking ten college-level courses in high school in order to skip the corresponding entry-level courses in college.

A mentor to her foster siblings who also volunteers by tutoring and helping the homeless, Olivia plans to use her degree to do good in the world.

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.