

Promoting Student Success through Title I of the ARRA

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ACT: WORKING TO CREATE A SYSTEM OF EXCELLENCE

Seventy-seven percent of Chicago's nearly 427,000 public school students participate in free or reduced-cost lunch programs. The Chicago Public School (CPS) system, the third largest school district in the nation, wanted to increase the college and career readiness of the city's students. CPS turned to ACT's College Readiness System for results.

Since 2002, the first year in which all CPS high school graduates had taken EXPLORE[®], PLAN[®], and the ACT[®] before the end of their junior year:

- The number of students taking the ACT has increased 22 percent, up 114 percent since 1999;
- ACT Composite scores have increased at *twice* the rate of the state of Illinois;
- Although testing nearly 100 percent of all graduates, the class of 2008 had a higher ACT Composite average than did the class of 1999 that tested only 40 percent of self-selected college bound students;
- College enrollment rates for CPS graduates have climbed by 6.5 percentage points (7.8 percentage points for four-year institutions) outpacing the national rate of 0.5 percentage points and -2.2 percentage points for overall enrollment and four-year institution rates, respectively; and
- More CPS students are returning for their second year of college than ever before.

For detailed information on this case study and similar case studies, visit:

<http://act.org/stateservices/casestudies.html>



Your Students Have Big Dreams. Let's Work Together To Get Them There.

The passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides districts with an unprecedented opportunity to help students realize their college dreams. With a focus on strengthening college and career standards, instruction, student support and data quality, the ARRA Title I funds can help spur school improvement efforts and strengthen the pathway to college, particularly for low-income students. As one of the nation's leading education nonprofit organizations, ACT, Inc. invites you to draw on our research, resources, and solutions for ensuring college and career readiness for all.

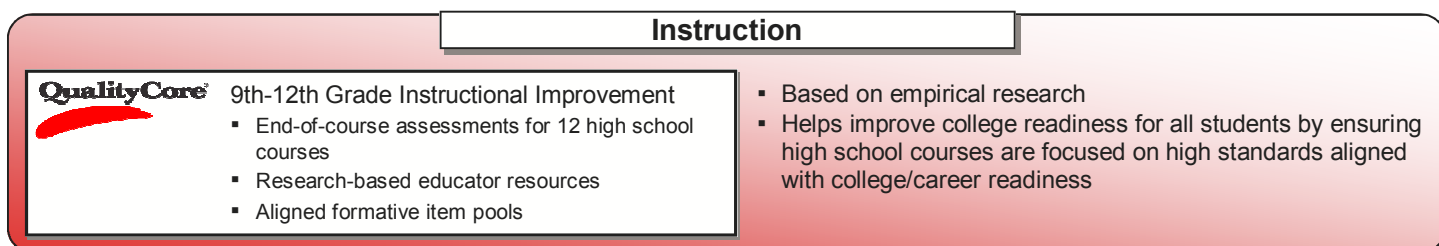
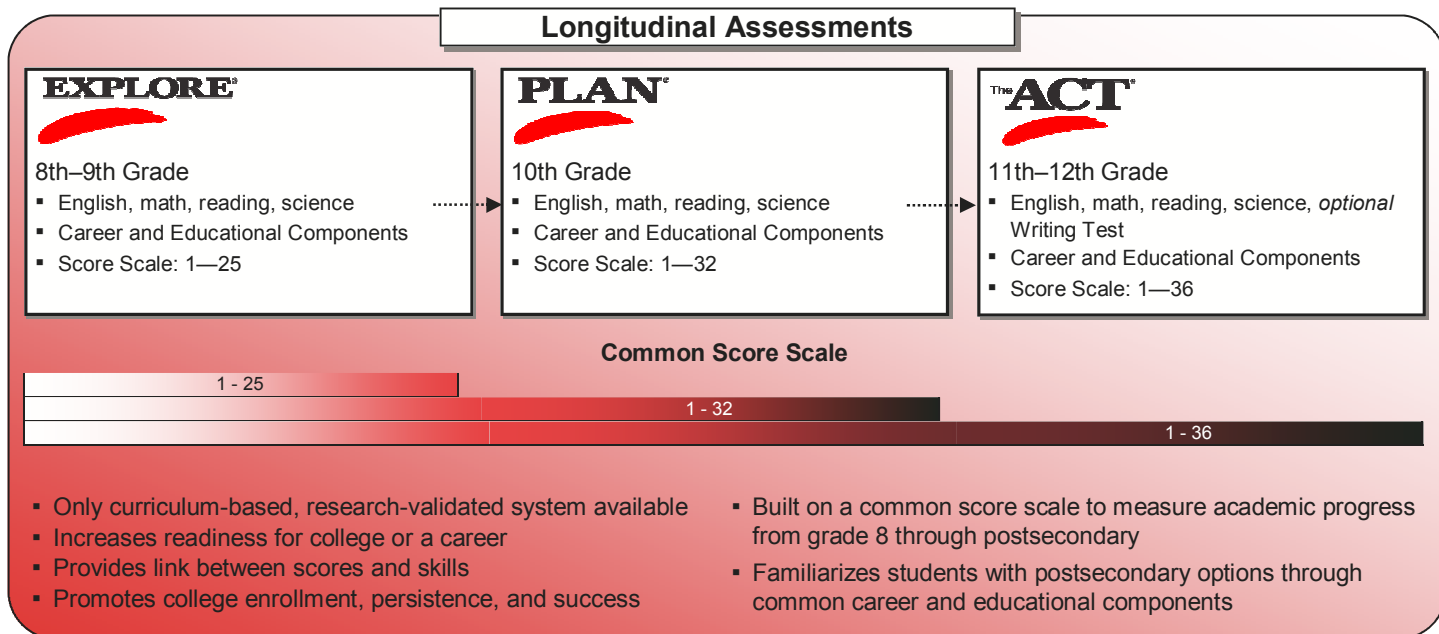
Great Futures Begin With Great Standards. Getting students on track for college and career success begins with a commitment to real-world standards. ACT's College Readiness Standards™ serve as a direct link between what students have learned, what they are ready to learn next, and what they must learn before leaving high school in order to be prepared for college and career. Derived from empirical research on what skills and knowledge students need to succeed in college and the workplace, ACT's College Readiness Standards can provide your district with the foundation you need to strengthen middle and high school curricula, instruction, and student support programs.

Start Where You Are And Get the Most From Your Efforts. While school improvement efforts are never easy, ACT works with numerous states and districts—each with unique needs and circumstances—that are making great progress towards district goals through the strategic alignment of standards, rigorous courses, effective instruction, assessment systems, and student support programs. These principles, embedded in ACT's College Readiness System, can help improve student outcomes and demonstrate a return on investment to state and federal stakeholders. Even if you are currently using one or more ACT solutions, consider adopting the full College Readiness System to employ a research-based model to get the most from your school improvement efforts.

ACT's College Readiness System

Longitudinal Assessment, Instruction, and School System Improvement

ACT provides a fully aligned, research-based system of solutions that help states and districts prepare every student for college and work. Our **College Readiness Standards™** and **College Readiness Benchmarks** define college readiness based on what postsecondary educators indicate is important for students to know and based on actual student success in credit-bearing college-entry courses. Together, the Standards and Benchmarks represent a single academic expectation for all students, regardless of whether they go on to college or the workplace after high school.



The longitudinal assessment component of the system—EXPLORE®, PLAN®, and the ACT®—is directly tied to and aligned with the Standards and Benchmarks. These assessments allow states to monitor students' college readiness beginning in eighth grade so that necessary interventions can be made.

QualityCore®, the instructional improvement component, offers rigorous model high school courses. QualityCore course objectives focus on the course-level knowledge and skills needed for college readiness. As such, they are tied to the ACT College Readiness Standards measured by EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT.

To discuss how to leverage ACT research in your ARRA strategy, or to learn more about ACT solutions and services, please visit www.act.org/stateservices