

Understanding Updates to the ACT Aspire Progress Toward Career Readiness Indicator

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An ACT® Aspire® Progress Toward Career Readiness (PTCR) indicator is provided for students in grades 8-10 to help predict performance on the ACT WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate® (NCRC) taken toward the end of high school. An ACT Aspire PTCR indicator is derived from a student’s ACT Aspire Composite score and is linked indirectly to actual NCRC performance through ACT Composite score.¹

Beginning in fall 2019, ACT Aspire reports will use an updated PTCR indicator, reflecting changes in how ACT and ACT Aspire Composite scores are linked to NCRC levels. The diagram below illustrates the changes for 10th-grade reports. It shows the ACT Aspire Composite score ranges linked to each NCRC level and compares the

updated score ranges to the existing score ranges. It also shows the percentage of spring 2018 10th-grade examinees scoring at each level.

Figure 1. Derivation of PTCR Indicator

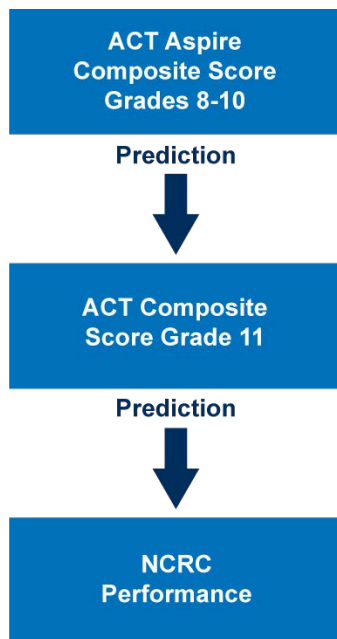
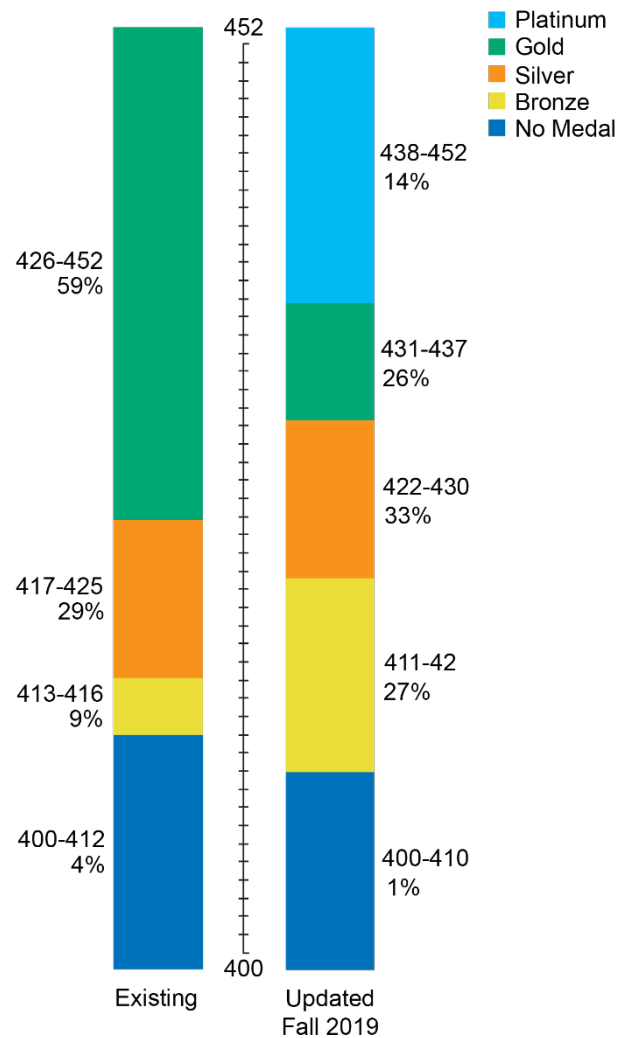


Figure 2. Comparison of Existing and Updated PTCR Indicators



Why are the Updates Needed?

In 2017, the ACT WorkKeys Assessments underwent significant changes to ensure alignment to the skill requirements of today's jobs. In 2018, the ACT Composite cut scores for the ACT PTCR indicator were updated so that they correspond to the certification level that is likely to be obtained on the refreshed WorkKeys. Updating ACT Aspire's PTCR indicator ensures alignment to the changes made to WorkKeys.

The existing indicator provides an estimate of the next NCRC medal students are progressing toward, but it often over-predicts a student's actual NCRC medal and is not aligned to the interpretation of PTCR used for the ACT test. In contrast, the updated indicator predicts NCRC medal and is consistent with the methodology and interpretation employed in deriving ACT College and Career Readiness Benchmarks for grades 8-10.

How are Results Expected to Change?

- The updated threshold scores for Silver and Gold indicators will be substantially higher.
- Significantly more students will score at the Bronze level (e.g., 27% versus 9% for 10th graders).
- More students will score at the Silver level (e.g., 33% versus 29% for 10th graders).
- Fewer students will score at the Gold level (e.g., 26% versus 59% Gold/Platinum for 10th graders).
- Some students will score at the Platinum level (e.g., 14% for 10th graders), whereas Gold and Platinum were previously combined.
- The table below shows the existing and updated ACT Aspire Composite score ranges linked to each NCRC level for each grade level.

Table 1. ACT Aspire Composite Scores Corresponding to Each PTCR Medal

Grade Level	PTCR Medal	ACT Aspire Composite Score Range	
		Existing	Updated Fall 2019
8	No medal	400-411	400-409
	Bronze	412-415	410-420
	Silver	416-422	421-427
	Gold	423-449	428-433
	Platinum	--	434-449
9	No medal	400-411	400-409
	Bronze	412-415	410-420
	Silver	416-423	421-428
	Gold	424-452	429-434
	Platinum	--	435-452
10	No medal	400-412	400-410
	Bronze	413-416	411-421
	Silver	417-425	422-430
	Gold	426-452	431-437
	Platinum	--	438-452

1. For more details on how ACT Composite scores are linked to NCRC levels, please see the following technical brief: Radunzel, J., & Fang, Y. (2018). Updating the Progress Toward the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate indicator. Iowa City, IA: ACT. Retrieved from <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/R1712-ACT-progress-toward-NCRC.pdf>. A summary of the technical brief is also available at <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/R1712-ncrc-progress-indicator-2018-08.pdf>.