

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

Colorado Key Findings

Performance of 2019 Graduates

- **Colorado discontinued use of the ACT as a statewide census test with the 2017 graduating class. Scores and results were impacted, establishing new trendlines and reflecting the transition of statewide college and career readiness assessments.**
- In the 2019 Colorado graduating class, 15,657 graduates (an estimated 27 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 23.8. This compares to 57,328 (an estimated 100 percent) with an average of 20.7 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - The 2019 Colorado graduating class average English score was 23.8. This compares to 23.9 and 20.2 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Colorado graduating class average math score was 23.3. This compares to 23.2 and 20.4 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Colorado graduating class average reading score was 24.3. This compares to 24.4 and 21.0 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Colorado graduating class average science score was 23.4. This compares to 23.5 and 20.8 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
- In 2019, 45 percent of Colorado graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 45 and 26 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 16 percent of Colorado graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 15 and 33 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 81 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 82 and 63 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 61 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 61 and 40 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 64 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 65 and 43 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 56 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 57 and 39 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 9,385 (60 percent) of Colorado graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 10,269 and 22,369 (60 and 39 percent) out of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively. For reference, the national percentage of 2019 graduates meeting three or four benchmarks was 37 percent.
- In 2019, 8 percent of Colorado graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 6 and 6 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.

STEM

- In 2019, 6,835 Colorado graduates (44 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
 - Nationally, 43 percent of graduates indicated having an interest in STEM.
- Compared to a 2019 Colorado graduating class average ACT STEM score of 23.6, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 23.6 and 20.8, respectively.
- Compared to 36 percent of 2019 Colorado graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 36 and 20, respectively.
 - 2019 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 24.9, compared to 22.2 for students not taking physics.
 - 2019 Colorado graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average science score of 29.1. This compares to 28.6 in 2015.
 - 2019 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 24.1, compared to 18.9 for students taking less than three years of math.
 - 2019 Colorado graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 29.0. This compares to 28.4 in 2015.

Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 13,952 Colorado graduates (89 percent) were likely to attain the Silver ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 1,273,362 (71 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, 22 for Gold, and 27 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 21 as “Silver,” and 22 or above as “Gold or Higher.”

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2019 ACT-tested Colorado high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2019 graduating class would result in:
 - 32 more students enrolling in college.
 - 38 more students persisting to year two.
 - 23 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - 38 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - 44 more students persisting to year four.
 - 48 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Colorado, 6,680 of the 2019 graduates (42.7 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.4, compared to an average of 22.6 for 8,977 of the 2019 graduates (57.3 percent) who took the ACT only once.
 - Nationwide, 765,568 of the 2019 graduates (42.9 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 22.7, compared to an average of 19.2 for 1,017,252 of the 2019 graduates (57.1 percent) who took the ACT only once.
- 22,696 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Colorado ACT-tested graduates.
 - 9,738 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Colorado ACT-tested graduates.
 - For Colorado's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Colorado State University, the University of Colorado - Boulder, the University of Northern Colorado, the University of Colorado - Colorado Springs, and the University of Colorado Denver.
 - For Colorado's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were the University of Wyoming, Montana State University - Bozeman, and Arizona State University.
- Compared to 66 percent of 2019 graduates nationally, 52 percent of Colorado graduates opted into the ACT Educational Opportunity Service (EOS). EOS is a free service that allows students to gain exposure to recruitment, scholarship agencies, colleges, and universities that students may not have accessed on their own. The ACT Get Your Name in the Game initiative encourages colleges and universities to recruit underserved EOS participants to increase access and opportunity for all.
- In the 2018-2019 academic year, ACT issued 1,954 ACT fee waivers to qualified Colorado students across all grades. However, 372 students (19.0 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 487,749 waivers issued nationally, of which 135,569 (27.8 percent) students did not take advantage. This represents a great opportunity for high schools within the state to increase the socioeconomic diversity of its students tested.

Postsecondary Aspirations

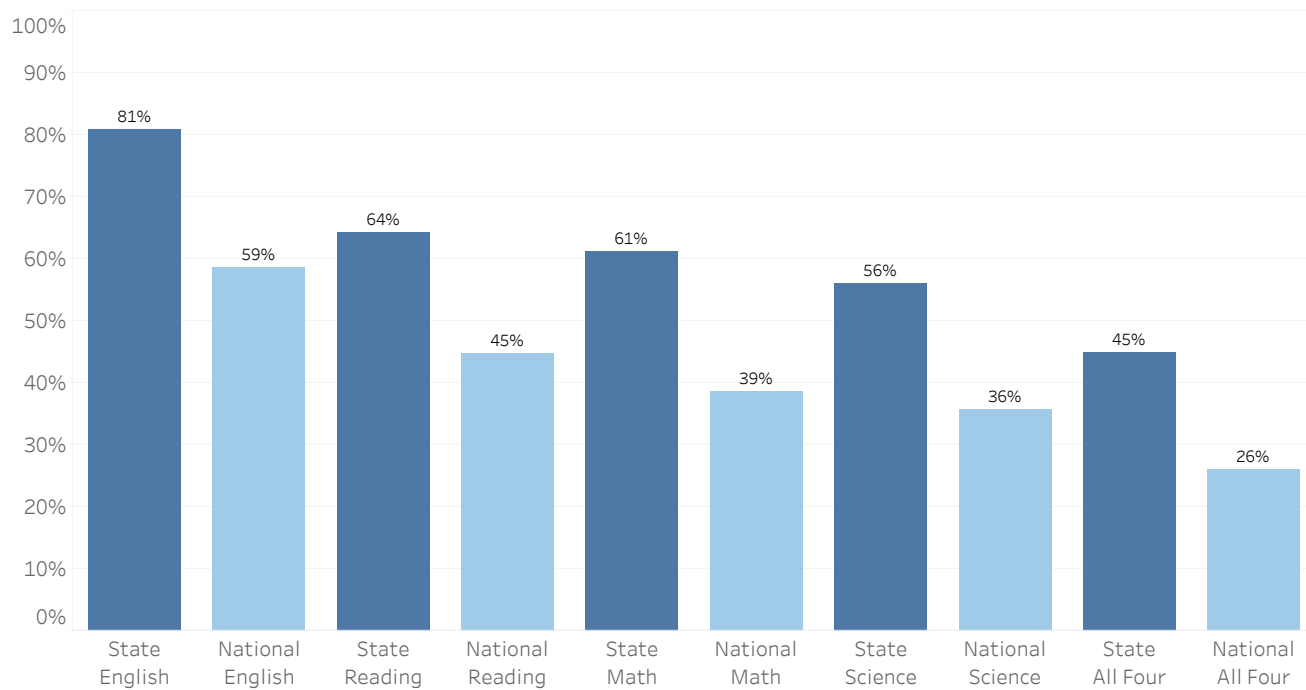
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - 5,640 students (36 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 26.4.
 - 5,441 students (35 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.1.
 - 152 students (1 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 18.8.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Colorado graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); and Mechanical Engineering.
 - In the Colorado graduating class of 2019, 2,332 students (15 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 24.5. Decision making regarding college major can be facilitated through activities included in ACT Aspire and PreACT testing experiences. In addition, the Student Score Report is a valuable tool for conversations using the College and Career Planning and Interest-Major Fit sections.
 - In the Colorado graduating class of 2019, 368 (2 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 22.6.

Additional Points

- The Colorado ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with almost 300 members from across the state. The membership includes educators from state agencies, K-12, access, and postsecondary institutions, as well as members involved in workforce development. Each year, ACT hosts a state summit that brings together professionals representing each of these areas, providing a unique and diverse professional development opportunity.
- In 2019, ACT honored College and Career Readiness Champions in most states. The Colorado honorees were:
 - High school senior: Amy Pollart, Prairie High School; K-12 professional: Donna Holley, Post-High School Success Advisor, Yampah Mountain High School; and postsecondary professional: Kimberly VanHoosier-Carey, Director, Center for Individualized Learning, Metropolitan State University of Denver.
- There is good news in that 72% of Colorado's 2019 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 88% of Colorado's 2018 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 77% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 1,818 of the 2018 ACT-tested graduates from Colorado would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data From Graph Above

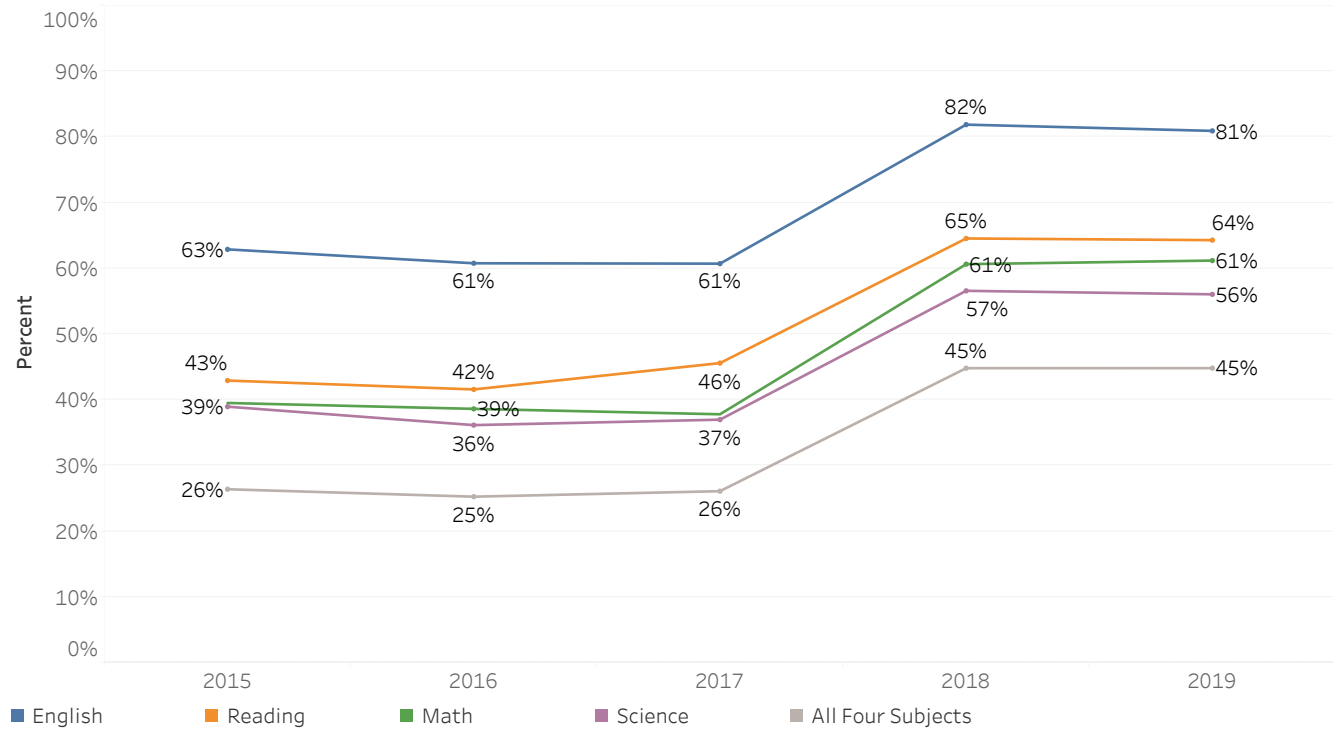
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
81%	59%	64%	45%	61%	39%	56%	36%	45%	26%

* 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 18 in English, 22 in Reading, 22 in Math and 23 in Science.

Note, missing data points in tables and graphs reflect insufficient data for reporting.

COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015–2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



Data From Graph Above

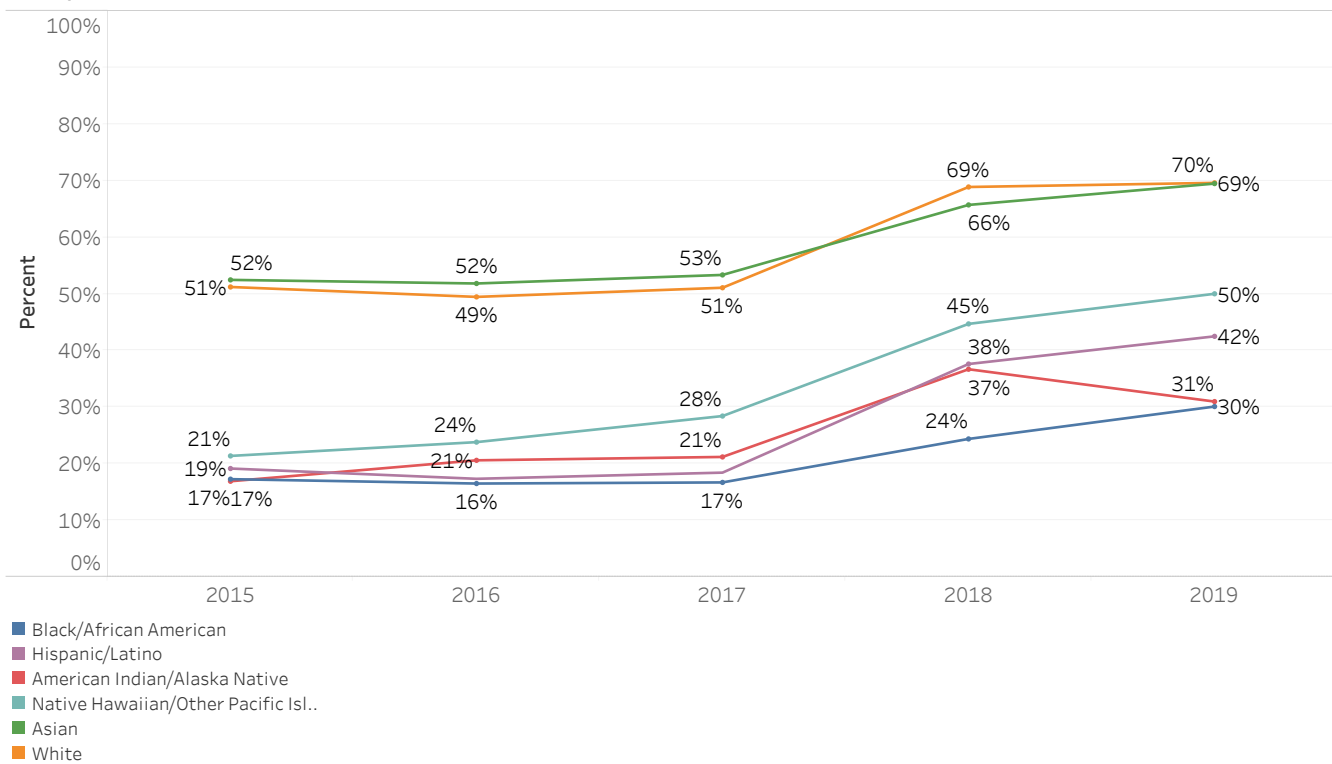
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	63%	43%	40%	39%	26%
2016	61%	42%	39%	36%	25%
2017	61%	46%	38%	37%	26%
2018	82%	65%	61%	57%	45%
2019	81%	64%	61%	56%	45%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015-2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity



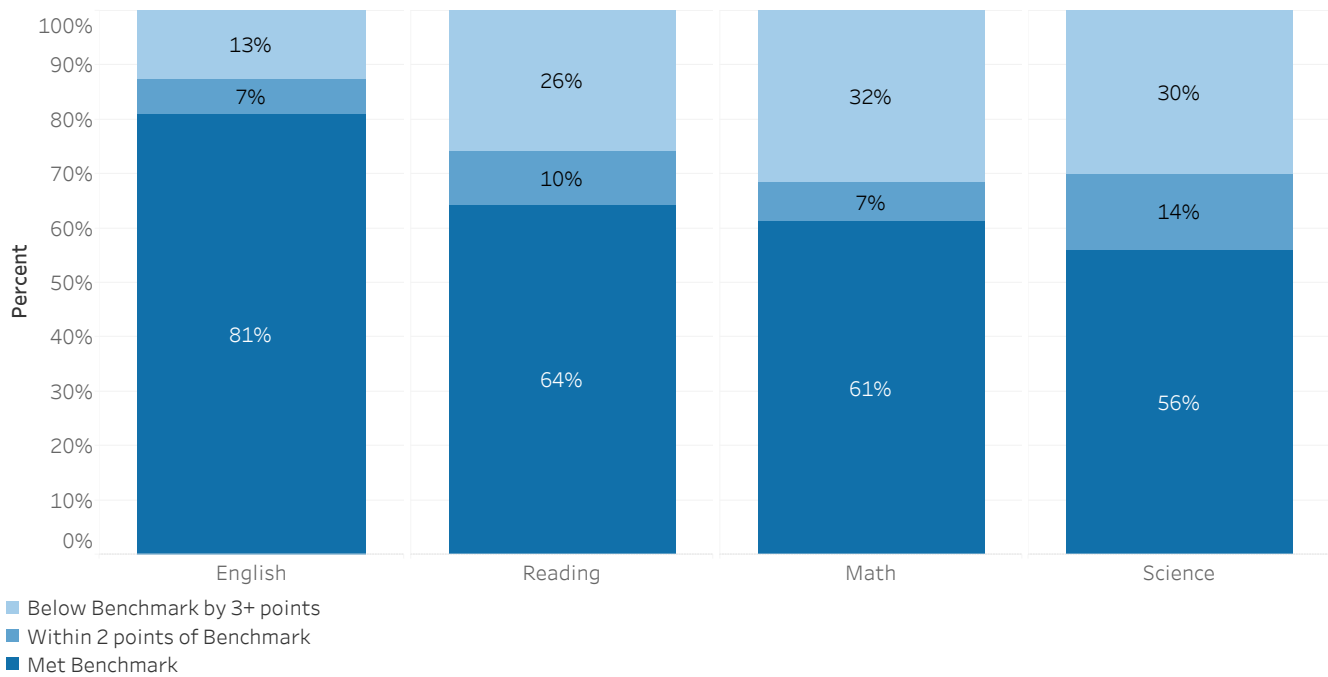
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	17%	19%	17%	21%	52%	51%
2016	16%	17%	21%	24%	52%	49%
2017	17%	18%	21%	28%	53%	51%
2018	24%	38%	37%	45%	66%	69%
2019	30%	42%	31%	50%	69%	70%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



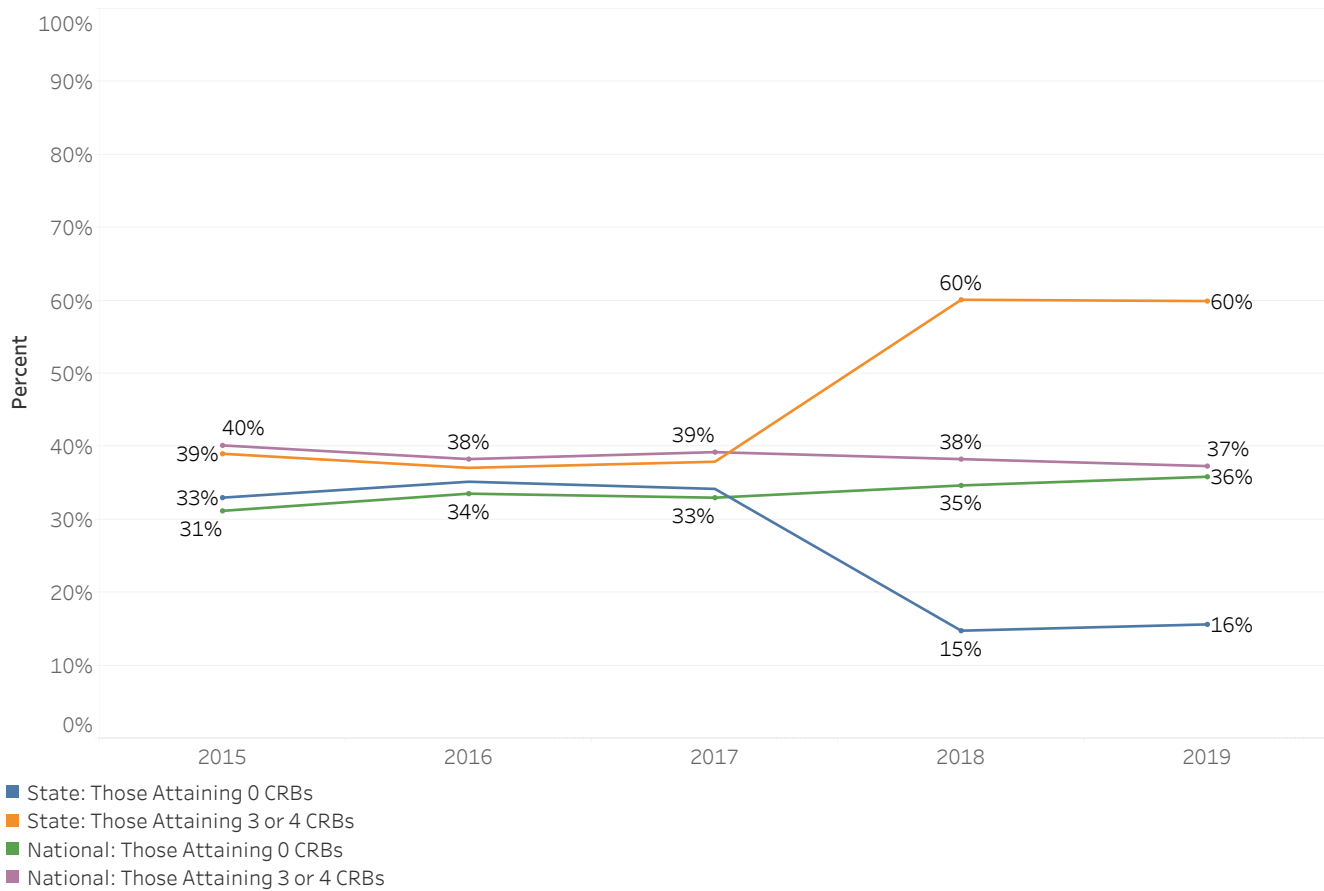
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	13%	7%	81%
Math	32%	7%	61%
Reading	26%	10%	64%
Science	30%	14%	56%

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Percent of 2015–2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



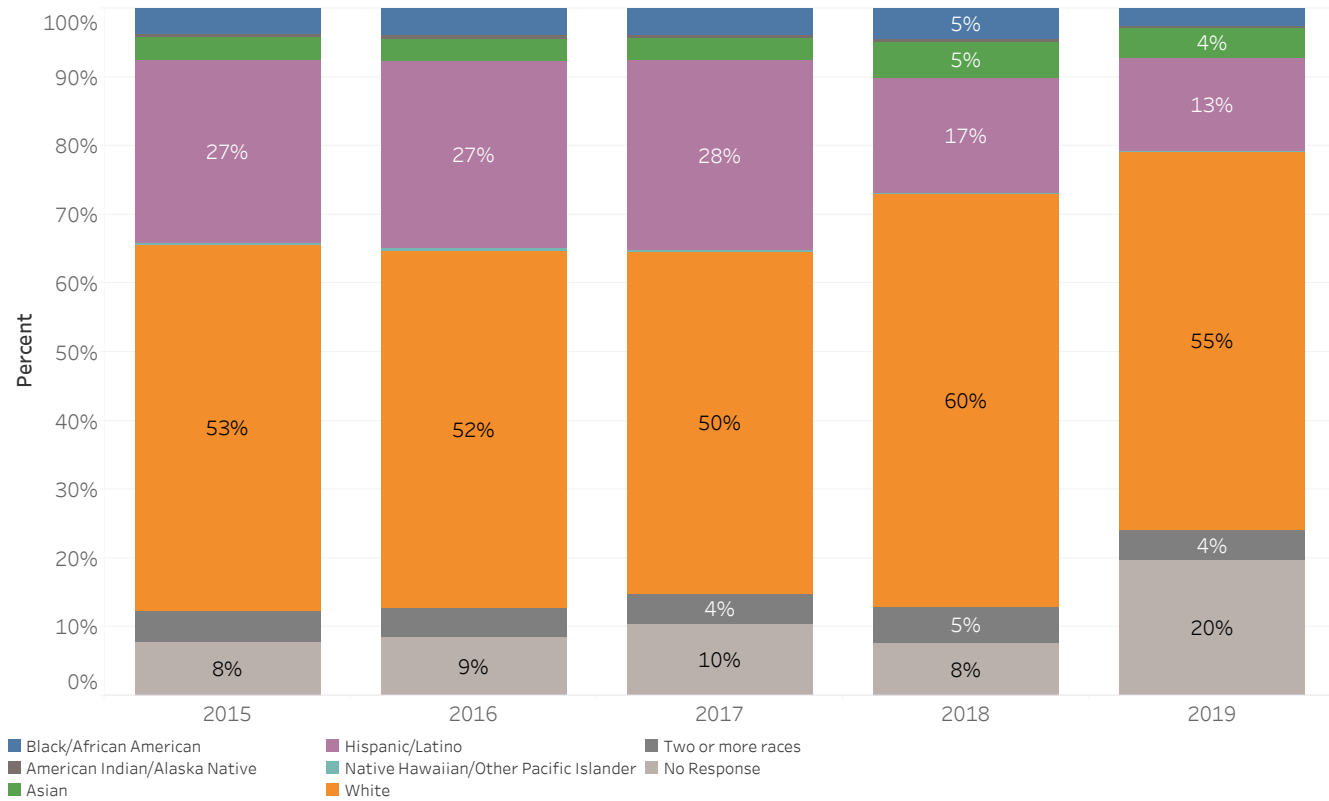
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	State: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	State: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs
2015	33%	39%	31%	40%
2016	35%	37%	34%	38%
2017	34%	38%	33%	39%
2018	15%	60%	35%	38%
2019	16%	60%	36%	37%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015-2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity



Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or more races	No Response
2015	4%	1%	3%	27%	0%	53%	4%	8%
2016	4%	1%	3%	27%	0%	52%	4%	9%
2017	4%	1%	3%	28%	0%	50%	4%	10%
2018	5%	0%	5%	17%	0%	60%	5%	8%
2019	3%	0%	4%	13%	0%	55%	4%	20%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

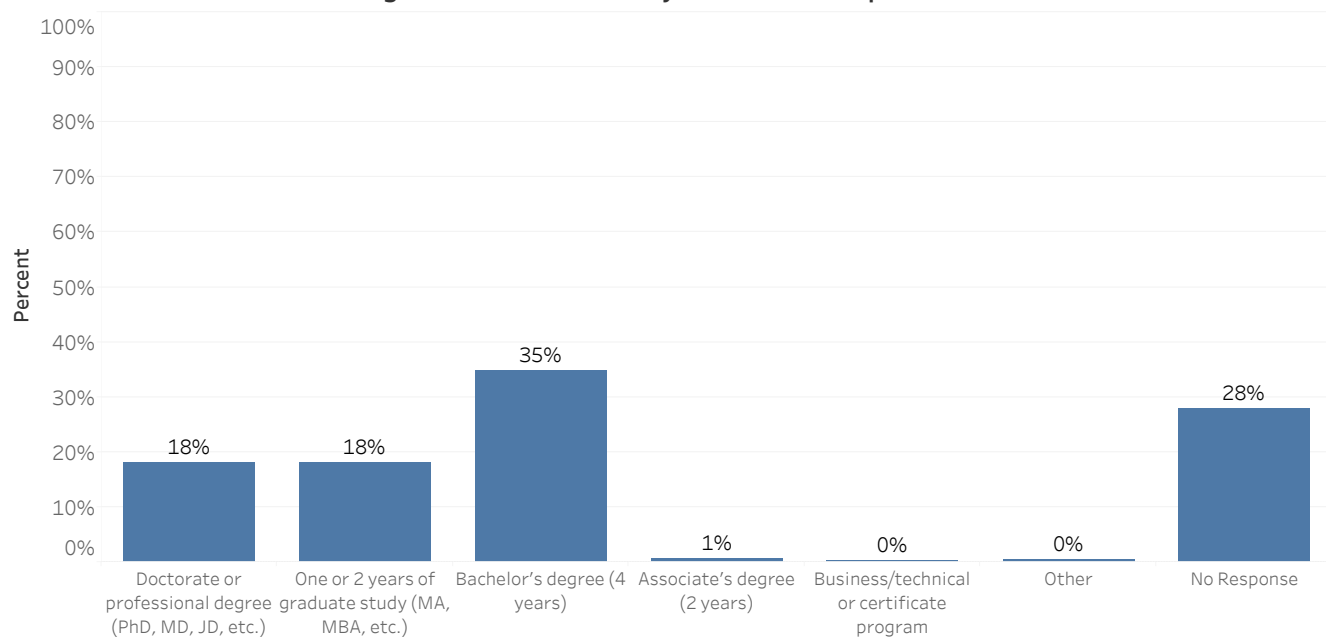
Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	57,328	58,616	59,259	17,081	15,657
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	20.2	20.0	20.1	23.9	23.8
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	21.0	20.9	21.2	24.4	24.3
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	20.4	20.3	20.3	23.2	23.3
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	20.8	20.9	20.9	23.5	23.4
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	20.7	20.6	20.8	23.9	23.8
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations



Data From Graph Above

	% of Graduates
Doctorate or professional degree (PhD, MD, JD, etc.)	18%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	18%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	35%
Associate's degree (2 years)	1%
Business/technical or certificate program	0%
Other	0%
No Response	28%

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