

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

Iowa Key Findings

Performance of 2019 Graduates

- In the 2019 Iowa graduating class, 22,965 graduates (an estimated 66 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 21.6. This compares to 22,675 (an estimated 67 percent) with an average of 22.2 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - The 2019 Iowa graduating class average English score was 20.8. This compares to 21.0 and 21.6 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Iowa graduating class average math score was 21.0. This compares to 21.2 and 21.5 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Iowa graduating class average reading score was 22.3. This compares to 22.5 and 22.7 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Iowa graduating class average science score was 21.8. This compares to 22.0 and 22.3 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
- In 2019, 29 percent of Iowa graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 30 and 33 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 25 percent of Iowa graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 24 and 20 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 67 percent of Iowa graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 70 and 75 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - 2019 Iowa graduates taking more advanced English coursework demonstrated markedly higher average English scores than those who did not. In fact, 71 percent of Iowa 2019 graduates taking four or more years of English met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 59 percent of students taking less than four years of English meeting the benchmark.
 - In 2019, 44 percent of Iowa graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 44 and 48 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - 2019 Iowa graduates taking more advanced math coursework demonstrated markedly higher average math scores than those who did not. In fact, 48 percent of Iowa 2019 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 8 percent of students taking less than three years of math meeting the benchmark.
 - In 2019, 52 percent of Iowa graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 54 and 55 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 44 percent of Iowa graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 45 and 48 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 10,057 (44 percent) of Iowa graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 10,926 and 10,966 (45 and 48 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, 4 percent of Iowa graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 3 and 2 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.

STEM

- In 2019, 11,276 Iowa graduates (49 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 Iowa graduating class average ACT STEM score of 21.7, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 21.8 and 22.2, respectively.
- Compared to 21 percent of 2019 Iowa graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 22 and 23, respectively.
 - 2019 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 23.3, compared to 20.7 for students not taking physics.
 - 2019 Iowa graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average science score of 28.7. This compares to 28.4 in 2015.
 - 2019 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 21.6, compared to 16.4 for students taking less than three years of math.
 - 2019 Iowa graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 28.3. This compares to 28.1 in 2015.

Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 19,229 Iowa graduates (84 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 Iowa 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:
 - 53 more students enrolling in college.
 - 61 more students persisting to year two.
 - 47 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - 74 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - 68 more students persisting to year four.
 - 73 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Iowa, 12,148 of the 2019 graduates (52.9 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 23.2, compared to an average of 19.9 for 10,817 of the 2019 graduates (47.1 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.
- 45,368 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Iowa ACT-tested graduates.
 - 24,466 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Iowa ACT-tested graduates.
 - For Iowa's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, the University of Northern Iowa, Kirkwood Community College, and Des Moines Area Community College - Ankeny.
 - For Iowa's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were South Dakota State University, the University of South Dakota, and Northwest Missouri State University.
- Compared to 66 percent of 2019 graduates nationally, 65 percent of Iowa 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 3,911 ACT fee waivers to qualified Iowa students across all grades. However, 779 students (19.9 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

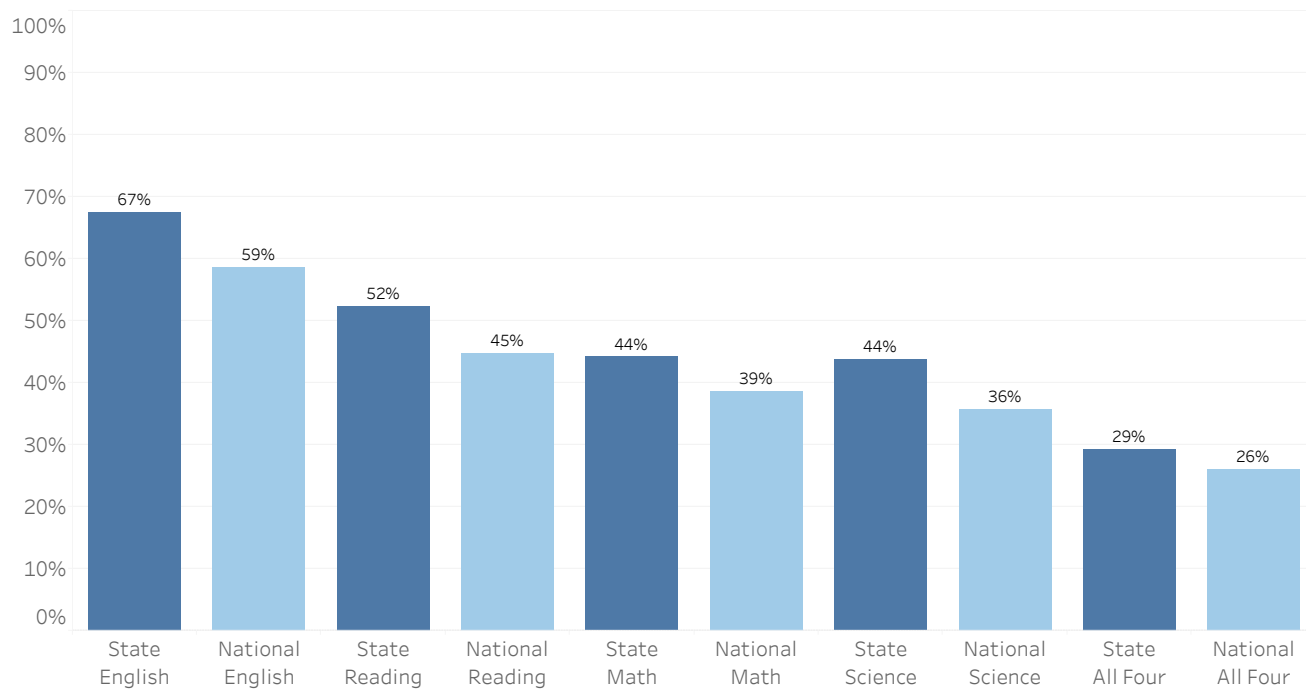
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - 6,097 students (27 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 24.4.
 - 12,901 students (56 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 21.4.
 - 1,202 students (5 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 18.2.
- In the Iowa graduating class of 2019, 2,556 students (11 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Iowa graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Elementary Education; and Business Administration and Management, General.
 - In the Iowa graduating class of 2019, 4,400 students (19 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 22.1. 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 Iowa graduating class of 2019, 1,594 (7 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 20.7.

Additional Points

- The Iowa ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with more than 330 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.
- There is good news in that 88% of Iowa's 2019 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 88% of Iowa's 2018 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 78% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 2,249 of the 2018 ACT-tested graduates from Iowa would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

IOWA 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

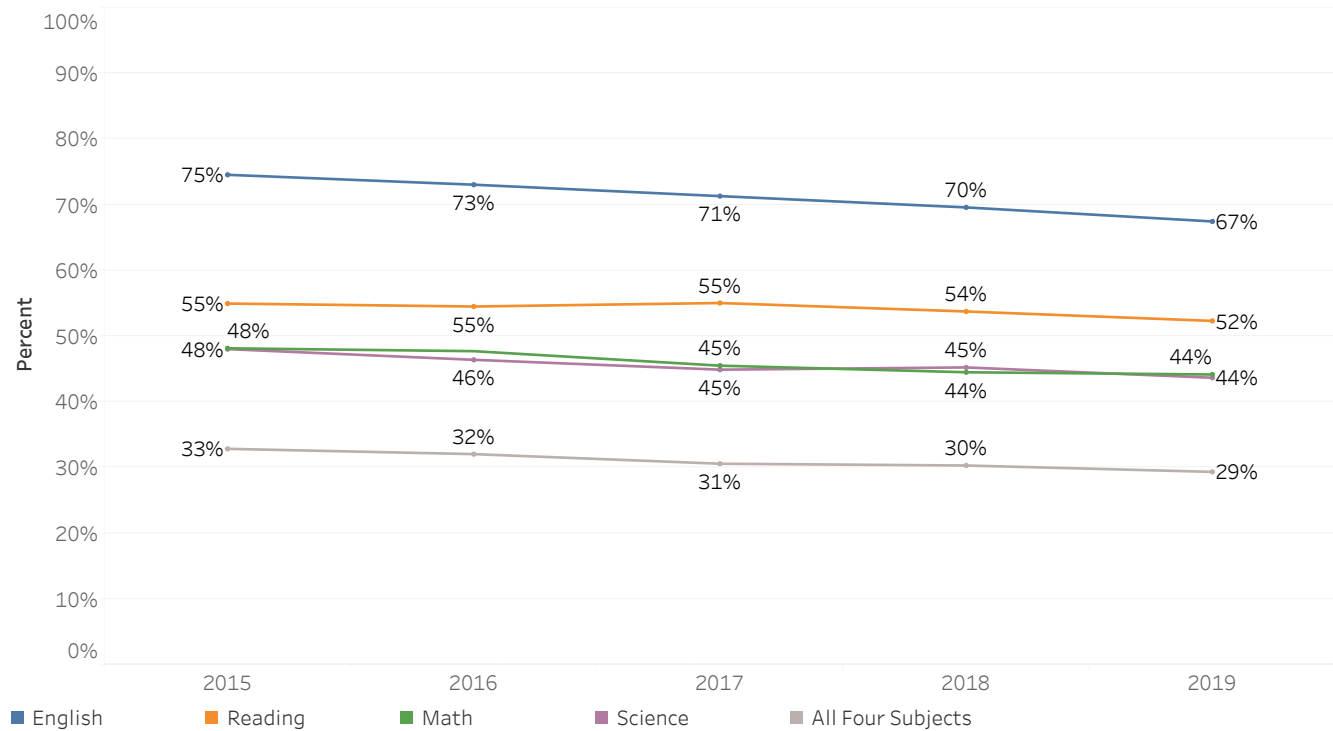
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
67%	59%	52%	45%	44%	39%	44%	36%	29%	26%

* 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.

IOWA 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

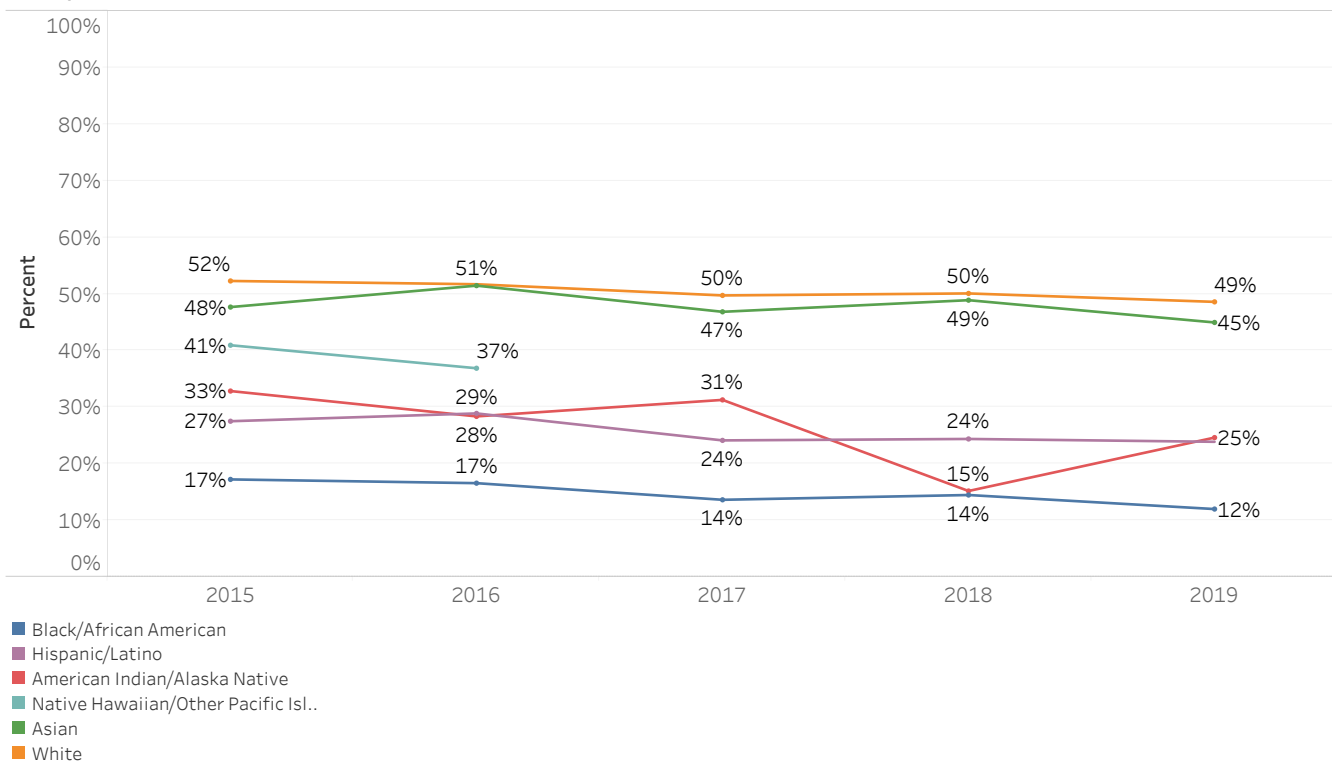
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	75%	55%	48%	48%	33%
2016	73%	55%	48%	46%	32%
2017	71%	55%	45%	45%	31%
2018	70%	54%	44%	45%	30%
2019	67%	52%	44%	44%	29%

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IOWA 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



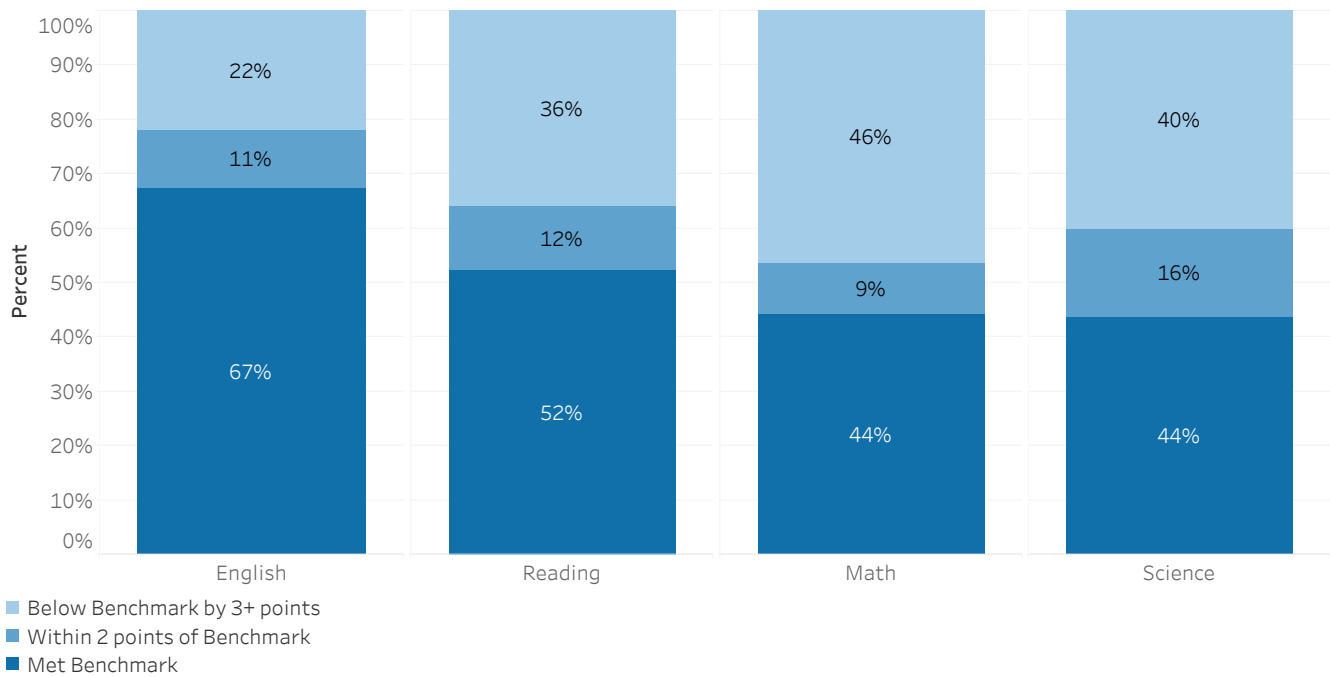
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	17%	27%	33%	41%	48%	52%
2016	17%	29%	28%	37%	51%	52%
2017	14%	24%	31%		47%	50%
2018	14%	24%	15%		49%	50%
2019	12%	24%	25%		45%	49%

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IOWA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



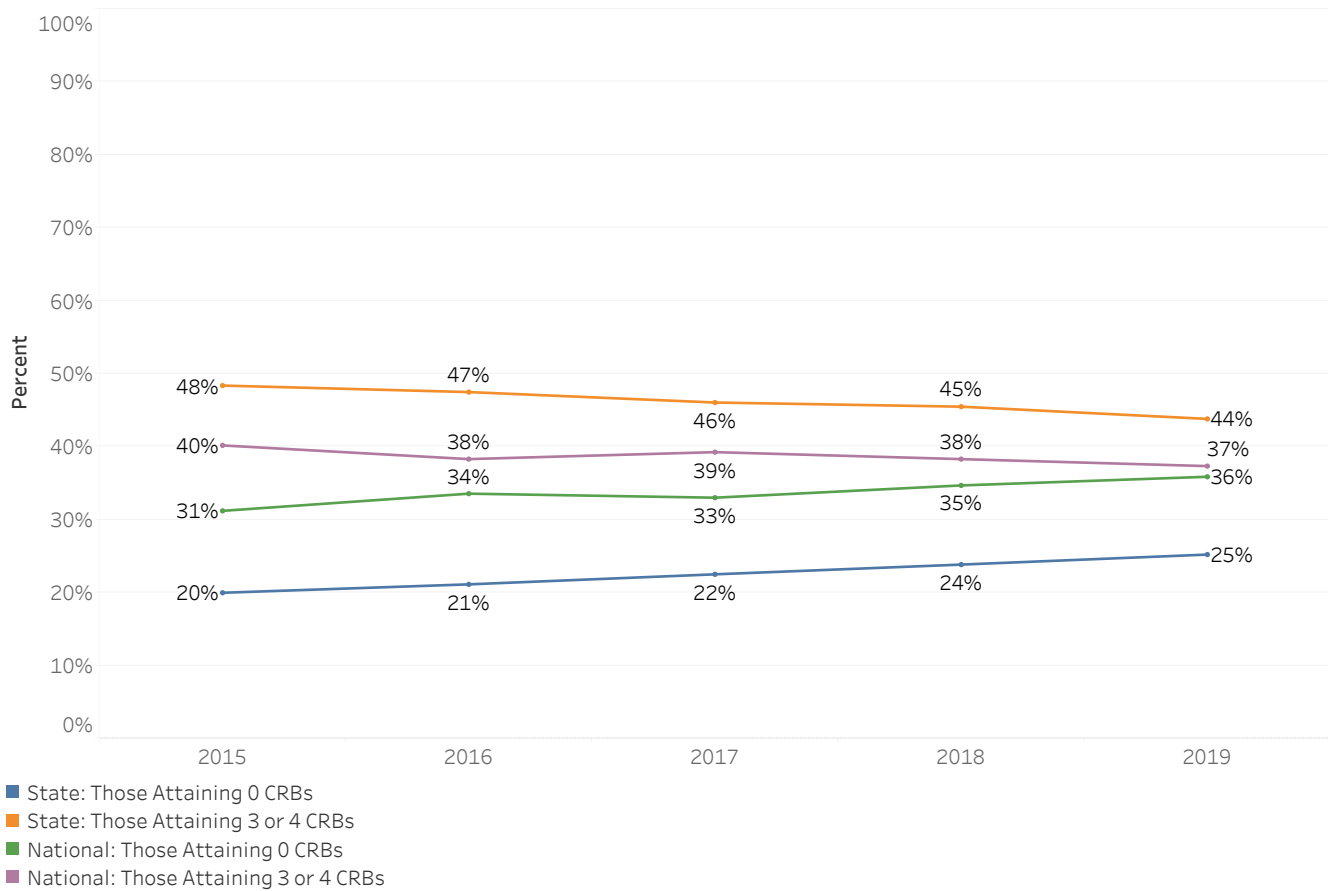
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	22%	11%	67%
Math	46%	9%	44%
Reading	36%	12%	52%
Science	40%	16%	44%

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



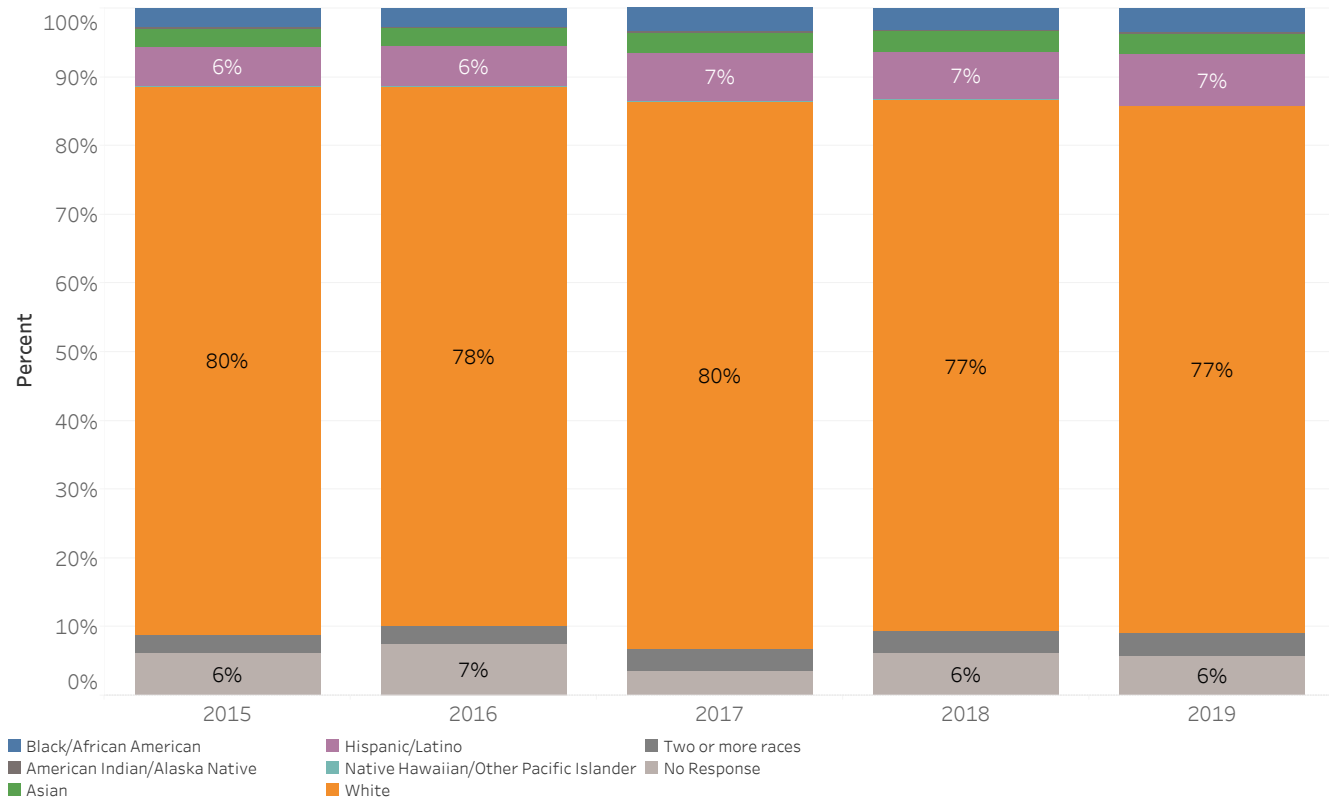
Data from Graph Above

	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	20%	48%	31%	40%
2016	21%	47%	34%	38%
2017	22%	46%	33%	39%
2018	24%	45%	35%	38%
2019	25%	44%	36%	37%

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IOWA 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	3%	0%	3%	6%	0%	80%	3%	6%
2016	3%	0%	3%	6%	0%	78%	3%	7%
2017	3%	0%	3%	7%	0%	80%	3%	4%
2018	3%	0%	3%	7%	0%	77%	3%	6%
2019	4%	0%	3%	7%	0%	77%	3%	6%

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IOWA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

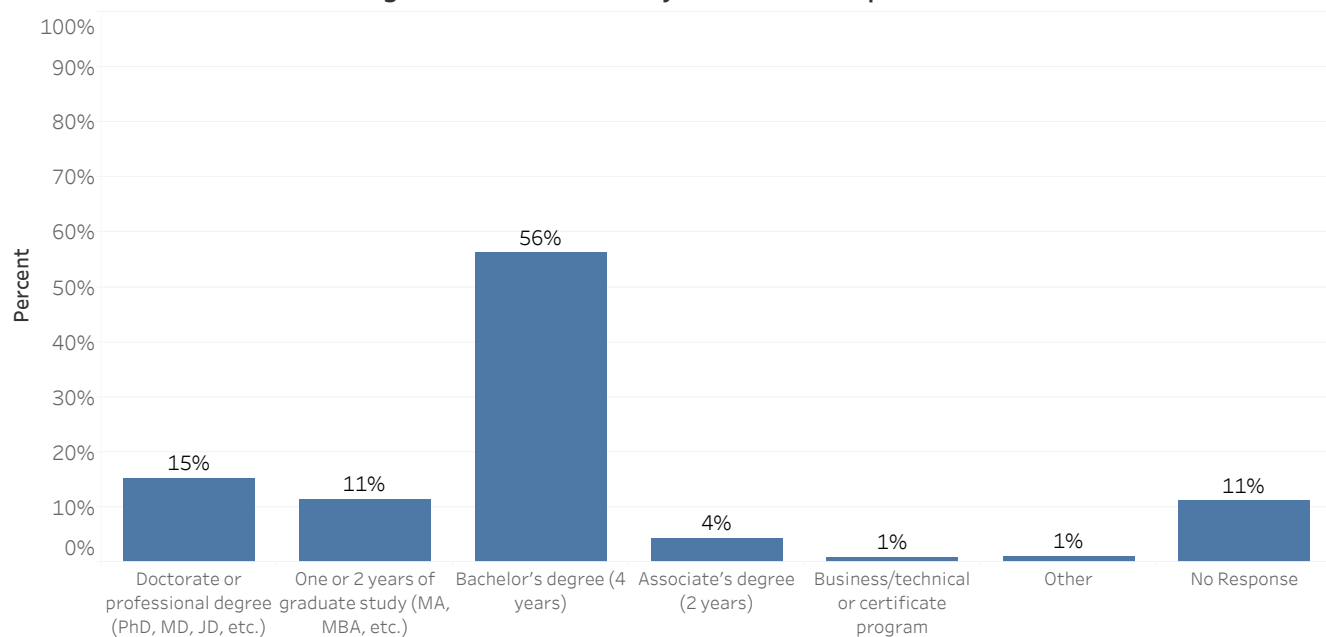
Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	22,675	23,132	23,306	24,028	22,965
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	21.6	21.4	21.2	21.0	20.8
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	22.7	22.7	22.6	22.5	22.3
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	21.5	21.4	21.3	21.2	21.0
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	22.3	22.3	22.1	22.0	21.8
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	22.2	22.1	21.9	21.8	21.6
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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IOWA 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.)	15%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	11%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	56%
Associate's degree (2 years)	4%
Business/technical or certificate program	1%
Other	1%
No Response	11%

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