

# The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

## Kentucky Key Findings

### Performance of 2019 Graduates

- In the 2019 Kentucky graduating class, 51,373 graduates (an estimated 100 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 19.8. This compares to 49,538 (an estimated 100 percent) with an average of 20.0 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
  - The 2019 Kentucky graduating class average English score was 19.5. This compares to 19.9 and 19.5 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
  - The 2019 Kentucky graduating class average math score was 19.2. This compares to 19.7 and 19.5 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
  - The 2019 Kentucky graduating class average reading score was 20.5. This compares to 20.8 and 20.3 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
  - The 2019 Kentucky graduating class average science score was 19.6. This compares to 20.1 and 20.1 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
- In 2019, 20 percent of Kentucky graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 22 and 21 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 40 percent of Kentucky graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 36 and 36 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 56 percent of Kentucky graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 59 and 60 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 29 percent of Kentucky graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 33 and 32 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 40 percent of Kentucky graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 43 and 39 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 29 percent of Kentucky graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 32 and 32 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 15,465 (30 percent) of Kentucky graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 17,358 and 15,867 (34 and 32 percent) out of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively. For reference, the national percentage of 2019 graduates meeting three or four benchmarks was 37 percent.
- 42 percent of 2019 Kentucky graduates were Proficient or Above Proficient in understanding complex texts.
- 58 percent of 2019 Kentucky graduates were Below Proficient in understanding complex texts.

## STEM

- In 2019, 22,797 Kentucky 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 Kentucky graduating class average ACT STEM score of 19.7, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 20.1 and 20.1, respectively.
- Compared to 13 percent of 2019 Kentucky graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 14 and 14, respectively.
- In 2019, 19,848 Kentucky graduates (39 percent) indicated taking physics. This compares to 41 and 42 percent for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
  - 40 percent of 2019 Kentucky graduates taking physics met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark, compared to 24 for students not taking physics.
  - 2019 Kentucky graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average science score of 28.8. This compares to 28.5 in 2015.
- 32 percent of 2019 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark, compared to 5 percent for students taking less than three years of math.
  - 2019 Kentucky graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 28.3. This compares to 28.0 in 2015.

## Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 17,548 Kentucky graduates (34 percent) were likely to attain the Gold ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 726,923 (41 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."
- In 2019, 34,590 Kentucky graduates (67 percent) were likely to attain the Silver ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 1,267,654 (71 percent) nationally.

## Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2019 ACT-tested Kentucky 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:
  - 129 more students enrolling in college.
  - 143 more students persisting to year two.
  - 107 fewer students needing remedial English.
  - 172 fewer students needing remedial math.
  - 151 more students persisting to year four.
  - 159 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

## Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Kentucky, 27,954 of the 2019 graduates (54.4 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 21.9, compared to an average of 17.3 for 23,419 of the 2019 graduates (45.6 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.
- 136,877 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Kentucky ACT-tested graduates.
  - 84,930 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Kentucky ACT-tested graduates.
  - For Kentucky's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were the University of Kentucky, the University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University, Eastern Kentucky University, and Morehead State University.
  - For Kentucky's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were the University of Cincinnati, The Ohio State University, and Indiana University Southeast.
- In the 2018-2019 academic year, ACT issued 14,516 ACT fee waivers to qualified Kentucky students across all grades. However, 4,026 students (27.7 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. Fee waivers represent a great opportunity for students of low socioeconomic status to retake without incurring any fees.
  - While African American Kentucky students represent 21 percent of fee waivers issued, they account for 22 percent of unused fee waivers. This compares to 32 and 34 nationally.
  - While White Kentucky students represent 56 percent of fee waivers issued, they account for 56 percent of unused fee waivers. This compares to 19 and 17 nationally.
  - While Hispanic Kentucky students represent 10 percent of fee waivers issued, they account for 9 percent of unused fee waivers. This compares to 35 and 36 nationally.

## Postsecondary Aspirations

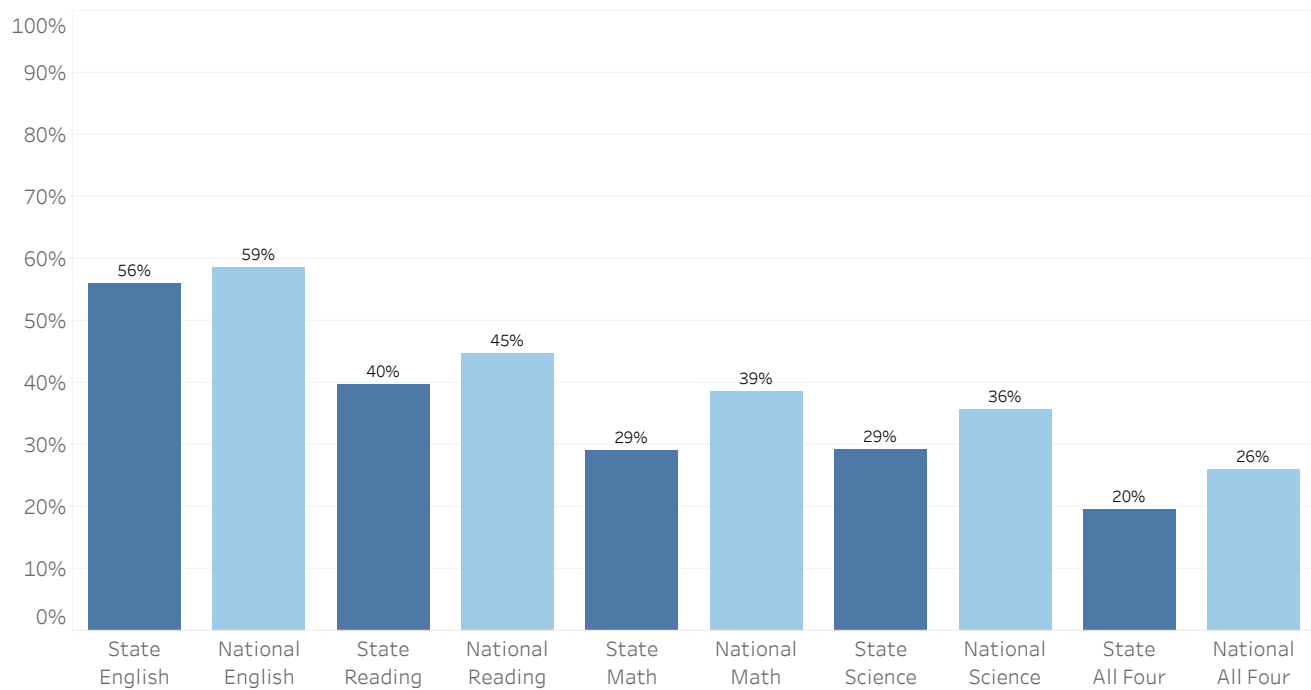
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
  - 13,417 students (26 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.2.
  - 20,050 students (39 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 20.1.
- In the Kentucky graduating class of 2019, 12,066 students (23 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Kentucky graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Biology, General.
  - In the Kentucky graduating class of 2019, 5,921 students (12 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 20.1. 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 Kentucky graduating class of 2019, 2,147 (4 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 20.3.

## Additional Points

- The Kentucky ACT State Organization consists of more than 430 members representing K-12, postsecondary education, workforce development, state agencies, and access organizations. Organized around ACT's mission of helping people achieve education and workplace success, the membership helps strengthen connections across the K-career continuum in the state.
- In 2019, ACT honored College and Career Readiness Champions in most states. The Kentucky honorees were:
  - High school senior: Grace Raber, Paducah Tilghman High School; K-12 professional: Anthony Zechella, Covington Catholic High School; Postsecondary Champion: Sophia Rucker-Taylor, Kentucky State University; Workforce professional: Amanda Jerome, Daviess County Public Schools.

# KENTUCKY 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

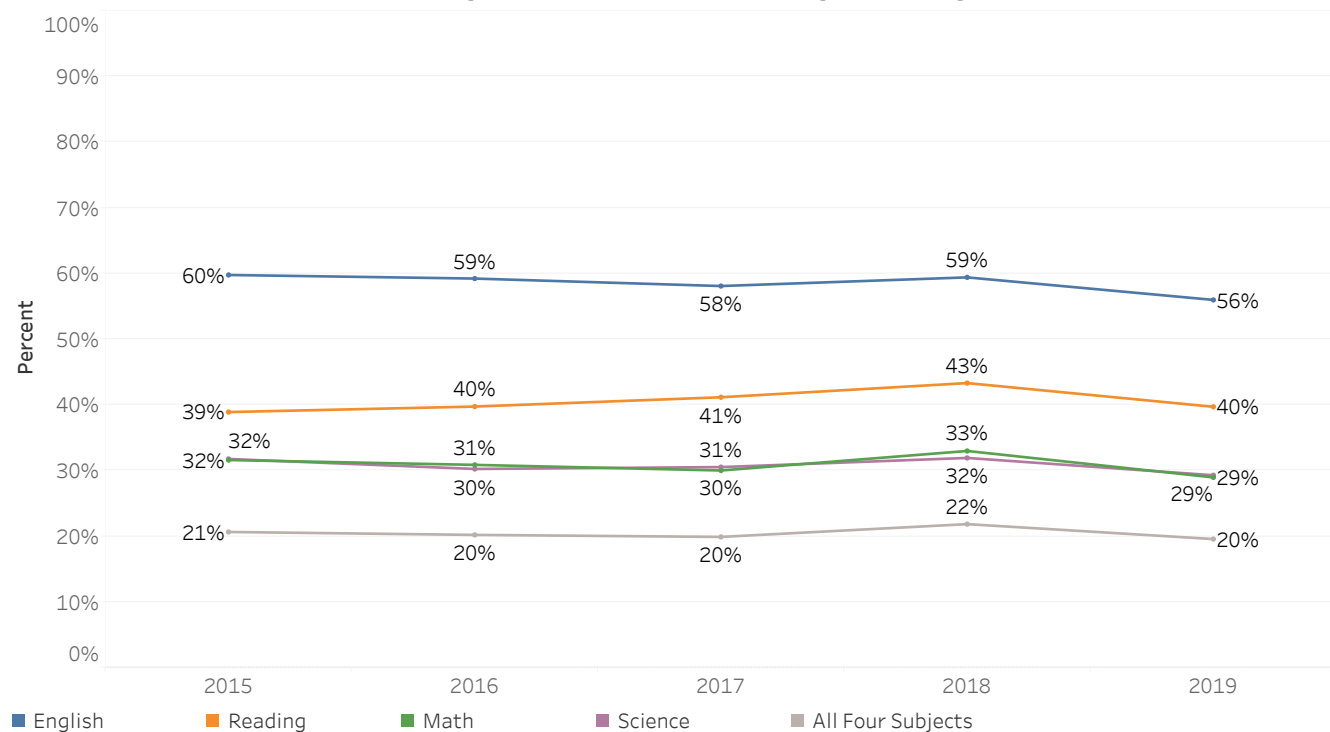
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
56%	59%	40%	45%	29%	39%	29%	36%	20%	26%

\* 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.

# KENTUCKY 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

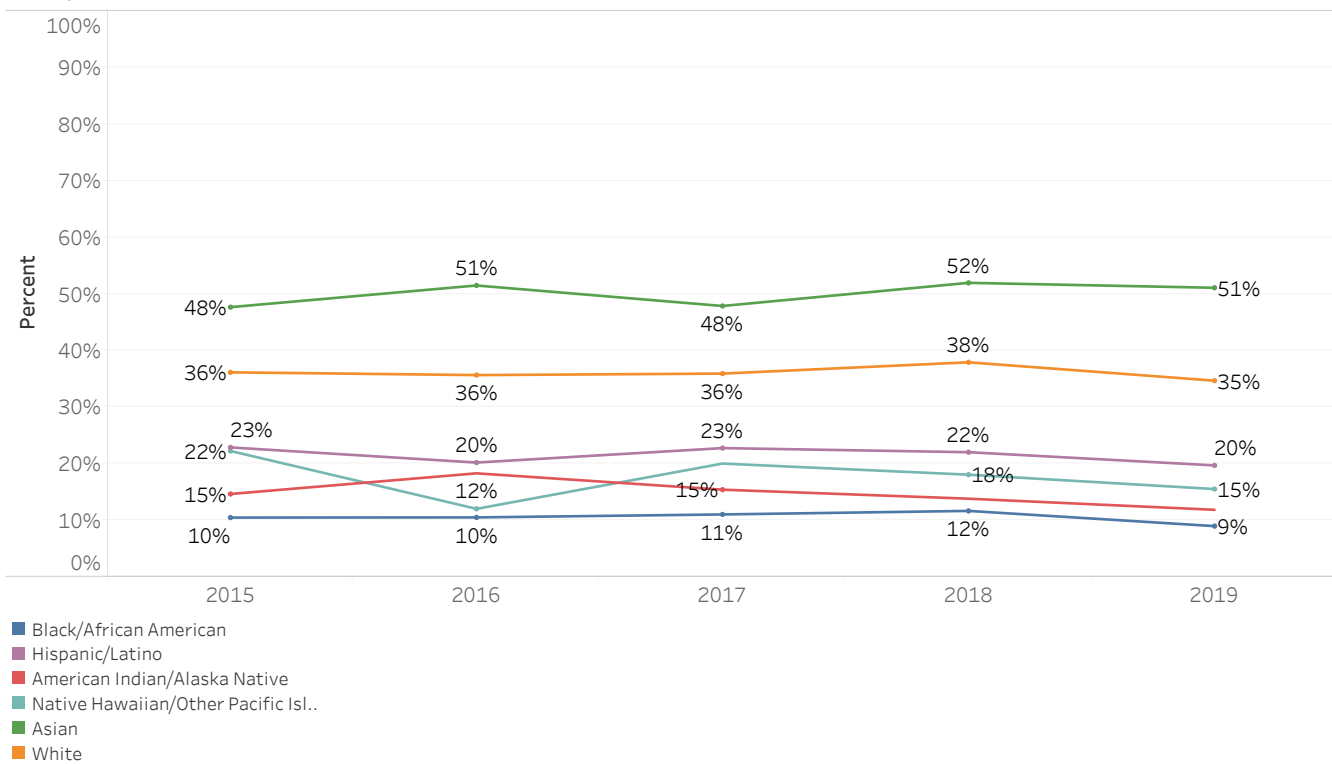
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	60%	39%	32%	32%	21%
2016	59%	40%	31%	30%	20%
2017	58%	41%	30%	31%	20%
2018	59%	43%	33%	32%	22%
2019	56%	40%	29%	29%	20%

\* 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.

# KENTUCKY 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



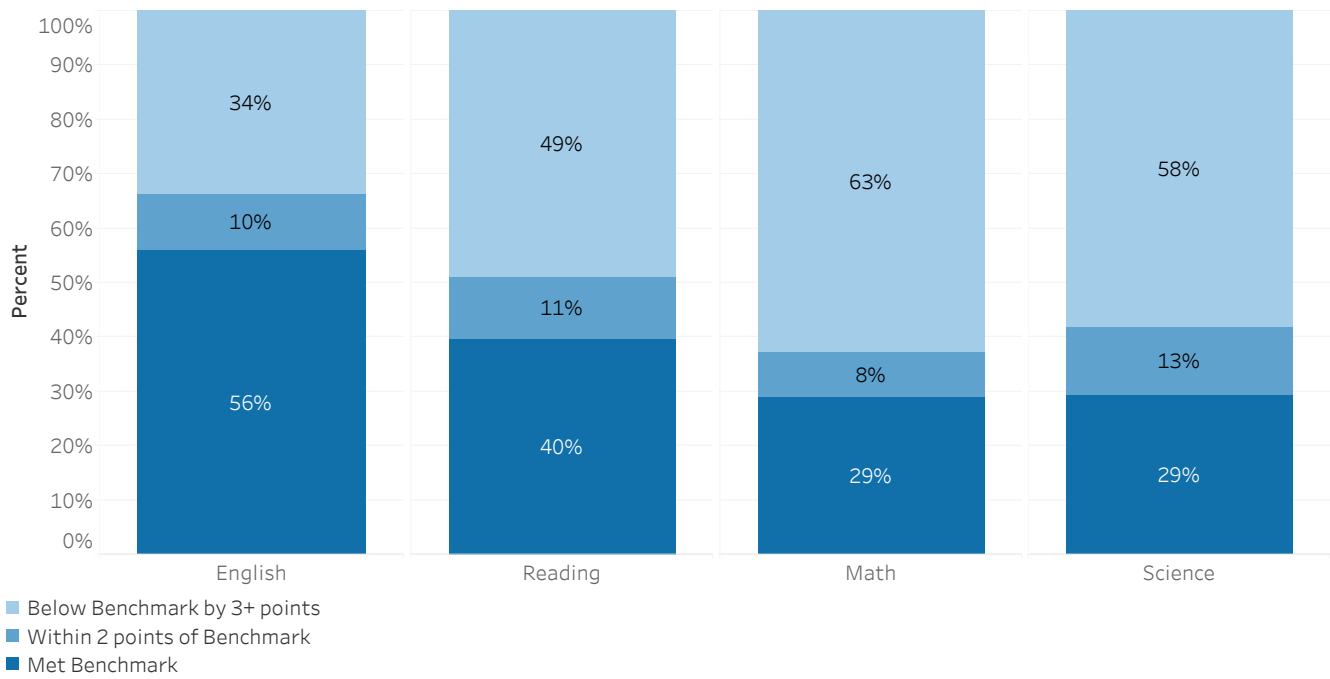
## Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	10%	23%	15%	22%	48%	36%
2016	10%	20%	18%	12%	51%	36%
2017	11%	23%	15%	20%	48%	36%
2018	12%	22%	14%	18%	52%	38%
2019	9%	20%	12%	15%	51%	35%

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

# KENTUCKY 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

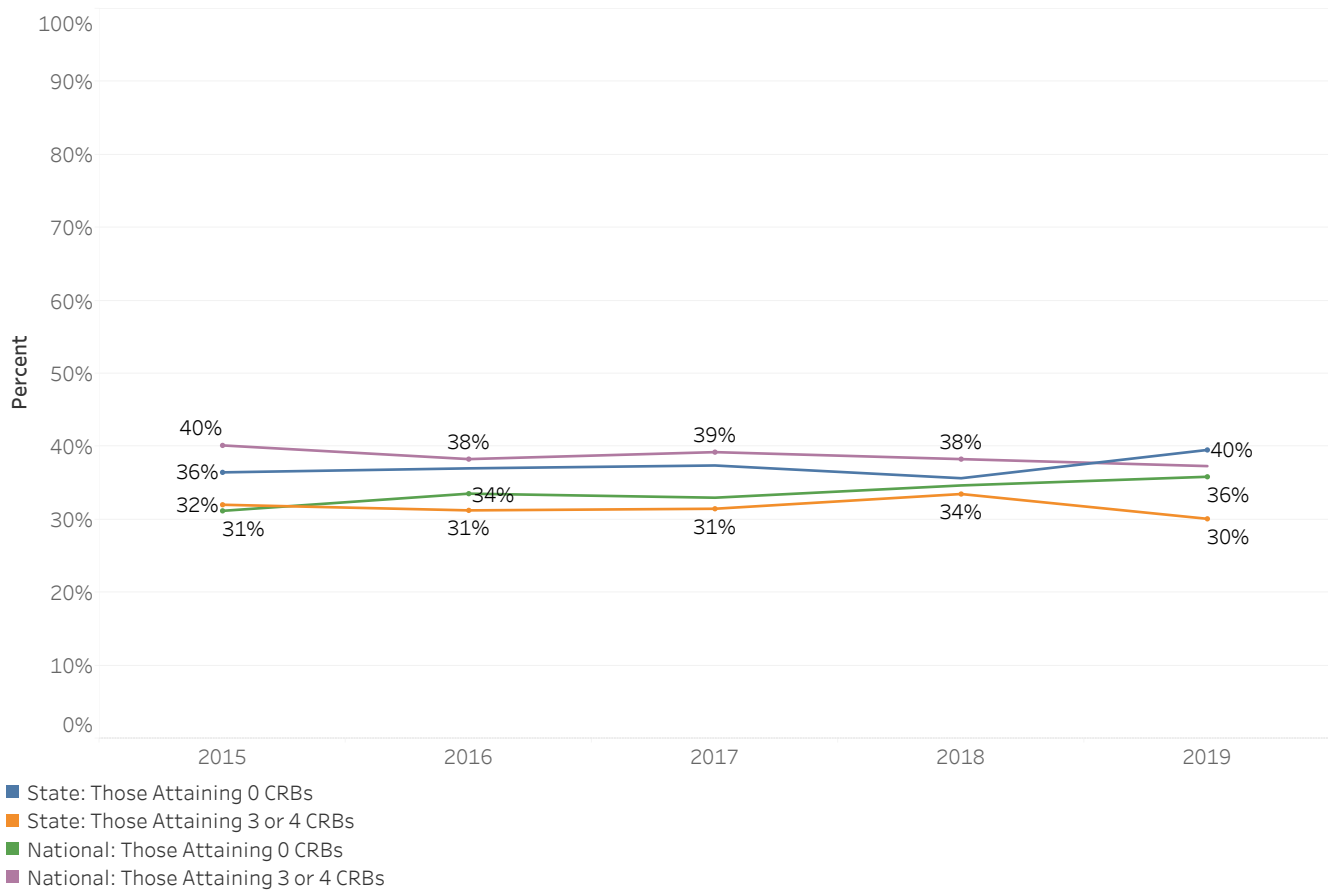
	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	34%	10%	56%
Math	63%	8%	29%
Reading	49%	11%	40%
Science	58%	13%	29%

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



# KENTUCKY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



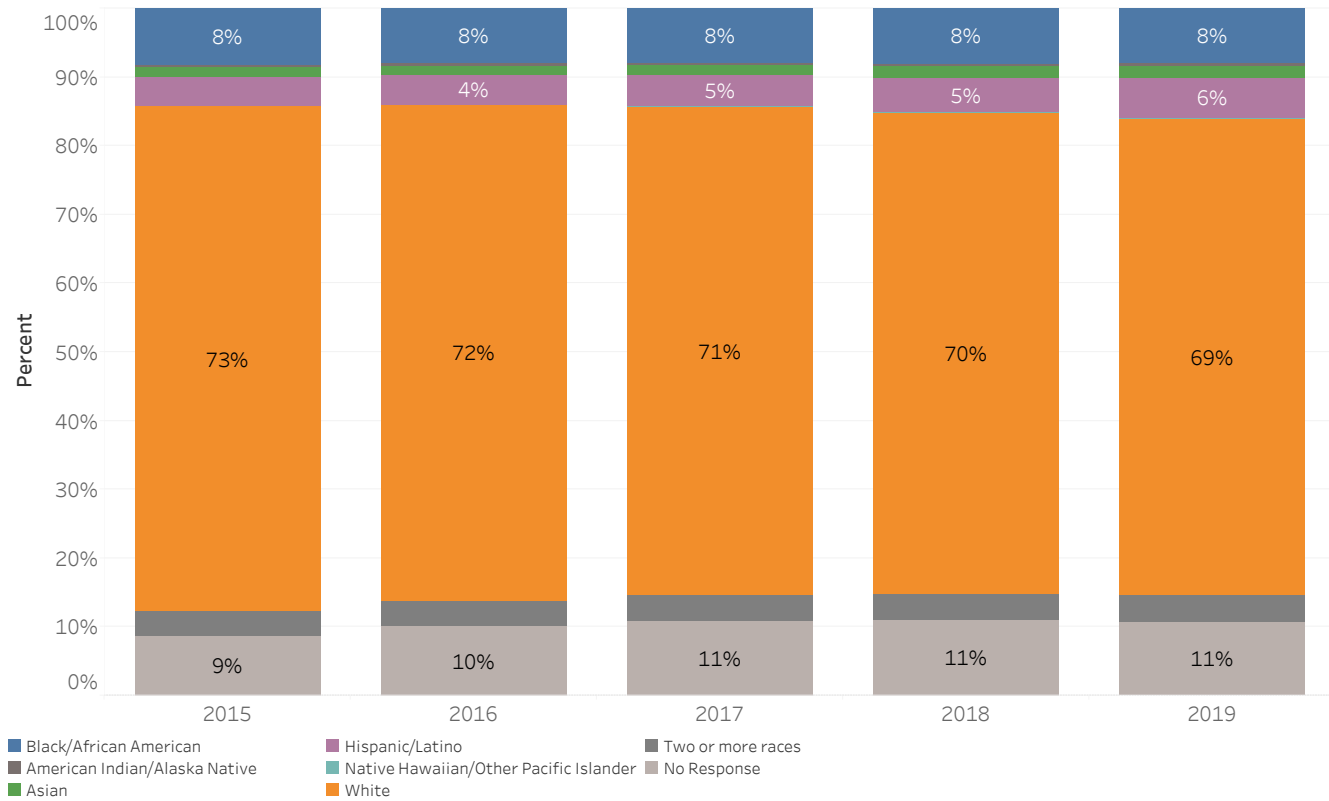
## Data from Graph Above

	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	36%	32%	31%	40%
2016	37%	31%	34%	38%
2017	37%	31%	33%	39%
2018	36%	34%	35%	38%
2019	40%	30%	36%	37%

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

# KENTUCKY 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	8%	0%	1%	4%	0%	73%	4%	9%
2016	8%	0%	1%	4%	0%	72%	4%	10%
2017	8%	0%	1%	5%	0%	71%	4%	11%
2018	8%	0%	2%	5%	0%	70%	4%	11%
2019	8%	0%	2%	6%	0%	69%	4%	11%

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

# KENTUCKY College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

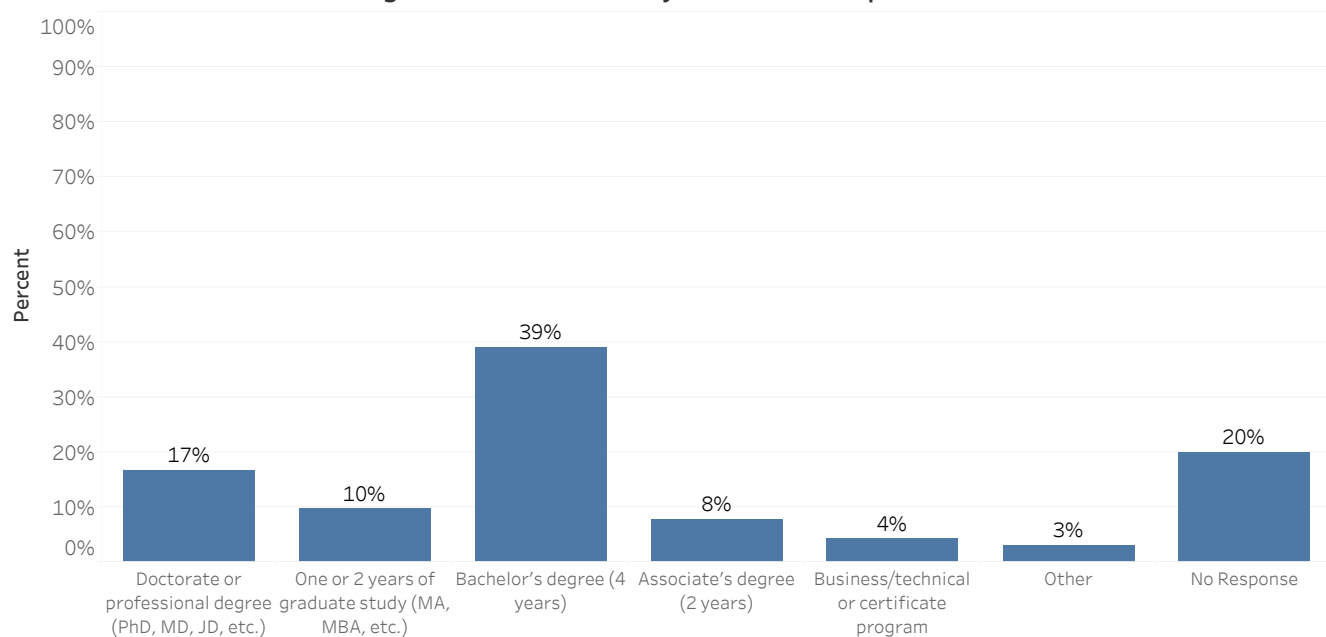
## Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	49,538	50,809	51,203	51,814	51,373
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	19.5	19.7	19.6	19.9	19.5
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	20.3	20.6	20.5	20.8	20.5
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	19.5	19.3	19.4	19.7	19.2
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	20.1	19.9	20.1	20.1	19.6
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.2	19.8
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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

# KENTUCKY 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.)	17%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	10%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	39%
Associate's degree (2 years)	8%
Business/technical or certificate program	4%
Other	3%
No Response	20%

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