

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

Montana Key Findings

Performance of 2019 Graduates

- Montana is in its sixth year of census testing all juniors.
- In the 2019 Montana graduating class, 10,003 graduates (an estimated 100 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 19.8. This compares to 9,489 (an estimated 100 percent) with an average of 20.4 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - There were 7,372 White graduates from Montana who took the ACT (74 percent) with an average Composite score of 20.5. This compares to 7,310 (75 percent) with an average of 20.4, and 7,149 (75 percent) with an average of 20.9, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 598 Hispanic graduates from Montana who took the ACT (6 percent) with an average Composite score of 18.5. This compares to 555 (6 percent) with an average of 18.4, and 481 (5 percent) with an average of 18.6, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 587 American Indian graduates from Montana who took the ACT (6 percent) with an average Composite score of 15.2. This compares to 551 (6 percent) with an average of 15.5, and 447 (5 percent) with an average of 16.1, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 84 Asian graduates from Montana who took the ACT (1 percent) with an average Composite score of 19.8. This compares to 75 (1 percent) with an average of 21.4, and 62 (1 percent) with an average of 21.0, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 64 African American graduates from Montana who took the ACT (1 percent) with an average Composite score of 15.6. This compares to 69 (1 percent) with an average of 17.5, and 69 (1 percent) with an average of 17.7, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.

- In 2019, 21 percent of Montana graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 21 and 24 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 41 percent of Montana graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 39 and 34 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 51 percent of Montana graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 52 and 57 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 34 percent of Montana graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 35 and 41 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 40 percent of Montana graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 41 and 44 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 32 percent of Montana graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 32 and 36 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 3,219 (32 percent) of Montana graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 3,187 and 3,468 (33 and 37 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 Montana graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 7 and 4 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.

STEM

- In 2019, 2,329 Montana graduates (23 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 Montana graduating class average ACT STEM score of 20.1, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 20.2 and 20.7, respectively.
- In 2019, 1,625 Montana graduates (16 percent) indicated taking physics. This compares to 17 and 31 percent for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - 2019 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 22.6, compared to 19.8 for students not taking physics.

Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 6,925 Montana graduates (69 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 Montana 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:
 - 25 more students enrolling in college.
 - 28 more students persisting to year two.
 - 23 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - 34 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - 30 more students persisting to year four.
 - 31 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Montana, 2,017 of the 2019 graduates (20.2 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 23.3, compared to an average of 19.0 for 7,986 of the 2019 graduates (79.8 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.
- 26,664 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Montana ACT-tested graduates.
 - 13,628 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Montana ACT-tested graduates.
 - For Montana's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Montana State University - Bozeman, University of Montana, Montana State University - Billings, Montana Tech - the University of Montana, and University of Montana Western.
 - For Montana's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were the University of Washington, Arizona State University, and the University of Oregon.
- In the 2018-2019 academic year, ACT issued 418 ACT fee waivers to qualified Montana students across all grades. However, 134 students (32.1 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.

Postsecondary Aspirations

- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - 1,285 students (13 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.6.
 - 2,034 students (20 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - 445 students (4 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 17.1.

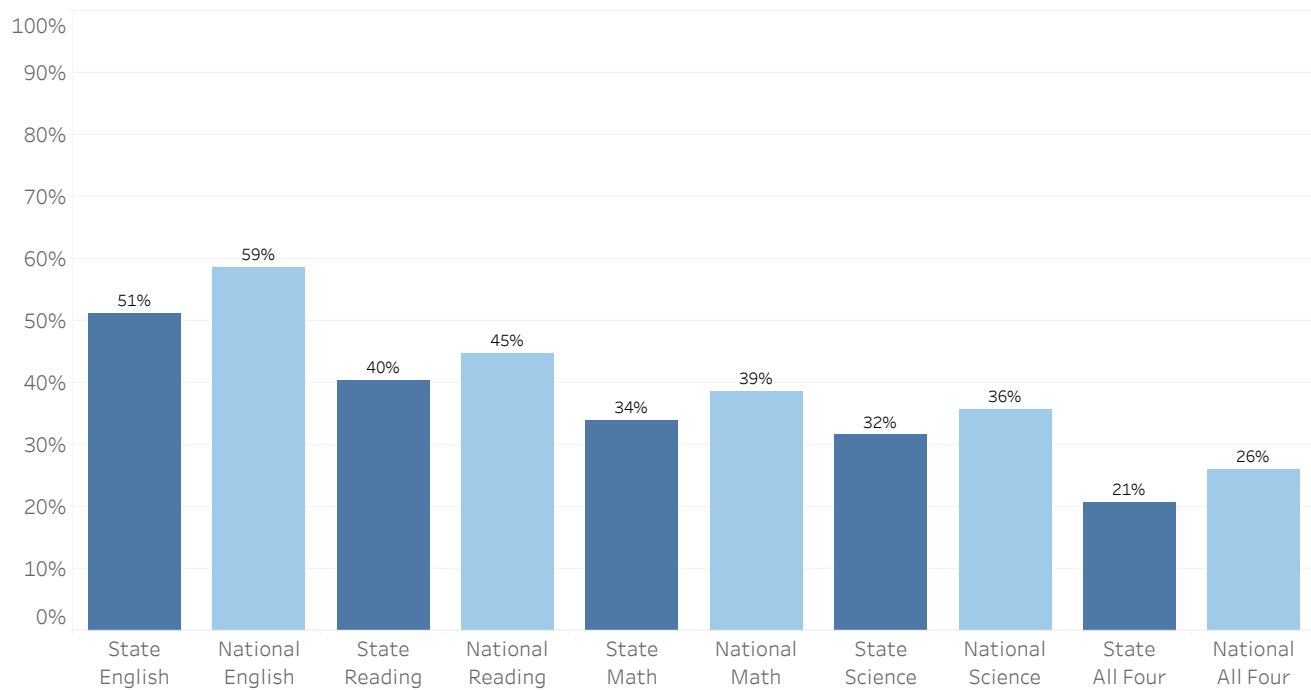
- In the Montana graduating class of 2019, 601 students (6 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Montana graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Mechanical Engineering.
 - In the Montana graduating class of 2019, 562 students (6 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 21.1. 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 Montana graduating class of 2019, 217 (2 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 21.1.

Additional Points

- The Montana ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with more than 140 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. The Montana ACT Council creates toolkits to share best practices around ACT administration and data for educators statewide.
- In 2019, ACT State Organizations honored College and Career Readiness Champions across the country, and Montana recognized recipients at the Montana Chamber of Commerce's Manufacturing and International Trade Day event. The state's honorees were:
 - Sophia Cajune, high school senior, Park High School; Jim Weber, welding/machining teacher, Capital High School; Carina Beck, director of the Allen Yarnell Center for Student Success, Montana State University; and Annie Chase, human resources director, Dick Anderson Construction.
- According to the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, the fastest-growing careers in Montana requiring education beyond high school are: nurse practitioners, respiratory therapists, physician assistants, software developers, and diagnostic medical sonographers.

MONTANA 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

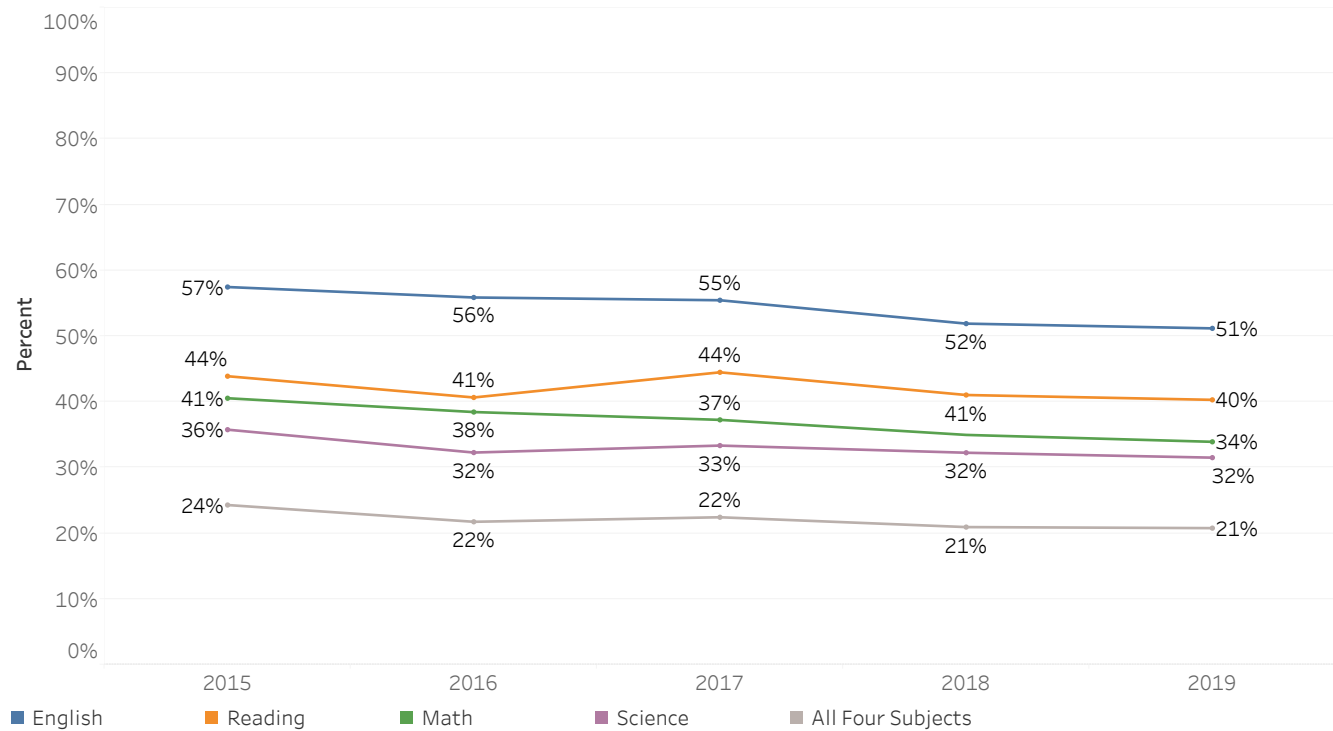
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
51%	59%	40%	45%	34%	39%	32%	36%	21%	26%

* 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.

MONTANA 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

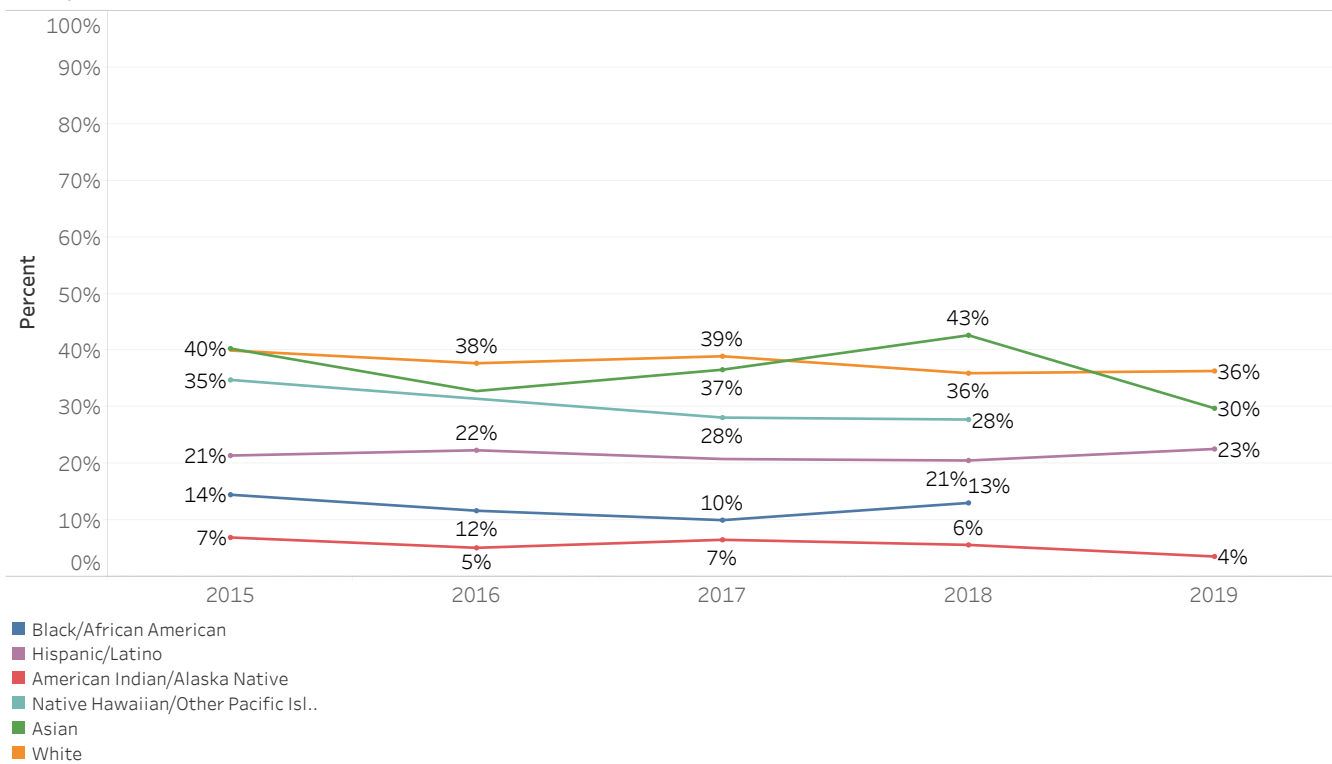
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	57%	44%	41%	36%	24%
2016	56%	41%	38%	32%	22%
2017	55%	44%	37%	33%	22%
2018	52%	41%	35%	32%	21%
2019	51%	40%	34%	32%	21%

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MONTANA 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



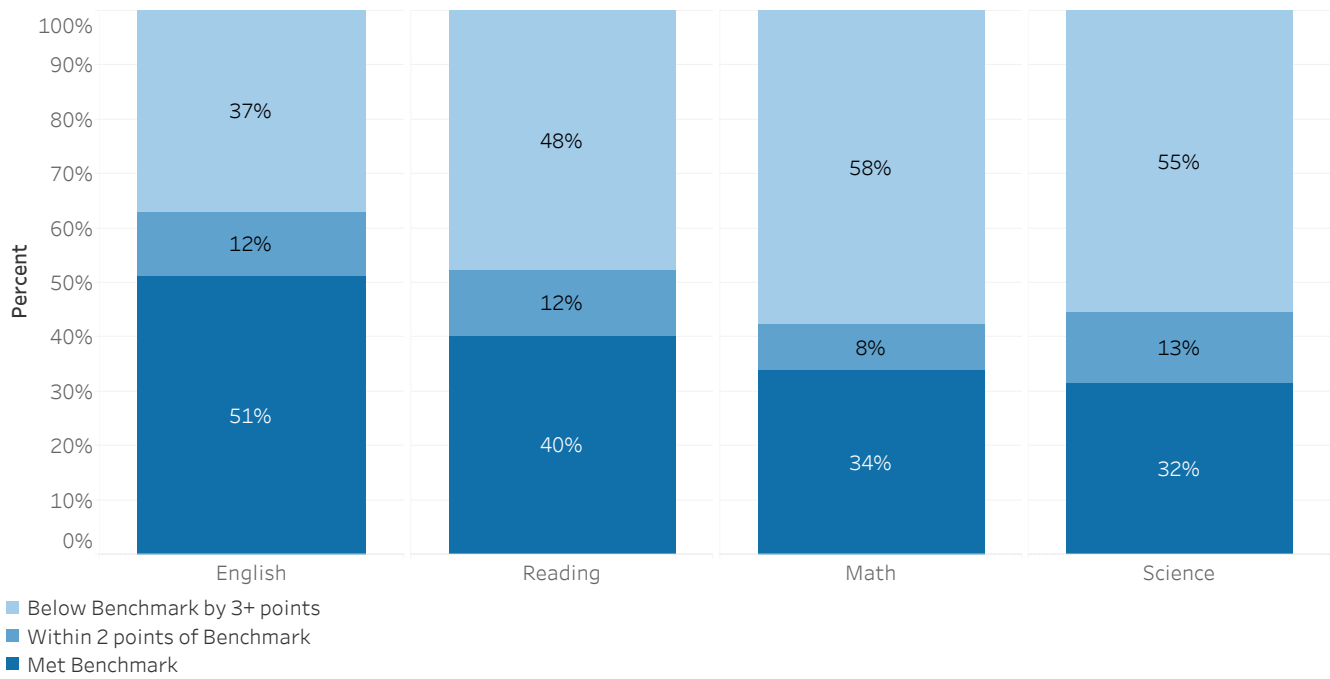
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	14%	21%	7%	35%	40%	40%
2016	12%	22%	5%		33%	38%
2017	10%	21%	7%	28%	37%	39%
2018	13%	21%	6%	28%	43%	36%
2019		23%	4%		30%	36%

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MONTANA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



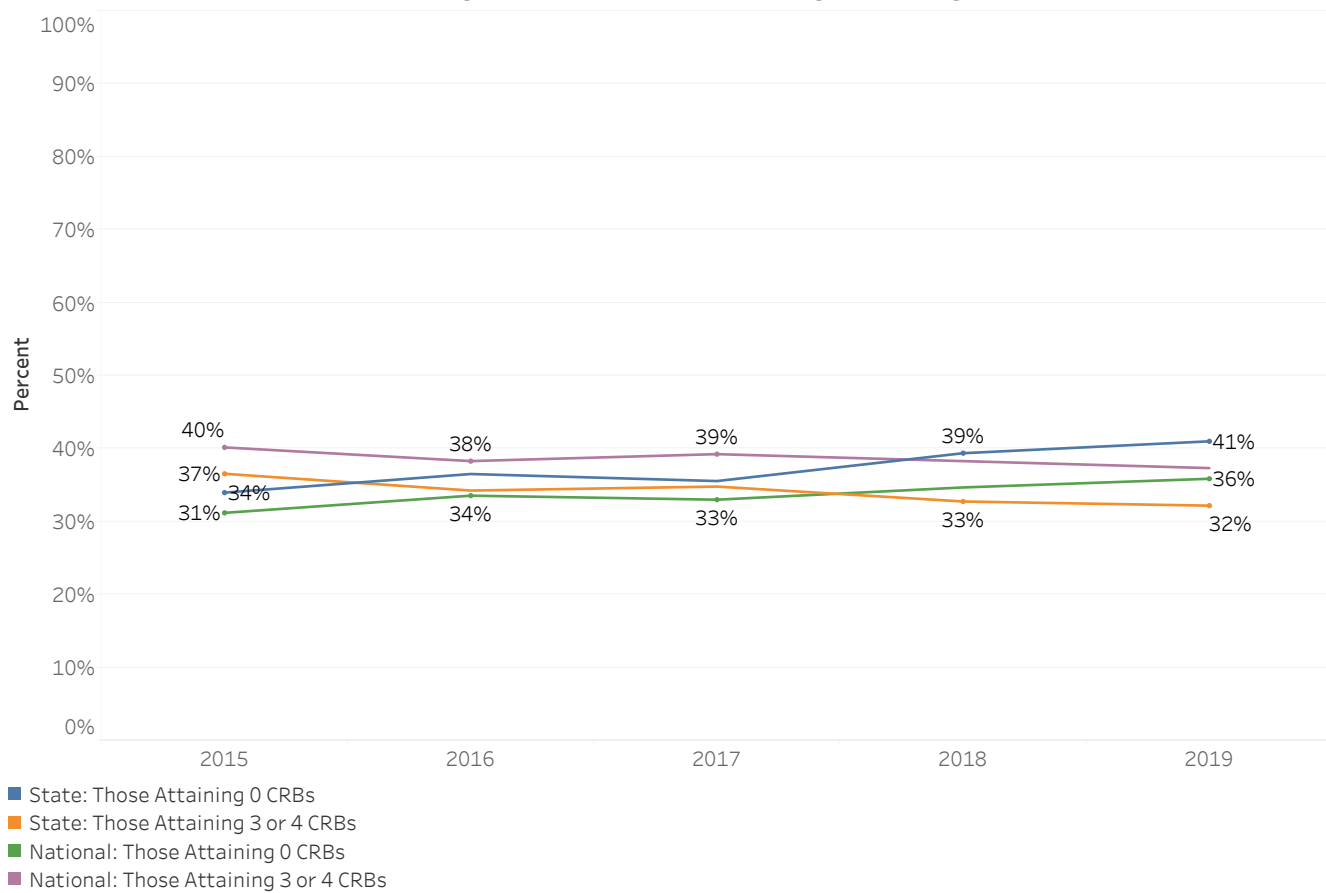
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	37%	12%	51%
Math	58%	8%	34%
Reading	48%	12%	40%
Science	55%	13%	32%

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



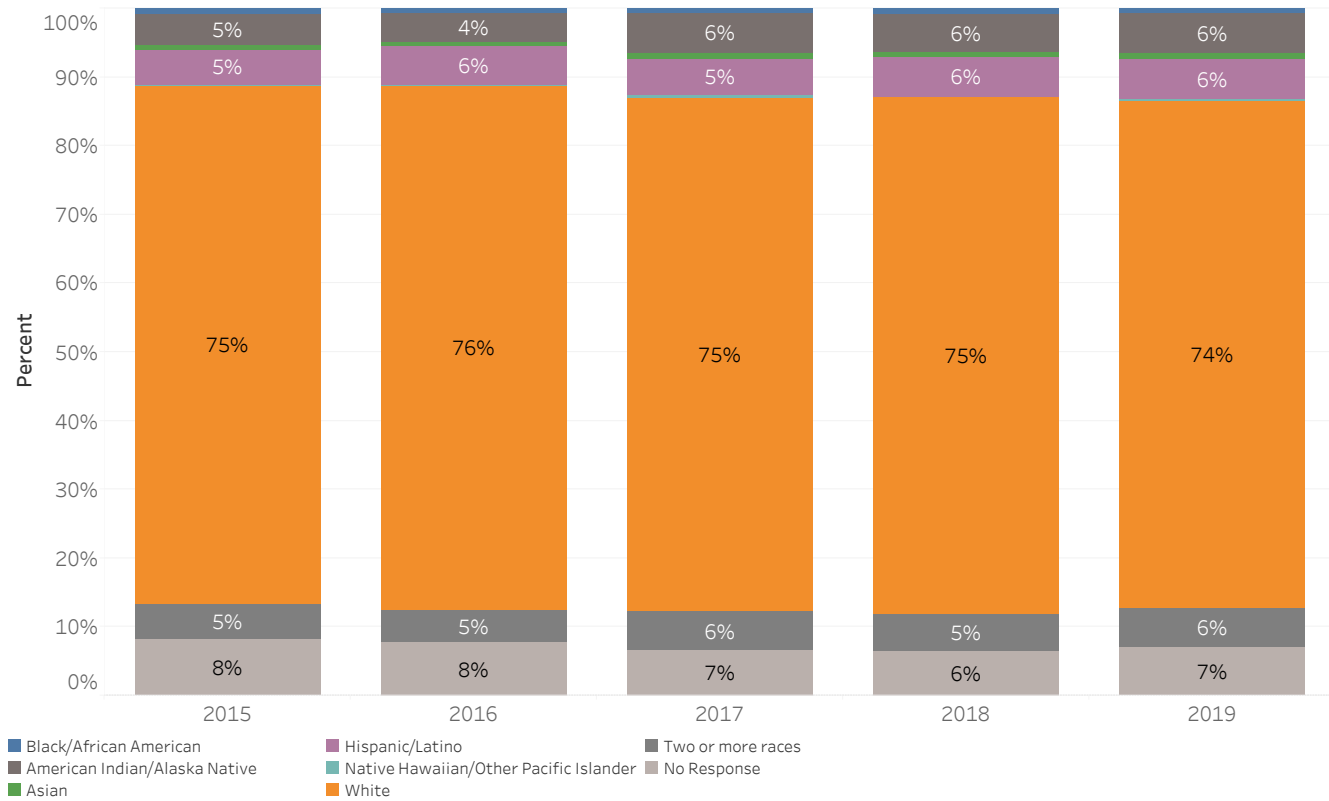
Data from Graph Above

	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	34%	37%	31%	40%
2016	37%	34%	34%	38%
2017	36%	35%	33%	39%
2018	39%	33%	35%	38%
2019	41%	32%	36%	37%

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MONTANA 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	1%	5%	1%	5%	0%	75%	5%	8%
2016	1%	4%	1%	6%	0%	76%	5%	8%
2017	1%	6%	1%	5%	0%	75%	6%	7%
2018	1%	6%	1%	6%	0%	75%	5%	6%
2019	1%	6%	1%	6%	0%	74%	6%	7%

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MONTANA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

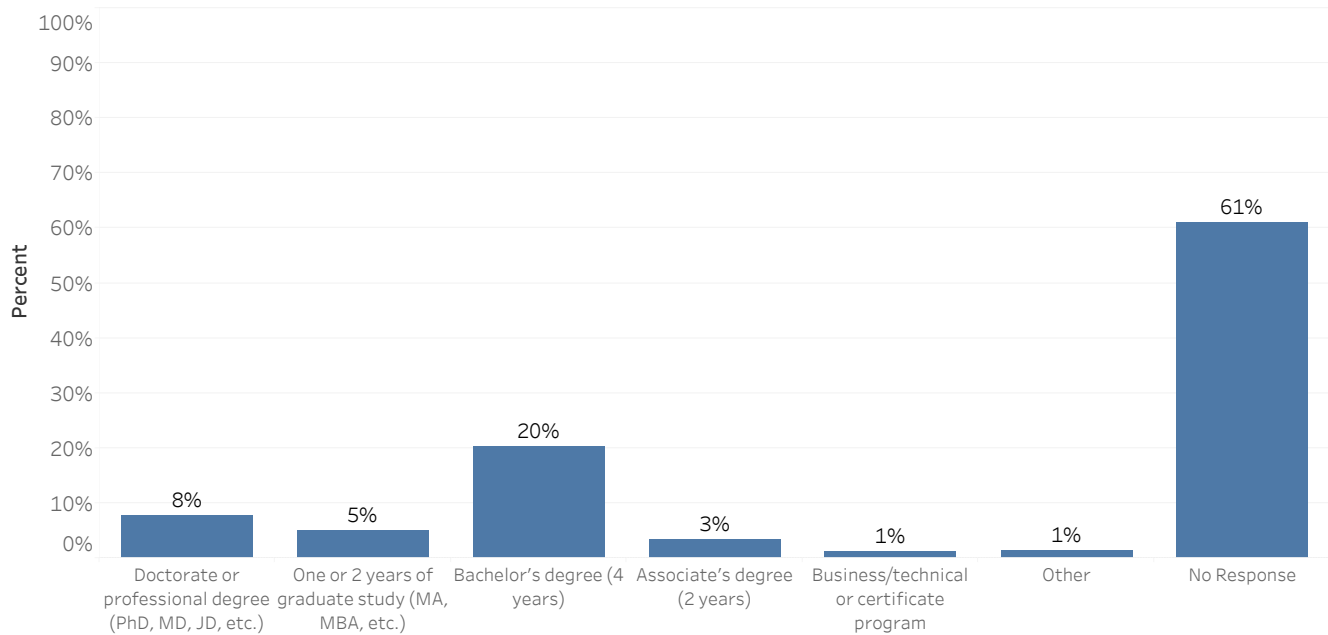
Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	9,489	9,568	9,938	9,731	10,003
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	19.1	19.0	19.0	18.7	18.7
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	20.4	20.2	20.2	19.9	19.7
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.0	19.9
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	20.4	20.3	20.3	20.0	19.8
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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MONTANA 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.)	8%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	5%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	20%
Associate's degree (2 years)	3%
Business/technical or certificate program	1%
Other	1%
No Response	61%

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