

# The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

## Nebraska Key Findings

### Performance of 2019 Graduates

- In the 2019 Nebraska graduating class, 24,744 graduates (an estimated 100 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 20.0. This compares to 18,347 (an estimated 88 percent) with an average of 21.5 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
  - There were 1,271 African American graduates from Nebraska who took the ACT (5 percent) with an average Composite score of 16.1. This compares to 1,264 (5 percent) with an average of 15.9, and 768 (4 percent) with an average of 17.3, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
  - There were 243 American Indian graduates from Nebraska who took the ACT (1 percent) with an average Composite score of 15.6. This compares to 224 (1 percent) with an average of 15.6, and 117 (1 percent) with an average of 17.5, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
  - There were 15,656 White graduates from Nebraska who took the ACT (63 percent) with an average Composite score of 21.4. This compares to 16,024 (65 percent) with an average of 21.4, and 13,405 (73 percent) with an average of 22.4, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
  - There were 3,759 Hispanic graduates from Nebraska who took the ACT (15 percent) with an average Composite score of 17.3. This compares to 3,699 (15 percent) with an average of 17.4, and 2,257 (12 percent) with an average of 18.4, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
  - The 2019 Nebraska graduating class average English score was 19.4. This compares to 19.4 and 21.1 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
  - The 2019 Nebraska graduating class average math score was 19.7. This compares to 19.8 and 21.0 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
  - The 2019 Nebraska graduating class average reading score was 20.3. This compares to 20.4 and 21.9 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
  - The 2019 Nebraska graduating class average science score was 20.2. This compares to 20.1 and 21.6 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.

- In 2019, 22 percent of Nebraska graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 22 and 29 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 40 percent of Nebraska graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 39 and 26 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 55 percent of Nebraska graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 56 and 69 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 40 percent of Nebraska graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 40 and 49 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 33 percent of Nebraska graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 33 and 42 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
  - In 2019, 8,230 (33 percent) of Nebraska graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 8,227 and 7,922 (34 and 43 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, 12 percent of Nebraska graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 9 and 3 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.

## STEM

- In 2019, 10,330 Nebraska graduates (42 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 Nebraska graduating class average ACT STEM score of 20.2, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 20.2 and 21.5, respectively.
  - Compared to 16 percent of 2019 Nebraska graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 16 and 21, respectively.
  - 2019 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 22.4, compared to 19.2 for students not taking physics.
  - 2019 Nebraska graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average science score of 28.6. This compares to 28.4 in 2015.
  - 2019 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 20.7, compared to 15.6 for students taking less than three years of math.
  - 2019 Nebraska graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 28.4. This compares to 28.2 in 2015.

## Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 16,873 Nebraska graduates (68 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 Nebraska 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:
  - 61 more students enrolling in college.
  - 68 more students persisting to year two.
  - 49 fewer students needing remedial English.
  - 76 fewer students needing remedial math.
  - 72 more students persisting to year four.
  - 76 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

## Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Nebraska, 12,049 of the 2019 graduates (48.7 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 22.9, compared to an average of 17.3 for 12,695 of the 2019 graduates (51.3 percent) who took the ACT only once.
- 64,464 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Nebraska ACT-tested graduates.
  - 35,120 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Nebraska ACT-tested graduates.
  - For Nebraska's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska at Kearney, Wayne State College, and Metropolitan Community College - NE.
  - For Nebraska's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, and Iowa State University.
- Compared to 66 percent of 2019 graduates nationally, 64 percent of Nebraska 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 3,855 ACT fee waivers to qualified Nebraska students across all grades. However, 871 students (22.6 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 retest without incurring any fees.

## Postsecondary Aspirations

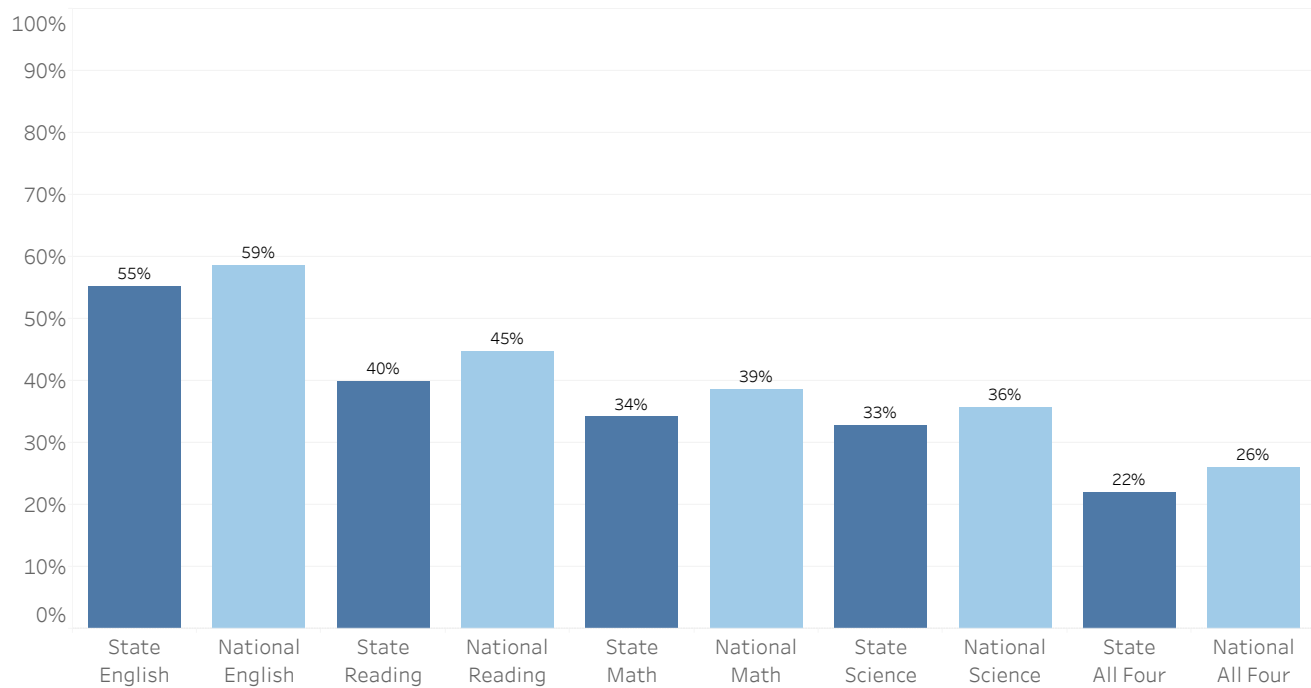
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
  - 5,817 students (24 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.7.
  - 10,133 students (41 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 20.7.
  - 2,685 students (11 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 16.5.
- In the Nebraska graduating class of 2019, 4,349 students (18 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Nebraska graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Biology, General.

## Additional Points

- The Nebraska ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with more than 170 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 Nebraska honorees were:
  - High school senior: Saray Bedoya, Papillion-LaVista High School; K-12 professional: Jana Goranson, Guidance Counselor, Gordon-Rushville Public Schools; postsecondary professional: Tammy Green, Director Workforce Innovation - Career Skills & AE, Metropolitan Community College - Omaha; and workforce professional: Keith Station, Director of Business Relations, Heartland Workforce Solutions.
- There is good news in that 75% of Nebraska's 2019 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 81% of Nebraska's 2018 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 62% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 4,726 of the 2018 ACT-tested graduates from Nebraska would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

# NEBRASKA 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

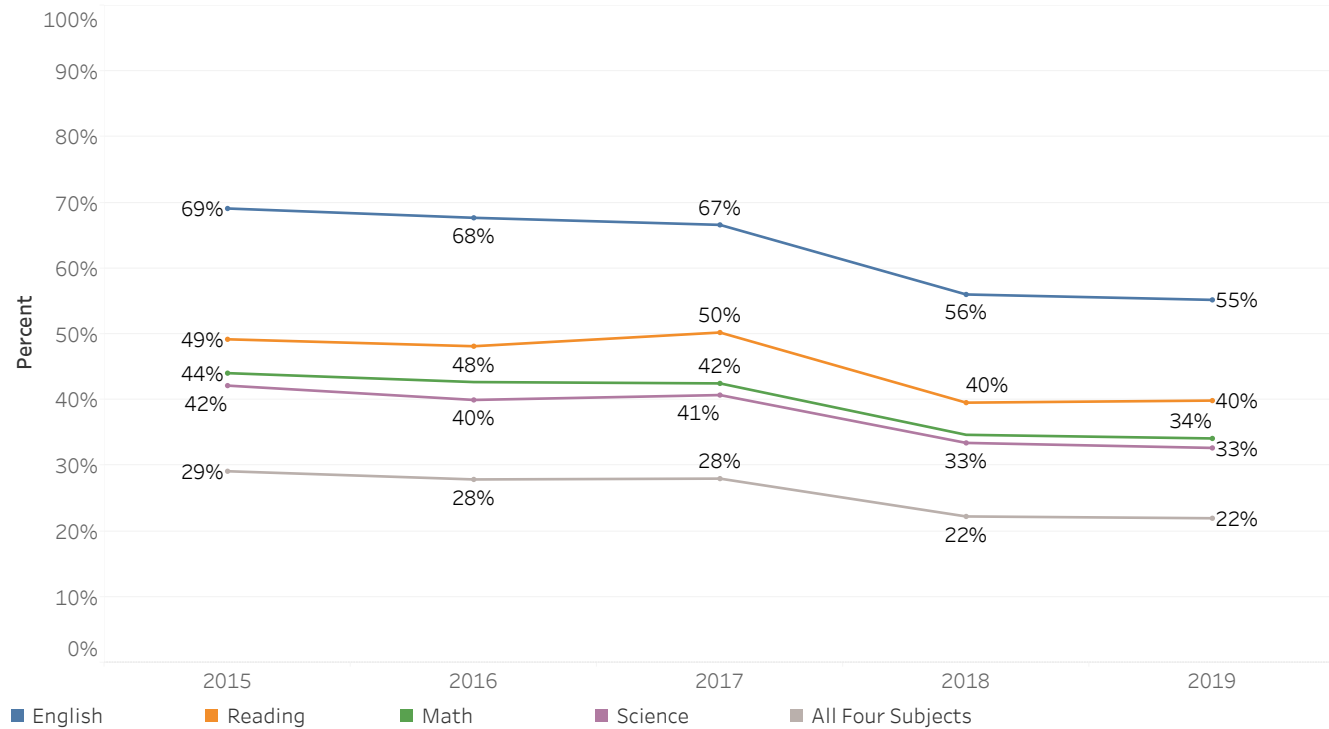
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
55%	59%	40%	45%	34%	39%	33%	36%	22%	26%

\* 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.

# NEBRASKA 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

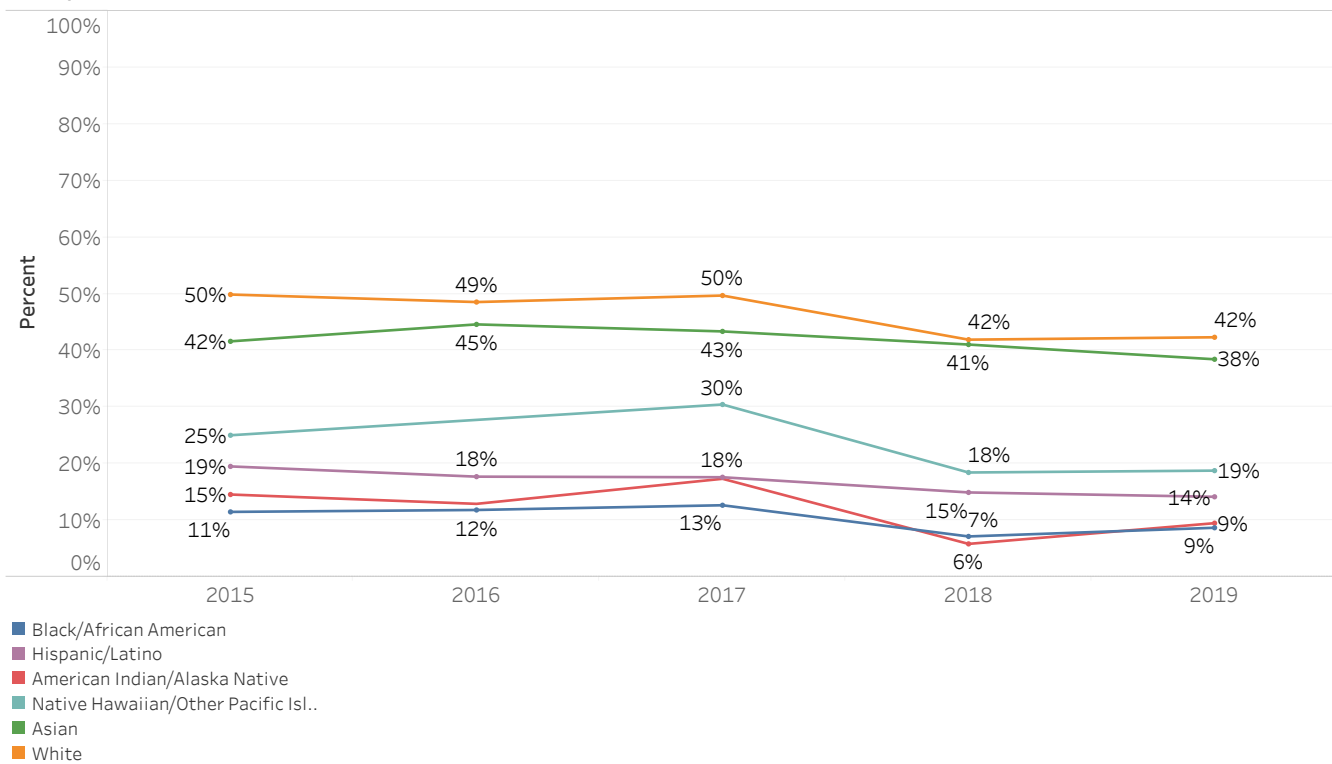
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	69%	49%	44%	42%	29%
2016	68%	48%	43%	40%	28%
2017	67%	50%	42%	41%	28%
2018	56%	40%	35%	33%	22%
2019	55%	40%	34%	33%	22%

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# NEBRASKA 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



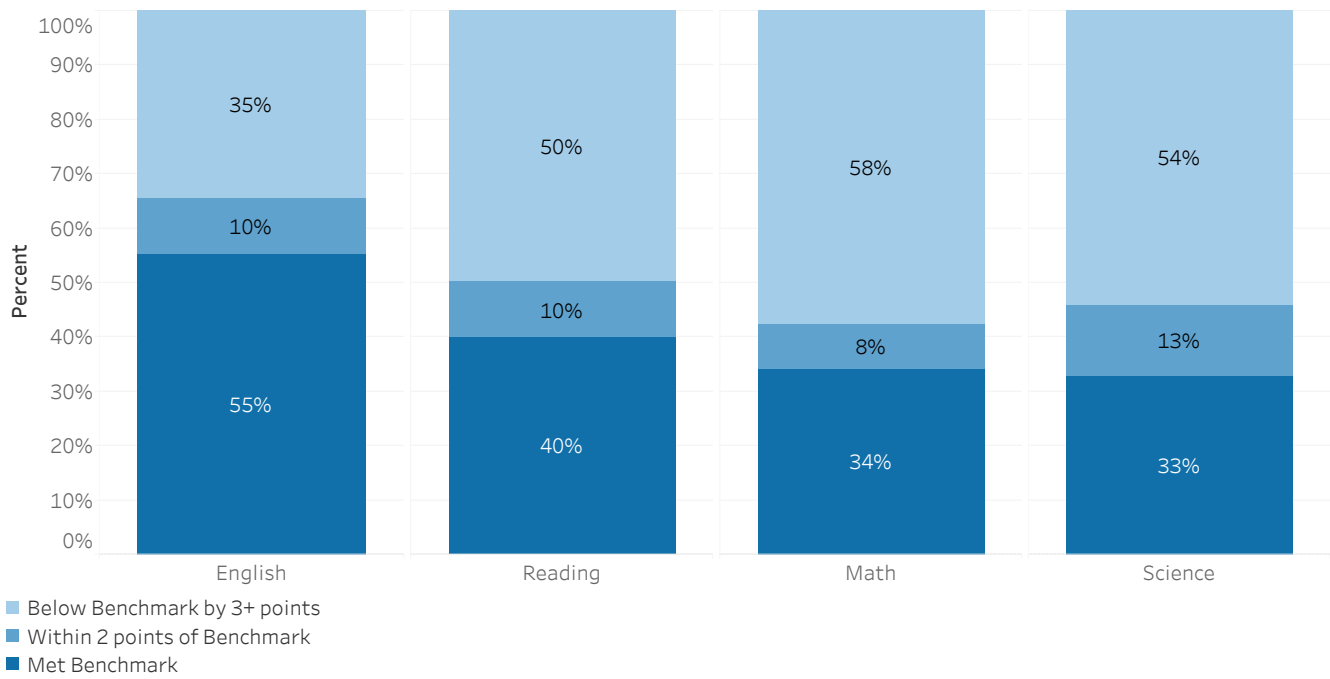
### Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	11%	19%	15%	25%	42%	50%
2016	12%	18%	13%		45%	49%
2017	13%	18%	17%	30%	43%	50%
2018	7%	15%	6%	18%	41%	42%
2019	9%	14%	9%	19%	38%	42%

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# NEBRASKA 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

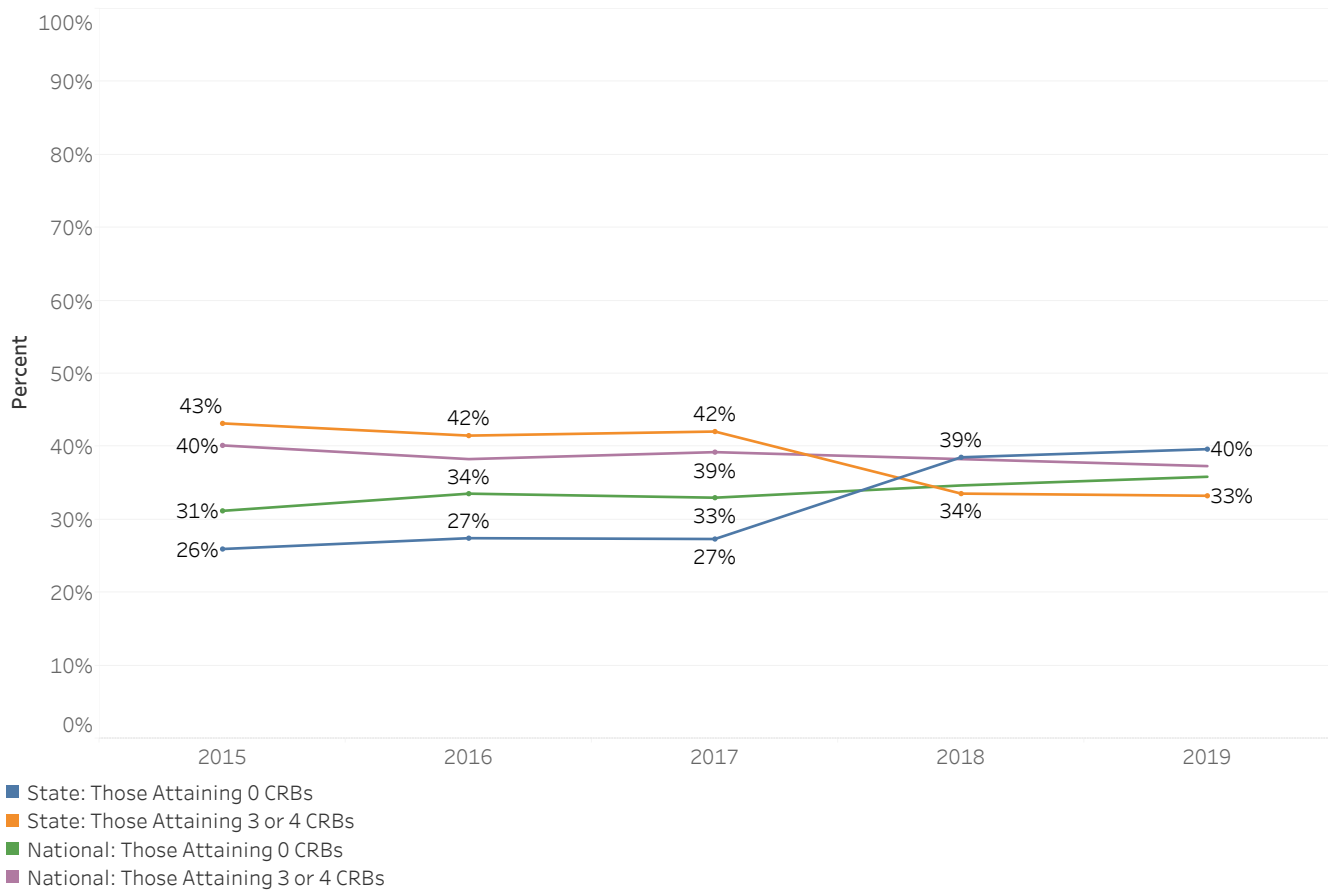
	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	35%	10%	55%
Math	58%	8%	34%
Reading	50%	10%	40%
Science	54%	13%	33%

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

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



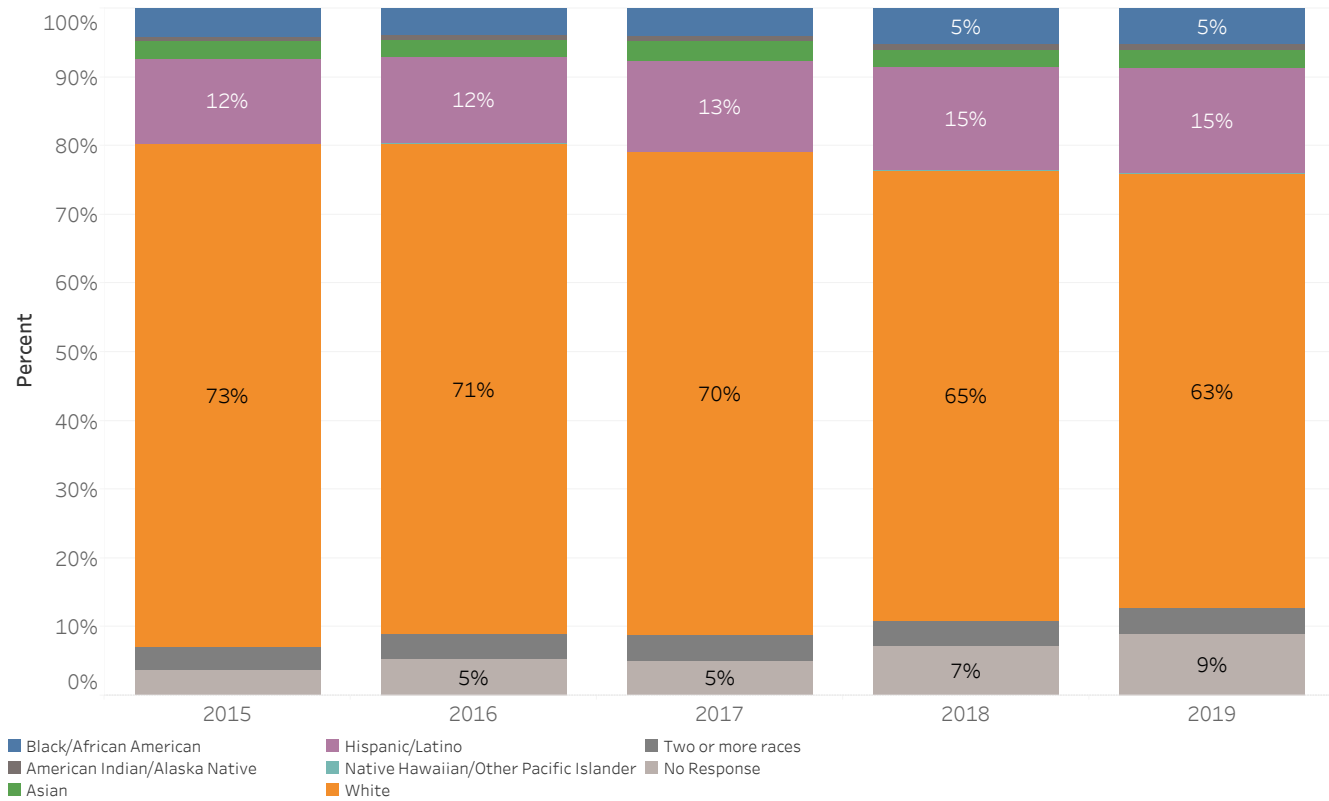
## Data from Graph Above

	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	26%	43%	31%	40%
2016	27%	42%	34%	38%
2017	27%	42%	33%	39%
2018	39%	34%	35%	38%
2019	40%	33%	36%	37%

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# NEBRASKA 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%	12%	0%	73%	3%	4%
2016	4%	1%	2%	12%	0%	71%	4%	5%
2017	4%	1%	3%	13%	0%	70%	4%	5%
2018	5%	1%	2%	15%	0%	65%	4%	7%
2019	5%	1%	3%	15%	0%	63%	4%	9%

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

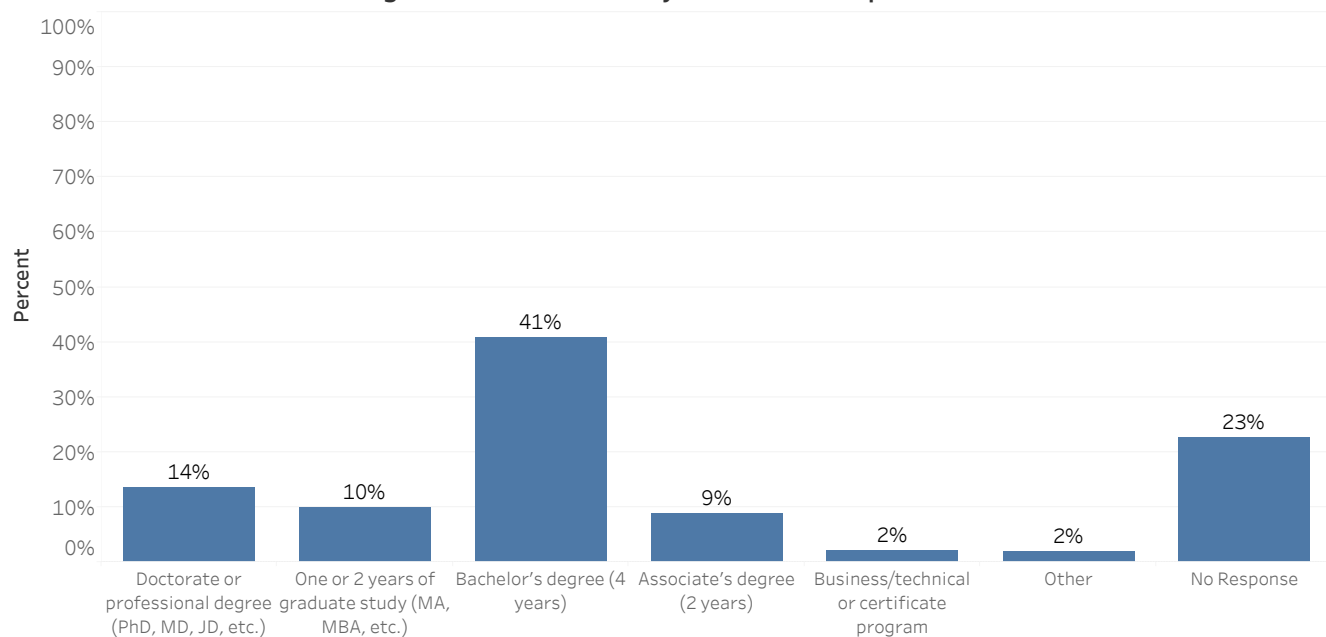
## Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	18,347	18,598	18,993	24,516	24,744
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	21.1	20.9	20.9	19.4	19.4
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	21.9	21.8	21.9	20.4	20.3
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	21.0	20.8	20.9	19.8	19.7
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	21.6	21.5	21.5	20.1	20.2
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	21.5	21.4	21.4	20.1	20.0
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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# NEBRASKA 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.)	14%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	10%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	41%
Associate's degree (2 years)	9%
Business/technical or certificate program	2%
Other	2%
No Response	23%

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