

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

Tennessee Key Findings

Performance of 2019 Graduates

- In the 2019 Tennessee graduating class, 85,436 graduates (an estimated 100 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 19.4. This compares to 68,737 (an estimated 100 percent) with an average of 19.8 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - The 2019 Tennessee graduating class average English score was 19.1. This compares to 19.4 and 19.5 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Tennessee graduating class average math score was 18.9. This compares to 19.1 and 19.3 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Tennessee graduating class average reading score was 19.7. This compares to 19.9 and 20.1 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
 - The 2019 Tennessee graduating class average science score was 19.2. This compares to 19.6 and 19.9 in 2018 and 2015, respectively.
- In 2019, 18 percent of Tennessee graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 19 and 20 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 44 percent of Tennessee graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 42 and 39 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 52 percent of Tennessee graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 54 and 58 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 27 percent of Tennessee graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 28 and 30 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 35 percent of Tennessee graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 38 and 38 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 27 percent of Tennessee graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 28 and 29 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
- 38 percent of 2019 Tennessee graduates were Proficient or Above Proficient in understanding complex texts.
- 62 percent of 2019 Tennessee graduates were Below Proficient in understanding complex texts.

STEM

- In 2019, 22,267 Tennessee graduates (26 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 Tennessee graduating class average ACT STEM score of 19.3, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 19.6 and 19.8, respectively.
- Compared to 13 percent of 2019 Tennessee graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 13 and 13, respectively.
 - 2019 Tennessee graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average science score of 28.8. This compares to 28.5 in 2015.
 - 2019 Tennessee graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 28.2. This compares to 28.1 in 2015.

Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 27,341 Tennessee graduates (32 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.”
- Earning a Gold NCRC translates to having the foundational work readiness skills needed for 93% of the jobs profiled in the ACT JobPro® database, which contains more than 22,000 profiled jobs.

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2019 ACT-tested Tennessee 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:
 - 217 more students enrolling in college.
 - 239 more students persisting to year two.
 - 168 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - 284 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - 249 more students persisting to year four.
 - 260 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Tennessee, 63,084 of the 2019 graduates (73.8 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 20.4, compared to an average of 16.4 for 22,352 of the 2019 graduates (26.2 percent) who took the ACT only once.
 - In October 2018, 76.1% of students in the Tennessee graduating class of 2019 participated in the Senior Retake. More than 50% increased their overall score to 21 or higher, making them eligible to access more than \$61,000,000 in HOPE Scholarship funds that provide up to \$16,000 per student to help pay for college in Tennessee. The Tennessee Department of Education and ACT will provide a fall 2019 Senior Retake for the ACT test, for the third year, to seniors at all public schools.
 - 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.
- 196,042 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Tennessee ACT-tested graduates.
 - 110,788 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Tennessee ACT-tested graduates.
 - For Tennessee's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were the University of Tennessee - Knoxville, Middle Tennessee State University, the University of Tennessee - Chattanooga, Tennessee Technological University, and the University of Memphis.
 - For Tennessee's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were Western Kentucky University, Mississippi State University, and the University of Alabama.
- Compared to 66 percent of 2019 graduates nationally, 59 percent of Tennessee 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 8,753 ACT fee waivers to qualified Tennessee students across all grades. However, 2,643 students (30.2 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.
 - While African American Tennessee students represent 44 percent of fee waivers issued, they account for 50 percent of unused fee waivers. This compares to 32 and 34 nationally.

Postsecondary Aspirations

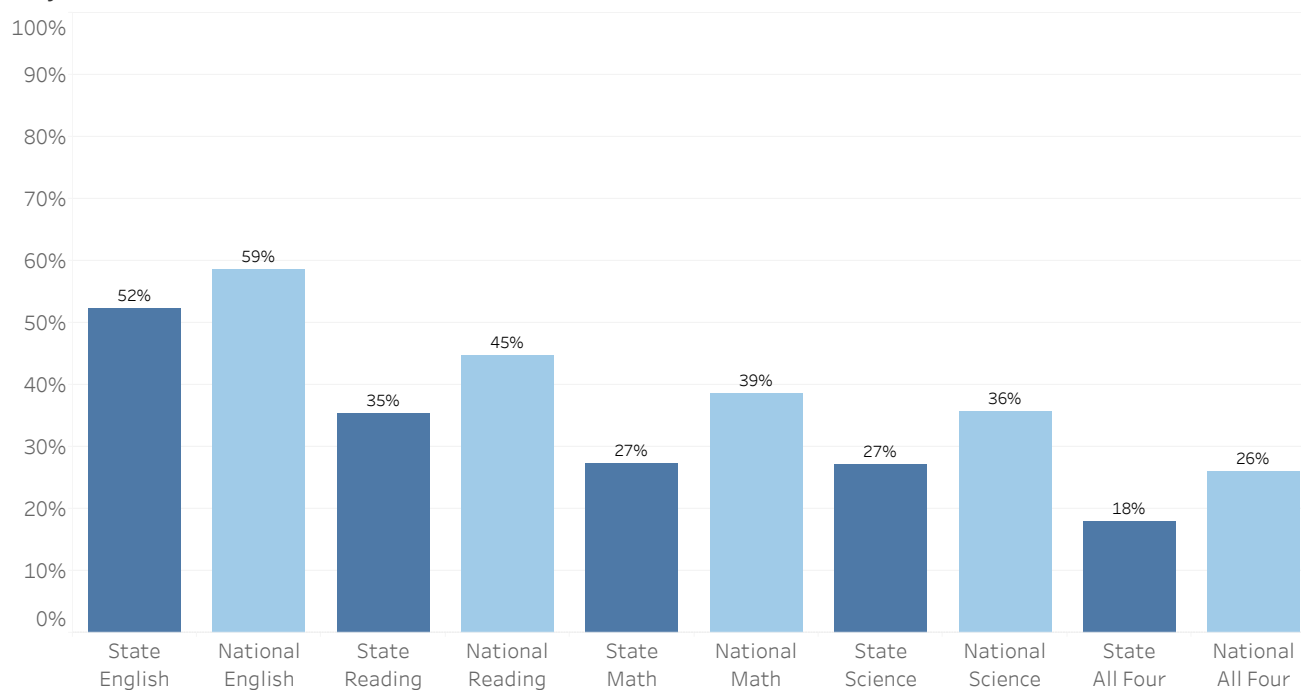
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - 13,856 students (16 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.6.
 - 19,732 students (23 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 20.1.
 - 5,927 students (7 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 16.0.
- In the Tennessee graduating class of 2019, 11,430 students (13 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Tennessee graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Mechanical Engineering.
 - In the Tennessee graduating class of 2019, 5,473 students (6 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 21.2. 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 Tennessee graduating class of 2019, 1,821 (2 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 20.4.

Additional Points

- The Tennessee ACT State Organization consists of more than 750 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.
- Each ACT State Organization recognizes individuals who make a positive impact on their communities as College and Career Readiness Champions. The 2019 Tennessee ACT Champions are:
 - High school senior: Kameron Santiago, Northwest High School; K-12 professional: Kimberly Gass, Greene Technology Center; Postsecondary professional: Brian Donavant, University of Tennessee, Martin; Workforce professional: Dan Caldwell, Nissan Manufacturing.
- Tennessee is currently home to 27 participating ACT Work Ready Communities, where local stakeholders from education, workforce, economic development, and government collaborate to help close the skills gap using ACT workforce solutions and research. There are over 700 employers who recognize and support the National Career Readiness Certificate in Tennessee.

TENNESSEE 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

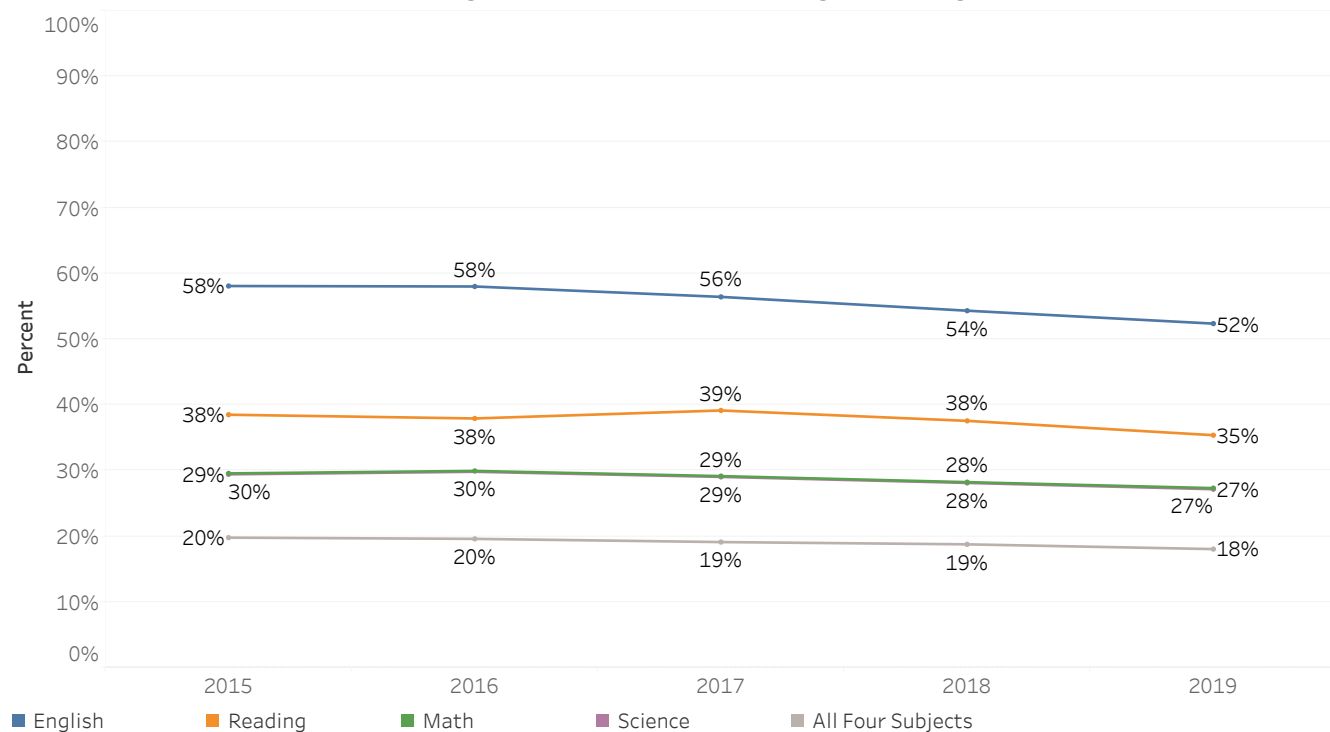
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
52%	59%	35%	45%	27%	39%	27%	36%	18%	26%

* 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.

TENNESSEE 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

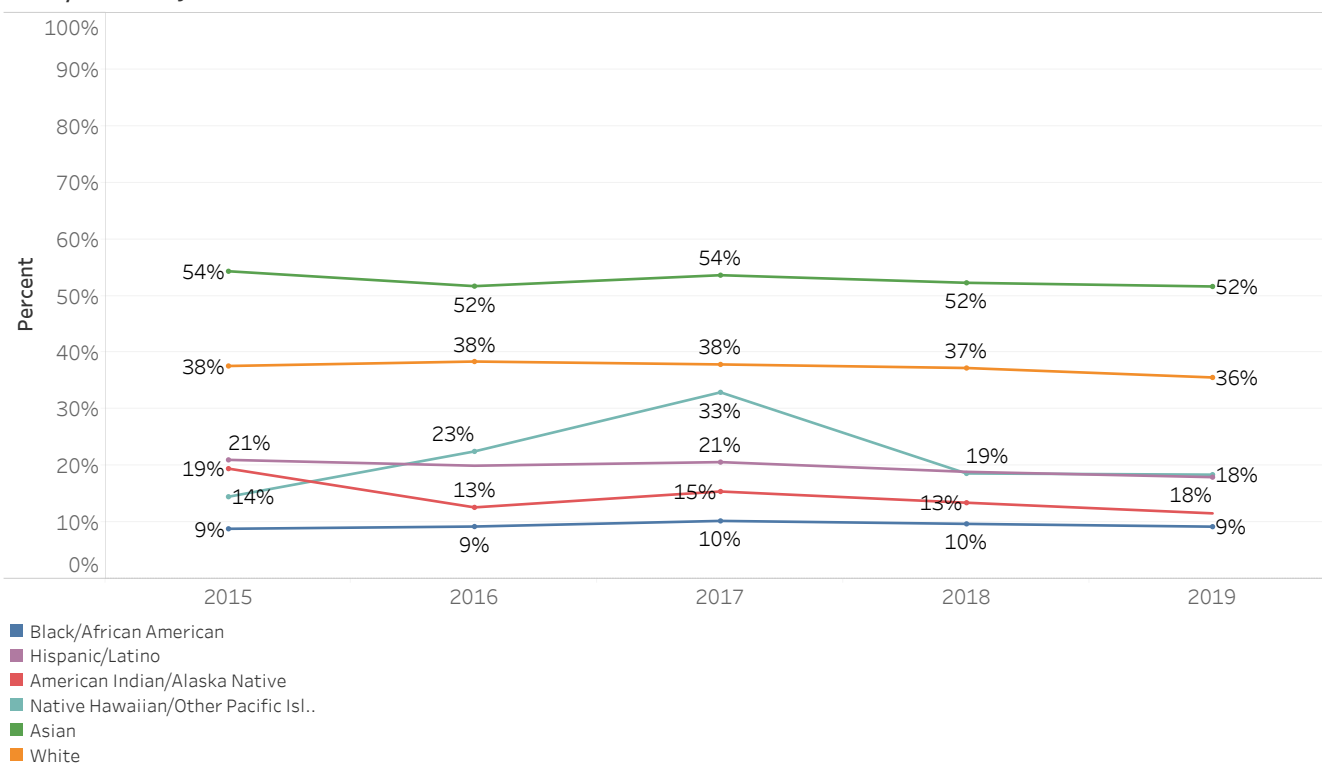
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	58%	38%	30%	29%	20%
2016	58%	38%	30%	30%	20%
2017	56%	39%	29%	29%	19%
2018	54%	38%	28%	28%	19%
2019	52%	35%	27%	27%	18%

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TENNESSEE 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



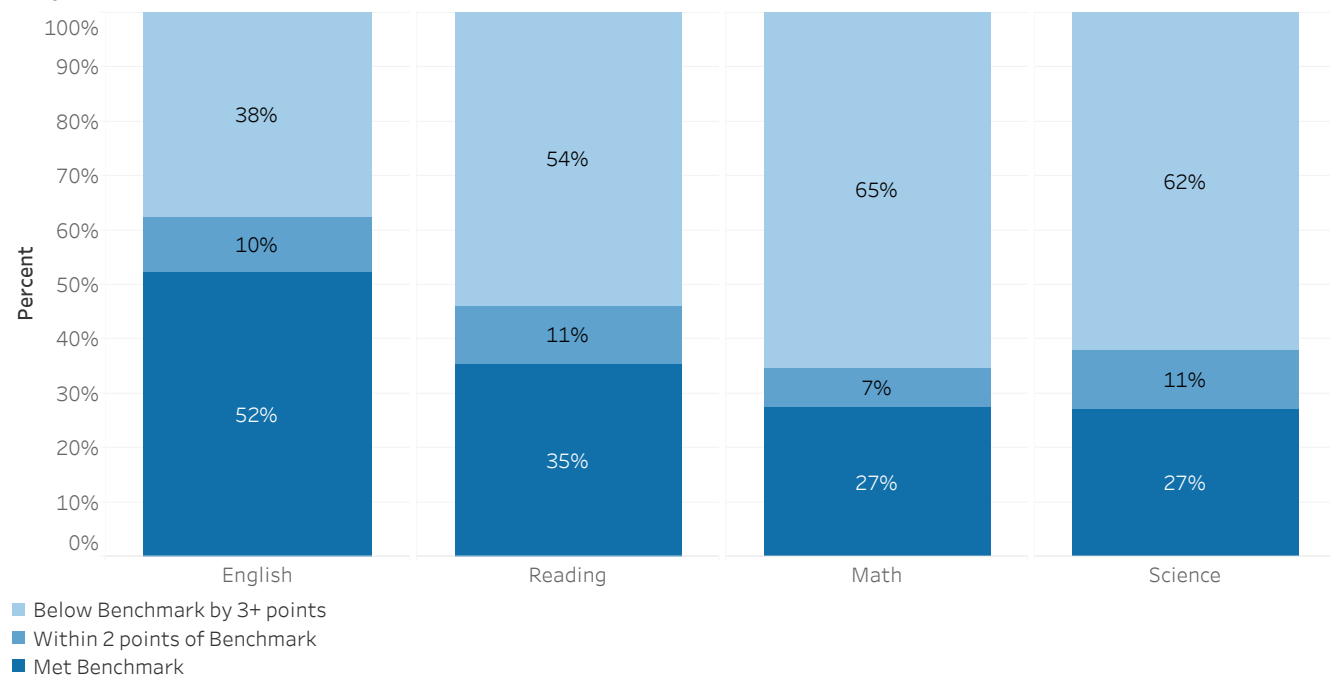
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	9%	21%	19%	14%	54%	38%
2016	9%	20%	13%	23%	52%	38%
2017	10%	21%	15%	33%	54%	38%
2018	10%	19%	13%	19%	52%	37%
2019	9%	18%	12%	18%	52%	36%

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TENNESSEE College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



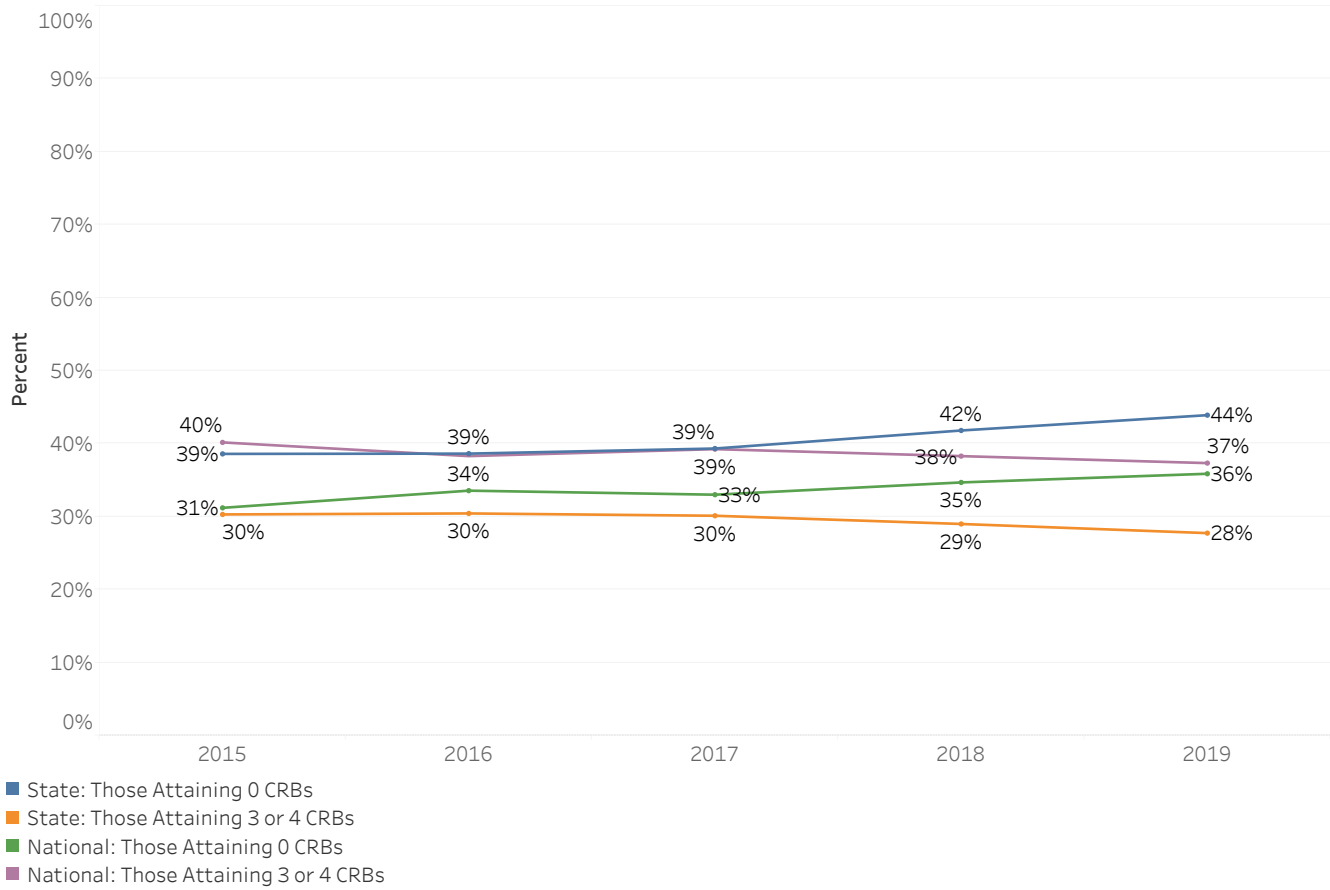
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	38%	10%	52%
Math	65%	7%	27%
Reading	54%	11%	35%
Science	62%	11%	27%

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TENNESSEE College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



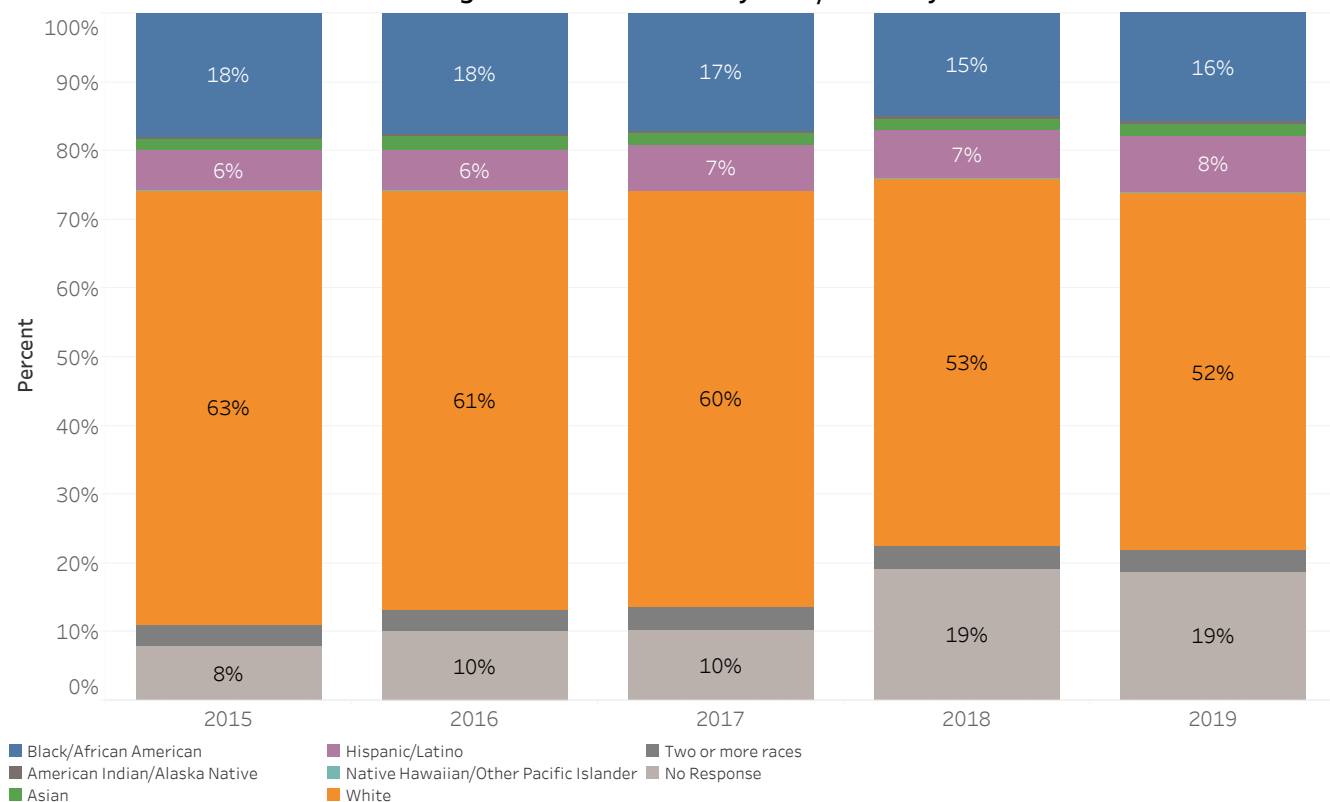
Data from Graph Above

	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	39%	30%	31%	40%
2016	39%	30%	34%	38%
2017	39%	30%	33%	39%
2018	42%	29%	35%	38%
2019	44%	28%	36%	37%

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TENNESSEE 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	18%	0%	2%	6%	0%	63%	3%	8%
2016	18%	0%	2%	6%	0%	61%	3%	10%
2017	17%	0%	2%	7%	0%	60%	3%	10%
2018	15%	0%	2%	7%	0%	53%	3%	19%
2019	16%	0%	2%	8%	0%	52%	3%	19%

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TENNESSEE College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

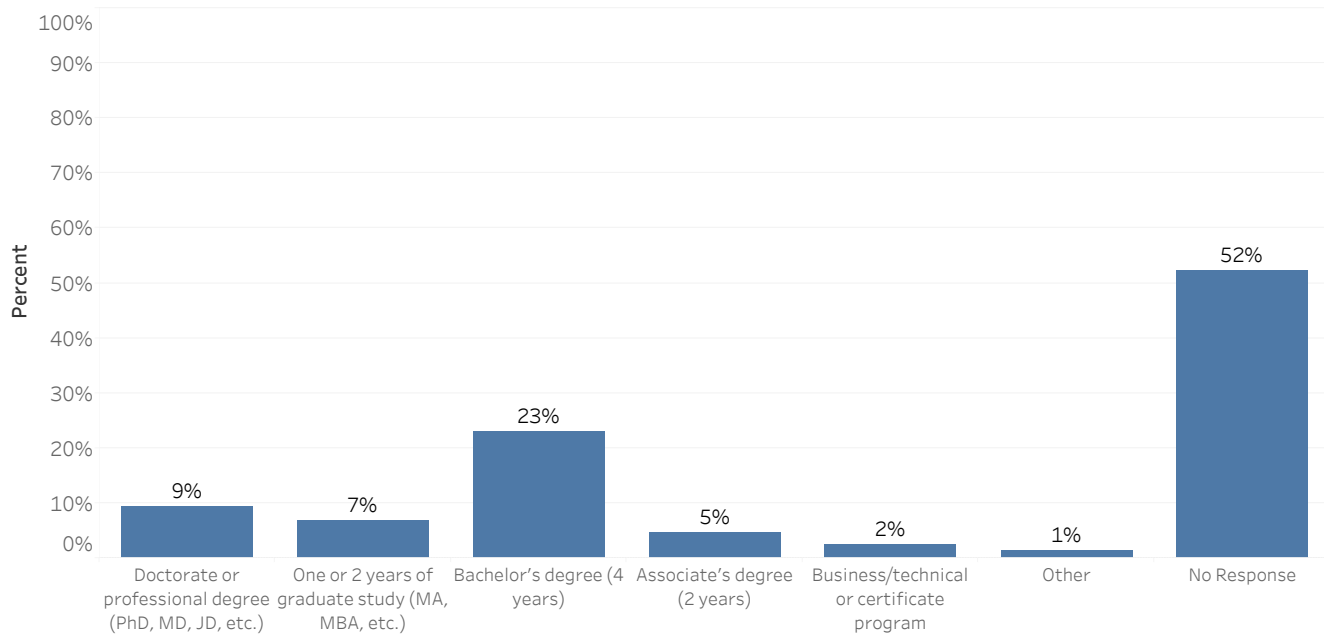
Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	68,737	71,880	75,808	79,170	85,436
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	19.6	19.5	19.4	19.1
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	20.1	20.3	20.1	19.9	19.7
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	19.3	19.2	19.2	19.1	18.9
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	19.9	19.9	19.9	19.6	19.2
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	19.8	19.9	19.8	19.6	19.4
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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TENNESSEE 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.)	9%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	7%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	23%
Associate's degree (2 years)	5%
Business/technical or certificate program	2%
Other	1%
No Response	52%

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