

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2018

Colorado Key Findings

Performance

- Of the 2018 Colorado graduating class, 17,081 graduates (30 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 23.9. Composite score shifts from prior years are expected with adjustments in participation percentages. Nationally, 55% of 2018 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.8
 - ~ In 2017, 59,259 (100 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite average of 20.8 and 60.1 percent meeting three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks.
 - ~ There were 772 African American graduates from Colorado who took the ACT (5 percent) with an average Composite score of 19.1. This compares to 2,256 (4 percent) with an average of 17.8, and 2,141 (4 percent) with an average of 17.3, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
 - ~ There were 60 American Indian graduates from Colorado who took the ACT (0 percent) with an average Composite score of 21.2. This compares to 359 (1 percent) with an average of 18.1, and 372 (1 percent) with an average of 17.6, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
 - ~ There were 10,264 White graduates from Colorado who took the ACT (60 percent) with an average Composite score of 24.9. This compares to 29,514 (50 percent) with an average of 22.6, and 30,782 (54 percent) with an average of 22.3, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
 - ~ There were 2,844 Hispanic graduates from Colorado who took the ACT (17 percent) with an average Composite score of 20.9. This compares to 16,459 (28 percent) with an average of 18.1, and 15,005 (27 percent) with an average of 17.8, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
 - ~ There were 898 Asian graduates from Colorado who took the ACT (5 percent) with an average Composite score of 24.9. This compares to 1,800 (3 percent) with an average of 22.9, and 1,788 (3 percent) with an average of 22.3, for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.

Performance - Subject Areas

- The 2018 Colorado graduating class average English score was 23.9. This compares to 20.1 and 20.1 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- The 2018 Colorado graduating class average math score was 23.2. This compares to 20.3 and 20.4 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- The 2018 Colorado graduating class average reading score was 24.4. This compares to 21.2 and 20.9 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- The 2018 Colorado graduating class average science score was 23.5. This compares to 20.9 and 20.6 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.

Performance - College Readiness Benchmarks

- In 2018, 45 percent of Colorado graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 26 and 25 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
- In 2018, 10,269 (60 percent) of Colorado graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 22,474 and 21,223 (38 and 38 percent) out of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively. For reference, the national percentage of 2018 graduates meeting three or four benchmarks was 38%.
- In 2018, 15 percent of Colorado graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 34 and 34 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
- In 2018, 82 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 61 and 63 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ 2018 Colorado graduates taking more advanced English coursework demonstrated markedly higher average English scores than those who did not. In fact, 83 percent of Colorado 2018 graduates taking four or more years of English met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 51 percent of students taking less than four years of English meeting the benchmark.
- In 2018, 61 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 38 and 39 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ 2018 Colorado graduates taking more advanced math coursework demonstrated markedly higher average math scores than those who did not. In fact, 62 percent of Colorado 2018 graduates taking three or more years of math met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 17 percent of students taking less than three years of math meeting the benchmark.
- In 2018, 65 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 46 and 43 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ 2018 Colorado graduates taking more advanced social studies coursework demonstrated markedly higher average reading scores than those who did not. In fact, 66 percent of Colorado 2018 graduates taking three or more years of social studies met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 48 percent of students taking less than three years of social studies meeting the benchmark.
- In 2018, 57 percent of Colorado graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 37 and 36 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.

Additional Performance Notes

- In 2018, 6 percent of Colorado graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 7 and 6 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ 65 percent of 2018 Colorado graduates were Proficient or Above Proficient in understanding complex texts. Nationally, 48% of graduates were Proficient or above.

STEM

- In 2018, 9,044 Colorado graduates (53 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
 - ~ Nationally, 45 percent of graduates indicated having an interest in STEM.
- Compared to a 2018 Colorado graduating class average ACT STEM score of 23.6, graduates in 2017 and 2014 had STEM averages of 20.9 and 20.8, respectively.
- Compared to 36 percent of 2018 Colorado graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2017 and 2014 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 19 and 19, respectively.

- 2018 Colorado graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 28.9. This compares to 28.4 in 2014.
 - ~ 2018 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 23.4, compared to 17.3 for students taking less than three years of math.
- 2018 Colorado graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average science score of 29.1. This compares to 28.4 in 2014.

Career Readiness

- In 2018, 7,639 Colorado graduates (45 percent) were likely to attain the Gold ACT WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate® or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 499,653 (26 percent) nationally.
- In 2018, 15,346 Colorado graduates (90 percent) were likely to attain the Silver NCRC® or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 1,393,517 (73 percent) nationally.
 - ~ The ACT Composite scores associated with a 50% chance of earning each NCRC level or higher are: 13 for Bronze, 17 for Silver, 25 for Gold, and 35 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 24 as “Silver,” and 25 or above as “Gold or Higher.”

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2018 ACT-tested Colorado high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2018 graduating class would result in:
 - ~ 35 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 41 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 25 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 43 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 48 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 52 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Colorado, 7,916 of the 2018 graduates (46.3%) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.4, compared to an average of 22.6 for 9,165 of the 2018 graduates (53.7%) who took the ACT only once.
 - ~ Nationwide, 847,940 of the 2018 graduates (44.3%) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 22.7, compared to an average of 19.3 for 1,066,877 of the 2018 graduates (55.7%) who took the ACT only once.
- 31,743 score reports were sent to colleges by 2018 Colorado ACT-tested graduates.
 - ~ 14,221 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2018 Colorado ACT-tested graduates.
 - ~ For Colorado’s 2018 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Univ Of Colorado-Boulder, Colorado State University, Univ Of Northern Colorado, University Of Colorado Denver, and Univ Of Colorado-Colorado Springs.
- Compared to 68 percent of 2018 graduates nationally, 66 percent of Colorado 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 2017-2018 academic year, ACT issued 2,122 ACT fee waivers to qualified Colorado students. However, 464 students (21.9 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 542,506 waivers issued nationally, of which 152,227 (28.1 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. Note: this is the number of fee waivers issued for the state, not specific to this graduating class.

Pipeline

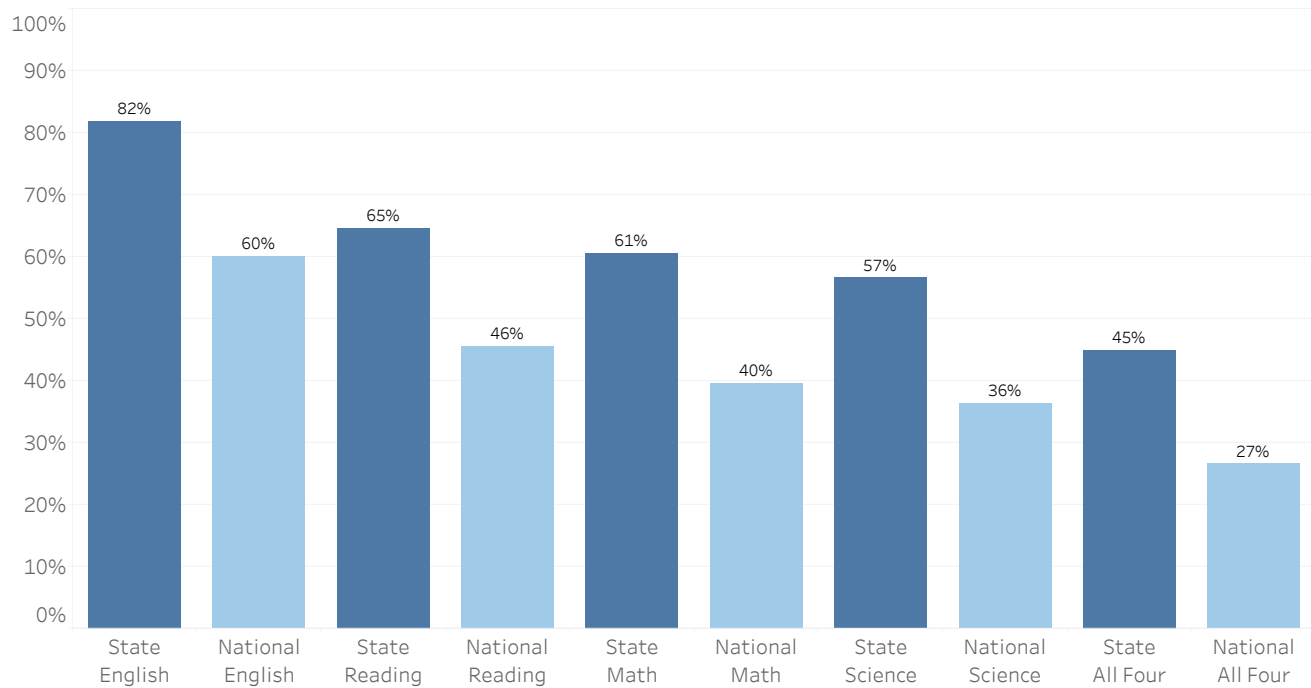
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - ~ 7,194 students (42 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 25.9.
 - ~ 7,378 students (43 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.6.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2018 Colorado graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); and Mechanical Engineering.
 - ~ In the Colorado graduating class of 2018, 2,890 students (17 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 24.2. 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 Colorado graduating class of 2018, 554 (3 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 22.1.
- There is good news in that 88% of Colorado's 2018 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 68% of Colorado's 2017 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 53% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 8,558 of the 2017 ACT-tested graduates from Colorado would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

Additional Points

- The Colorado ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with more than 228 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 conferences that bring together professionals representing each of these areas, providing a unique and diverse professional development opportunity.

COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data From Graph Above

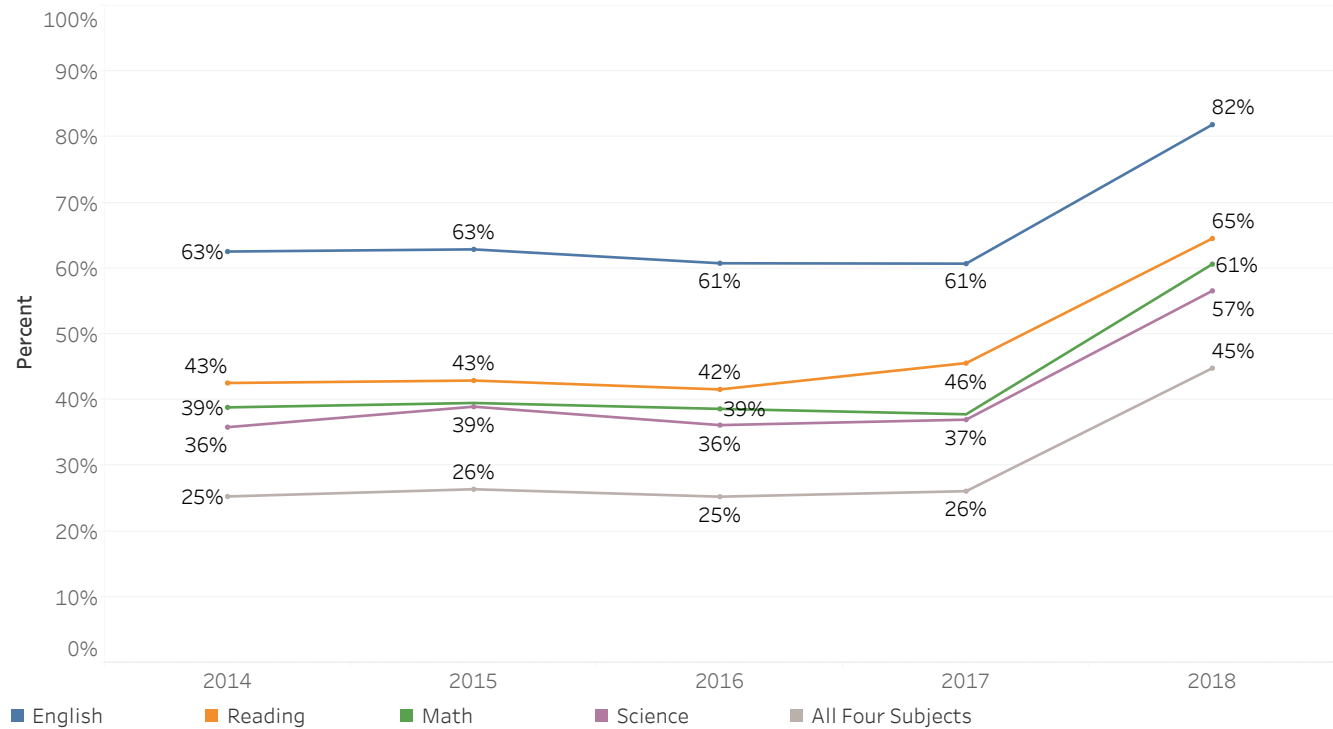
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
82%	60%	65%	46%	61%	40%	57%	36%	45%	27%

* 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.

COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2014–2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



Data From Graph Above

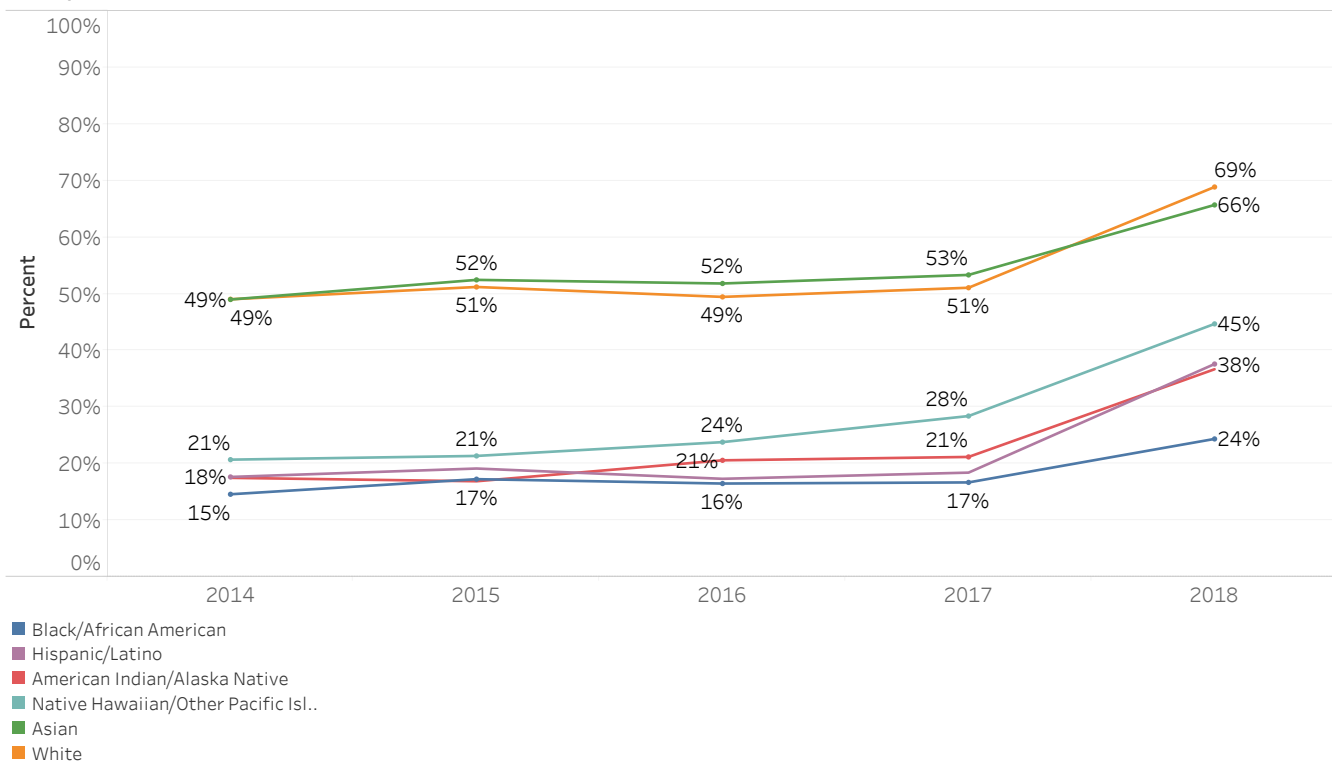
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2014	63%	43%	39%	36%	25%
2015	63%	43%	40%	39%	26%
2016	61%	42%	39%	36%	25%
2017	61%	46%	38%	37%	26%
2018	82%	65%	61%	57%	45%

* 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.

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2014-2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity



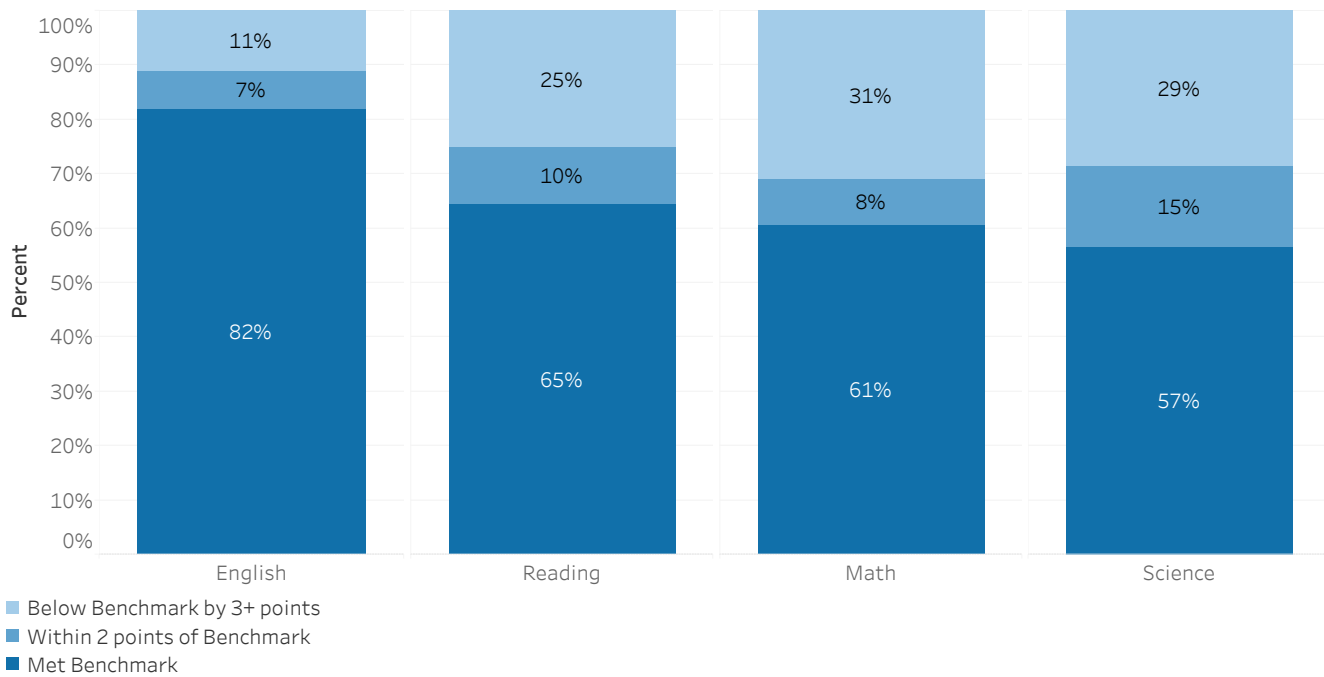
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2014	15%	18%	17%	21%	49%	49%
2015	17%	19%	17%	21%	52%	51%
2016	16%	17%	21%	24%	52%	49%
2017	17%	18%	21%	28%	53%	51%
2018	24%	38%	37%	45%	66%	69%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



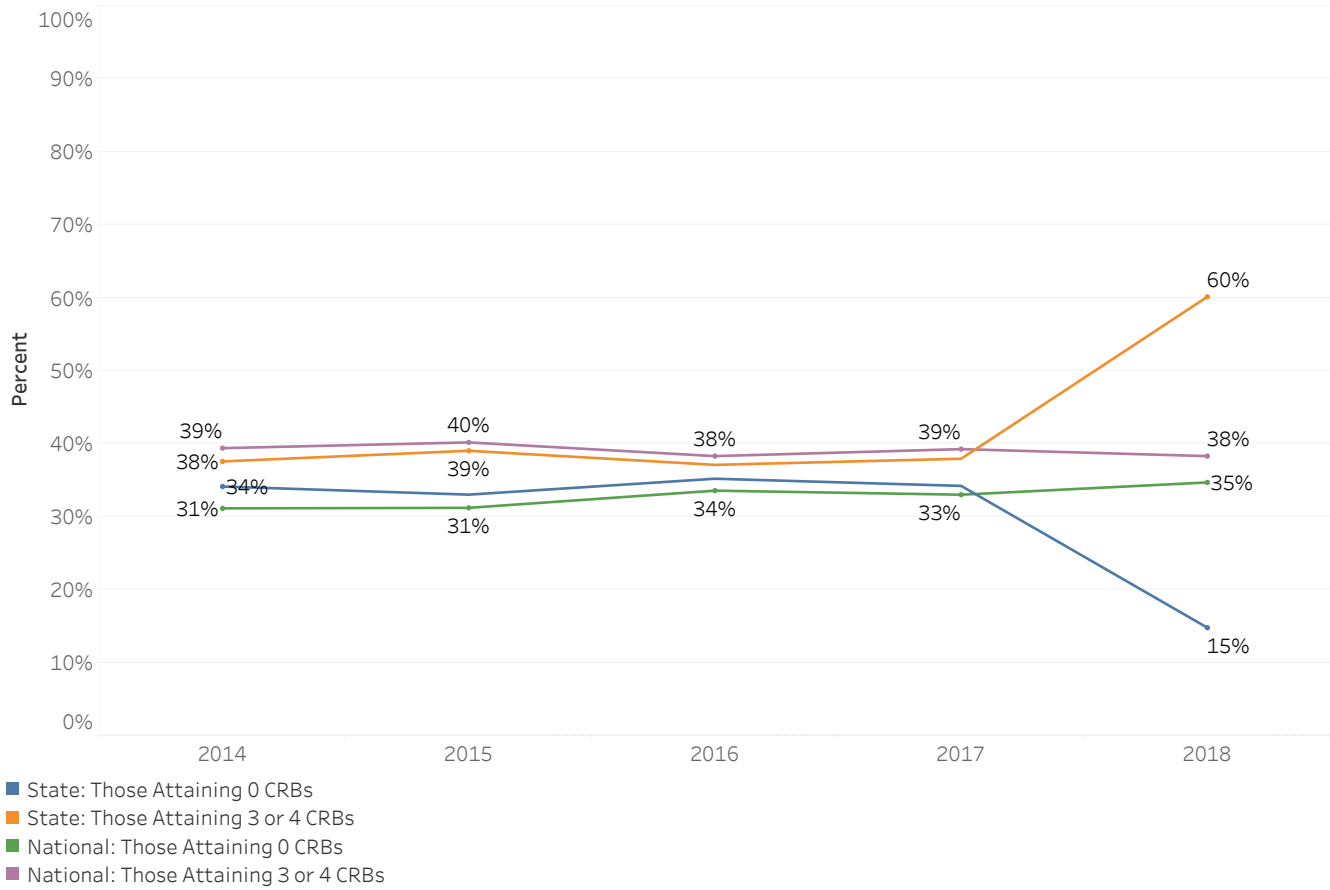
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	11%	7%	82%
Math	31%	8%	61%
Reading	25%	10%	65%
Science	29%	15%	57%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2014–2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



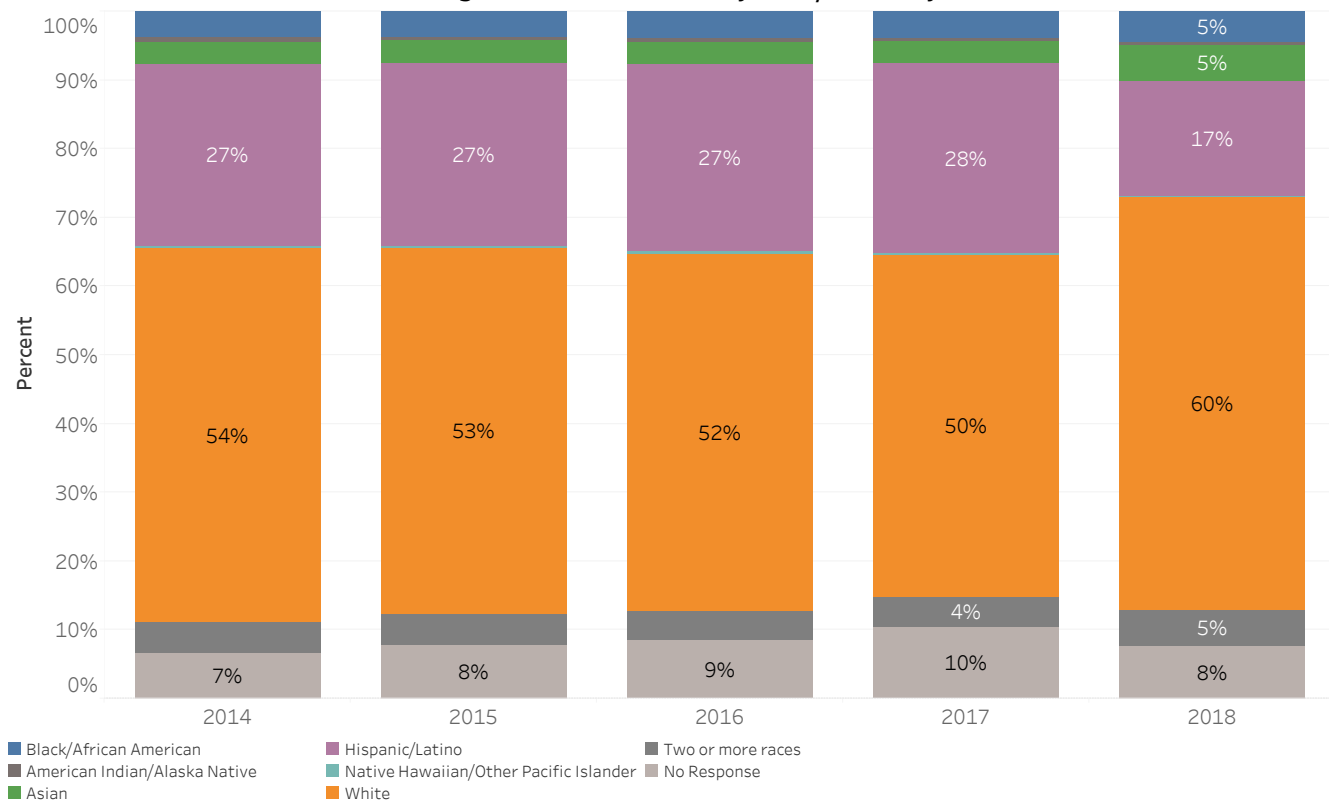
Data from Graph Above

	State: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	State: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs
2014	34%	38%	31%	39%
2015	33%	39%	31%	40%
2016	35%	37%	34%	38%
2017	34%	38%	33%	39%
2018	15%	60%	35%	38%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2014-2018 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
2014	4%	1%	3%	27%	0%	54%	4%	7%
2015	4%	1%	3%	27%	0%	53%	4%	8%
2016	4%	1%	3%	27%	0%	52%	4%	9%
2017	4%	1%	3%	28%	0%	50%	4%	10%
2018	5%	0%	5%	17%	0%	60%	5%	8%

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

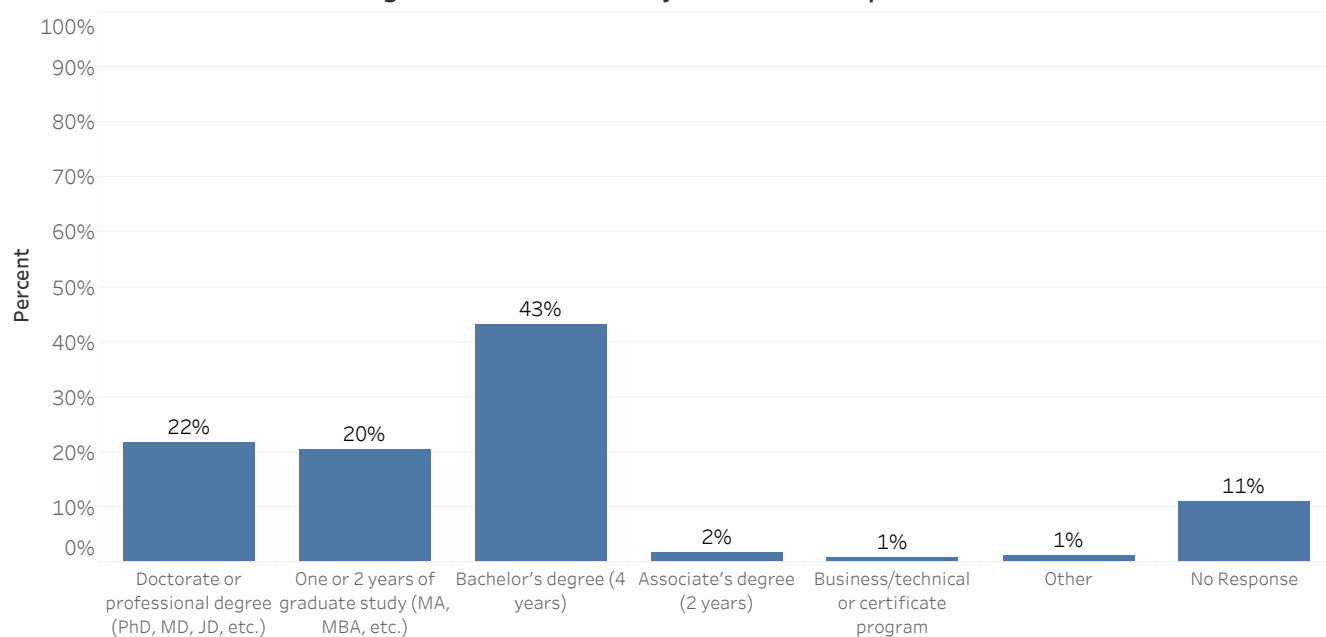
Student Data Trends: 2014-2018, State vs. Nation

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
State N-count	56,510	57,328	58,616	59,259	17,081
National N-count	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817
Average ACT English Score - State	20.1	20.2	20.0	20.1	23.9
Average ACT English Score - National	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2
Average ACT Reading Score - State	20.9	21.0	20.9	21.2	24.4
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3
Average ACT Math Score - State	20.4	20.4	20.3	20.3	23.2
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5
Average ACT Science Score - State	20.6	20.8	20.9	20.9	23.5
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7
Average ACT Composite Score - State	20.6	20.7	20.6	20.8	23.9
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8

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COLORADO College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2018 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations



Data From Graph Above

	% of Graduates
Doctorate or professional degree (PhD, MD, JD, etc.)	22%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	20%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	43%
Associate's degree (2 years)	2%
Business/technical or certificate program	1%
Other	1%
No Response	11%

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