

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2018

Illinois Key Findings

Performance

- In the 2018 Illinois graduating class, 62,626 graduates (43 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 23.9. This compares to 158,037 (100 percent) with an average of 20.7 in 2014. Nationally, 55% of 2018 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.8.
 - ~ The 2018 Illinois graduating class average English score was 24.1. This compares to 21.0 and 20.3 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
 - ~ The 2018 Illinois graduating class average math score was 23.4. This compares to 21.2 and 20.7 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
 - ~ The 2018 Illinois graduating class average reading score was 24.2. This compares to 21.6 and 20.8 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
 - ~ The 2018 Illinois graduating class average science score was 23.4. This compares to 21.3 and 20.5 in 2017 and 2014, respectively.
- In 2018, 45 percent of Illinois graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 30 and 26 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2018, 37,197 (59 percent) of Illinois graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 56,427 and 58,899 (42 and 37 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, 14 percent of Illinois graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 29 and 34 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2018, 82 percent of Illinois graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 66 and 62 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2018, 61 percent of Illinois graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 44 and 41 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2018, 64 percent of Illinois graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 48 and 41 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2018, 55 percent of Illinois graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 39 and 35 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
- In 2018, 6 percent of Illinois graduates took the ACT with extended time. This compares to 9 and 10 percent of 2017 and 2014 graduates, respectively.
- 65 percent of 2018 Illinois graduates were Proficient or Above Proficient in understanding complex texts.
- 35 percent of 2018 Illinois graduates were Below Proficient in understanding complex texts.

STEM

- In 2018, 30,294 Illinois graduates (48 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
 - ~ Nationally, 45 percent of graduates indicated having an interest in STEM.
 - ~ In 2018, 47,527 Illinois graduates (76 percent) indicated taking physics. This compares to 62 and 56 percent for the 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
 - ~ 2018 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 24.0, compared to 21.0 for students not taking physics.
- In 2018, 58,051 Illinois graduates (93 percent) indicated taking three or more years of math. This compares to 82 and 82 percent for 2017 and 2014 graduating classes, respectively.
 - ~ 2018 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 23.6, compared to 19.1 for students taking less than three years of math.

Career Readiness

- In 2018, 27,931 Illinois 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.
 - ~ 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 Illinois 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:
 - ~ 129 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 151 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 88 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 156 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 176 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 192 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Illinois, 38,413 of the 2018 graduates (61.3%) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.2, compared to an average of 21.8 for 24,213 of the 2018 graduates (38.7%) 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.
- 109,975 score reports were sent to colleges by 2018 Illinois ACT-tested graduates.
 - ~ 31,821 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2018 Illinois ACT-tested graduates.
 - ~ For Illinois's 2018 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, Illinois State University, University of Illinois at Chicago, Northern Illinois University, and University of Wisconsin-Madison.
 - ~ For Illinois's 2018 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Iowa, and Purdue University.
- Compared to 68 percent of 2018 graduates nationally, 67 percent of Illinois 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 12,451 ACT fee waivers to qualified Illinois students. However, 2,909 students (23.4 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

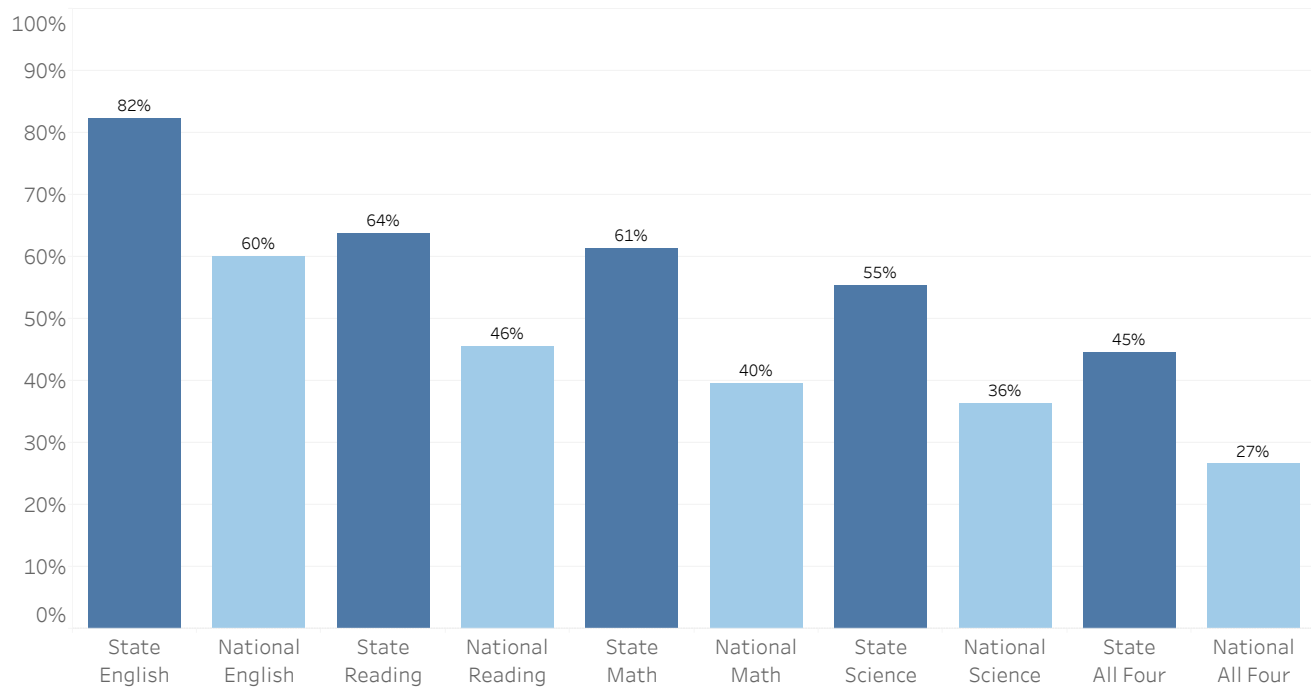
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - ~ 26,043 students (42 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 25.9.
 - ~ 27,074 students (43 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.7.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2018 Illinois graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Business Administration and Management, General; and Biology, General.
 - ~ In the Illinois graduating class of 2018, 12,972 students (21 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 23.9. 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 Illinois graduating class of 2018, 2,798 (4 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 22.3.
- There is good news in that 86% of Illinois's 2018 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 77% of Illinois's 2017 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 69% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 11,293 of the 2017 ACT-tested graduates from Illinois would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

Additional Points

- The Illinois ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with more than 557 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. Members of this state organization and council meet to discuss the educational landscape in Illinois and how council/organization members can work together to contribute to ACT's mission of assisting individuals to achieve education and workplace success.
- The ACT College and Career Readiness Champions are individuals across the country who support ACT's mission of education and workplace success. They are high school seniors, K-12, postsecondary, and workforce professionals who have demonstrated exemplary behavior and contributions in support of college and career readiness in their respective communities. Congratulations to the Illinois Champions: Juan Pablo Gomez-Postigo (High School Senior), Christopher Chiakulas (K-12 Professional), and Dr. Kristine M. Condon (Postsecondary Professional).
- For the Illinois graduating class of 2016, all students took the ACT at state expense. For the Illinois graduating class of 2017, the state did not pay for a college admissions test, dropping the ACT participation to 93.3%. For the graduating class of 2018, some Illinois high schools and districts paid for their students to take the ACT. Other students in Illinois elected to register and pay for an ACT test.
 - ~ In 2017, 35.4% of the ACT-tested students were minority students, but in 2018, that participation rate decreased to 25.2%.
 - ~ In 2017, 19.4% of the ACT-tested students were low-income students, but in 2018, that participation rate decreased to 11.5%.
 - ~ In 2017, 17.3% of the ACT-tested students were first-generation college students, but in 2018, that participation rate decreased to 10.1%.
 - ~ In 2017, 10.5% of the ACT-tested students were in homes where English was not spoken, but in 2018, that participation rate decreased to 3.9%.

ILLINOIS 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

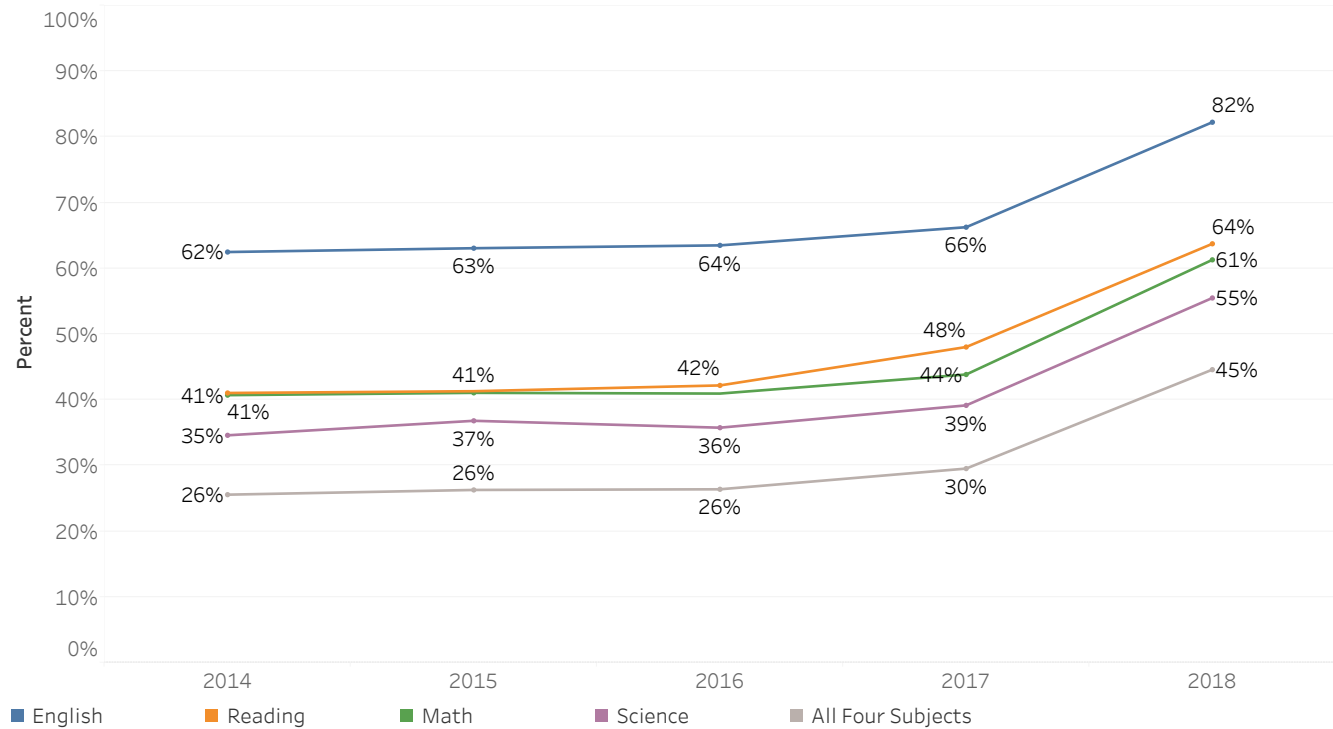
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
82%	60%	64%	46%	61%	40%	55%	36%	45%	27%

* 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.

ILLINOIS 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

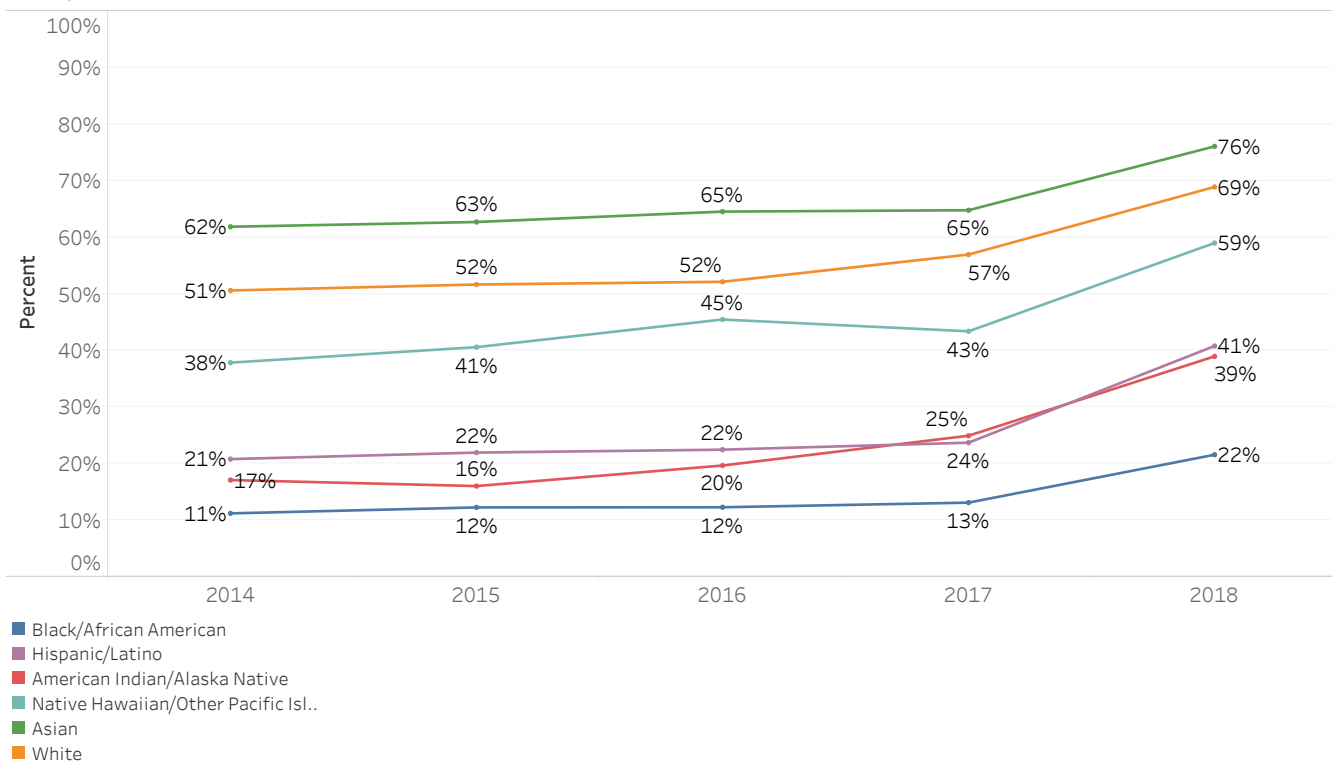
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2014	62%	41%	41%	35%	26%
2015	63%	41%	41%	37%	26%
2016	64%	42%	41%	36%	26%
2017	66%	48%	44%	39%	30%
2018	82%	64%	61%	55%	45%

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ILLINOIS 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



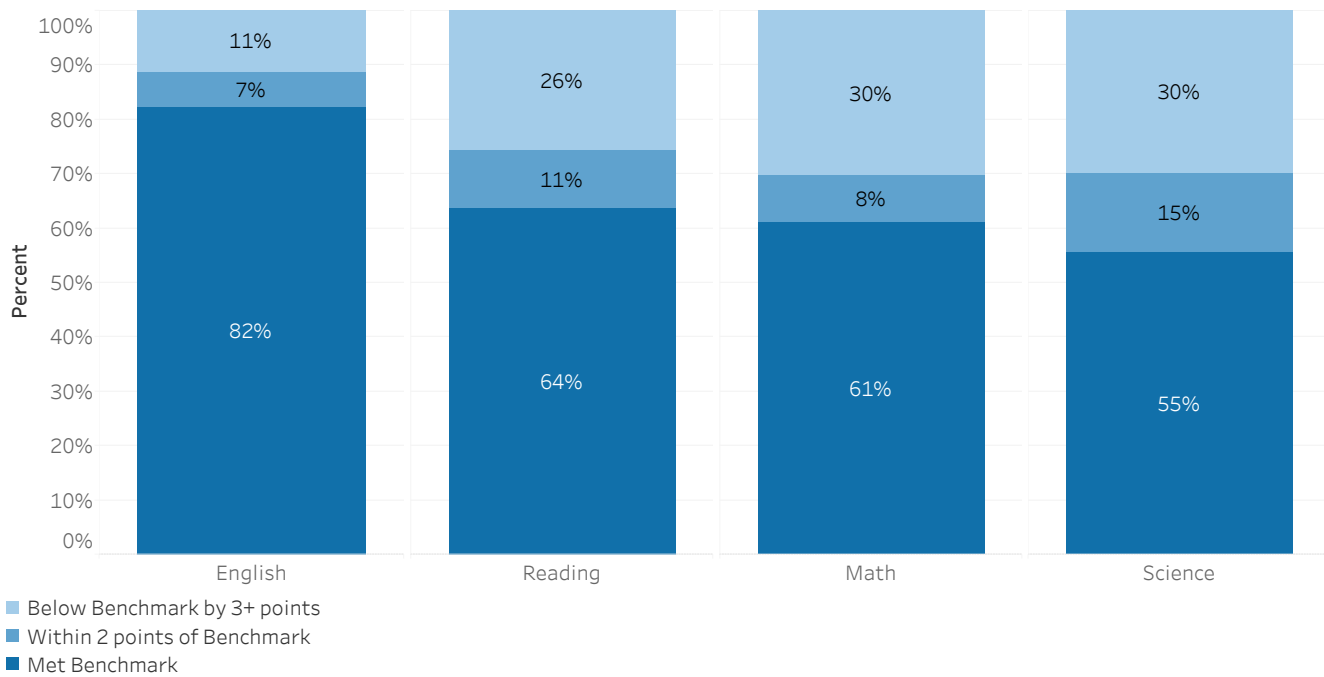
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2014	11%	21%	17%	38%	62%	51%
2015	12%	22%	16%	41%	63%	52%
2016	12%	22%	20%	45%	65%	52%
2017	13%	24%	25%	43%	65%	57%
2018	22%	41%	39%	59%	76%	69%

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ILLINOIS College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



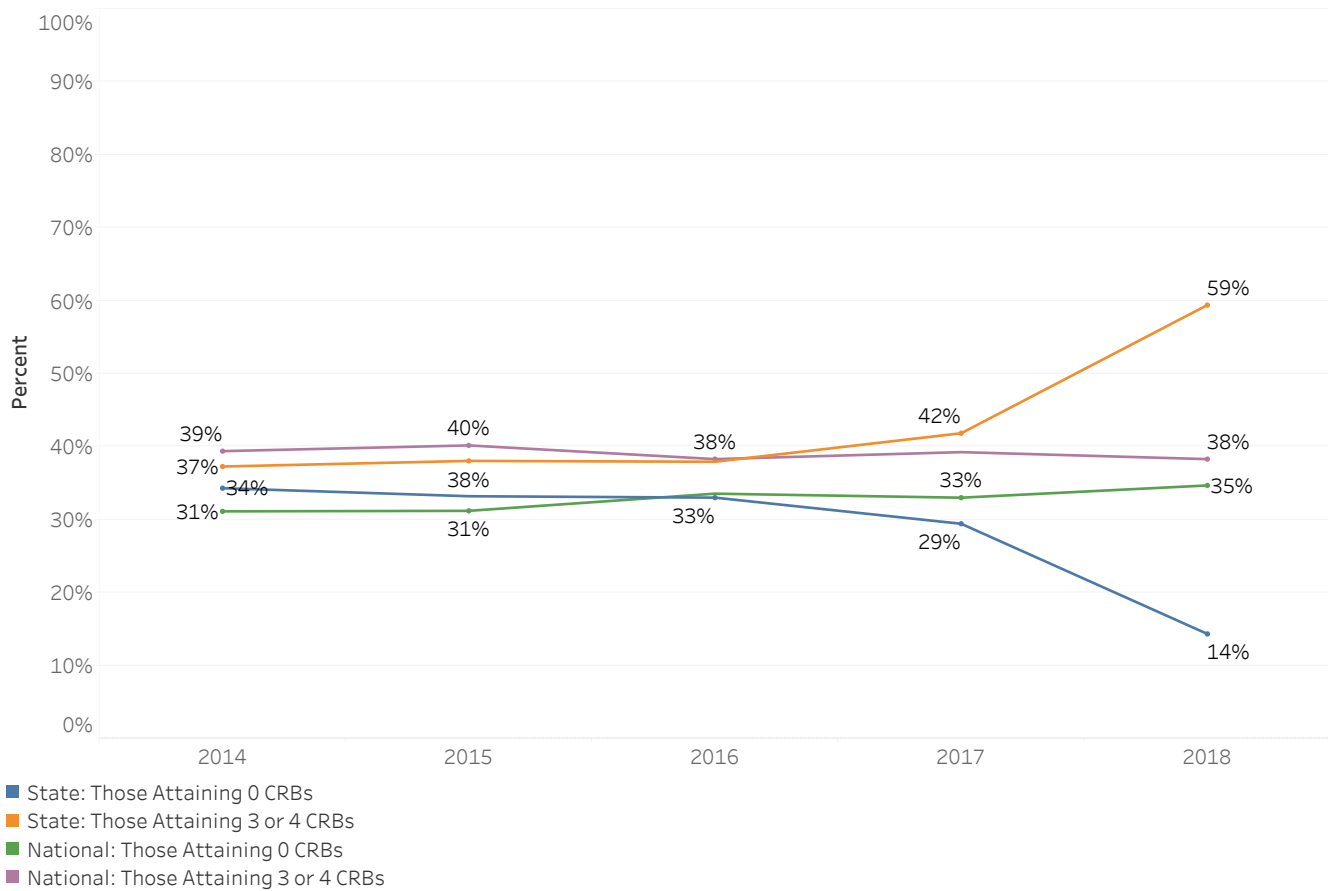
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	11%	7%	82%
Math	30%	8%	61%
Reading	26%	11%	64%
Science	30%	15%	55%

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ILLINOIS College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

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



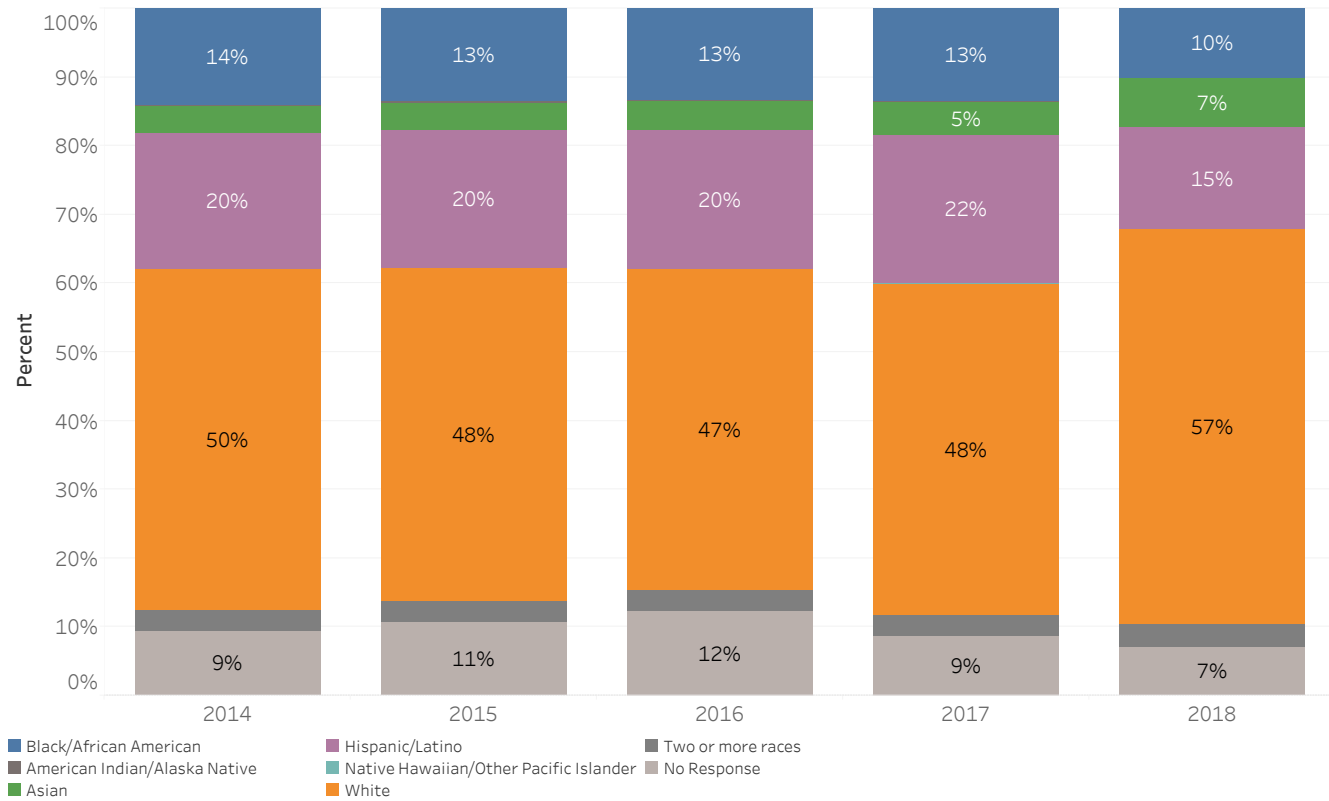
Data from Graph Above

	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%	37%	31%	39%
2015	33%	38%	31%	40%
2016	33%	38%	34%	38%
2017	29%	42%	33%	39%
2018	14%	59%	35%	38%

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ILLINOIS 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	14%	0%	4%	20%	0%	50%	3%	9%
2015	13%	0%	4%	20%	0%	48%	3%	11%
2016	13%	0%	4%	20%	0%	47%	3%	12%
2017	13%	0%	5%	22%	0%	48%	3%	9%
2018	10%	0%	7%	15%	0%	57%	3%	7%

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ILLINOIS College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

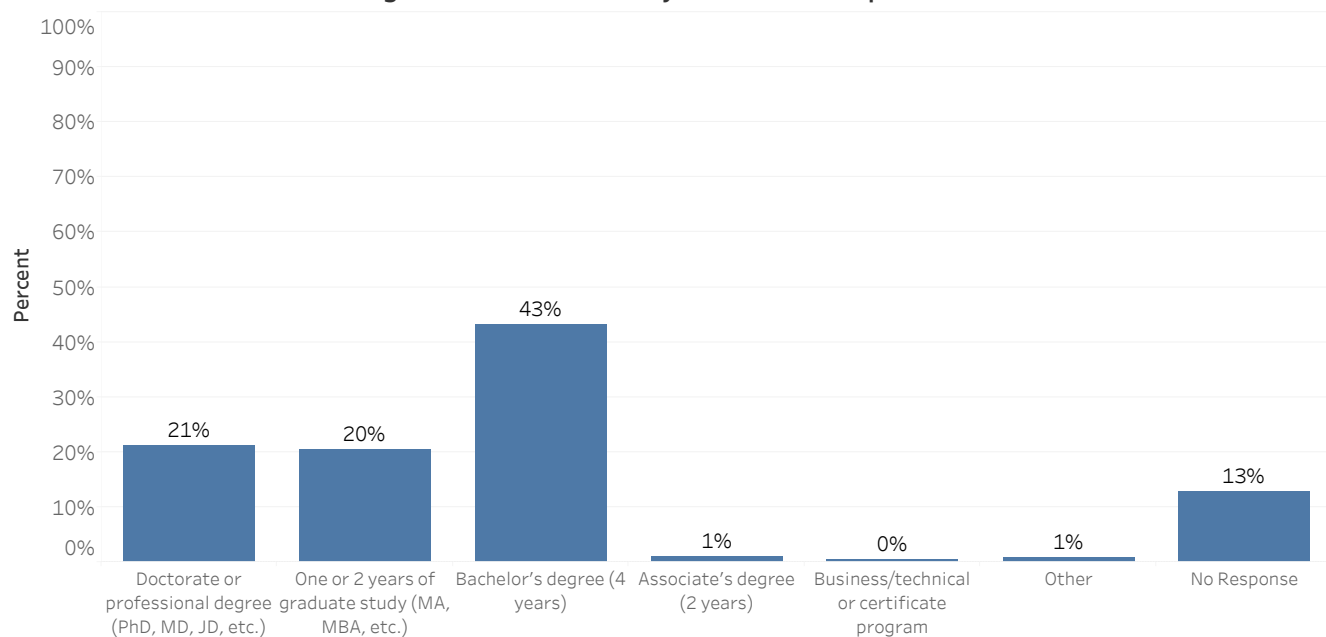
Student Data Trends: 2014-2018, State vs. Nation

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
State N-count	158,037	157,047	156,403	134,901	62,626
National N-count	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817
Average ACT English Score - State	20.3	20.3	20.5	21.0	24.1
Average ACT English Score - National	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2
Average ACT Reading Score - State	20.8	20.8	21.0	21.6	24.2
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3
Average ACT Math Score - State	20.7	20.7	20.6	21.2	23.4
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5
Average ACT Science Score - State	20.5	20.6	20.6	21.3	23.4
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7
Average ACT Composite Score - State	20.7	20.7	20.8	21.4	23.9
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8

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ILLINOIS 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.)	21%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	20%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	43%
Associate's degree (2 years)	1%
Business/technical or certificate program	0%
Other	1%
No Response	13%

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