

The Condition of College & Career Readiness

This report looks at the achievement of the ACT®-tested 2017 graduating class relative to college and career readiness. A total of 60% of students in the 2017 US graduating class took the ACT® test, compared to 64% last year, 54% in 2013, and 42% in 2007. The growing percentage of the nation's graduates taking the ACT over the past decade has enhanced the breadth and depth of the data pool, providing a comprehensive picture of the current graduating class in the context of college readiness.

As a research-based nonprofit organization, ACT is committed to providing information and solutions to support the following:

- **Holistic view of readiness.** The ACT report, *Broadening the Definition of College and Career Readiness: A Holistic Approach*, shows academic readiness is only one of multiple domains critical in determining an individual's readiness for success in college and career. Social and emotional learning skills (SEL) are also vital. Behavioral skills, cross-cutting capabilities, and navigational skills should be measured and addressed. Together, these elements provide a comprehensive picture of student readiness for success after high school.
- **Meaningful data for better decisions.** ACT is focused on providing better data to students, parents, schools, districts, and states so that all can make more informed decisions to improve educational outcomes. We accomplish this goal by taking a holistic view and using consistent and reliable historical information so that individuals and institutions have a better context to make critical decisions about the journey they have undertaken.

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2017

Utah Key Findings

Performance

- In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 42,580 graduates (100 percent) took the ACT® test, compared to 34,514 (100 percent) in 2013. This represents a record-high number of students who have participated in the ACT.
- Compared to the 2017 Utah graduating class's ACT Composite score average of 20.3, Utah graduates in 2016 and 2013 had Composite averages of 20.2 and 20.7, respectively.
 - ~ The Utah ACT science score increased by 0.3 from 2016 to 20.6.
 - ~ The Utah ACT mathematics score increased by 0.2 from 2016 to 19.9, while the national mathematics score increased by 0.1.
- In 2017, 35 percent of Utah graduates met three or four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 34 and 37 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 58 percent of Utah graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 59 and 63 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 35 percent of Utah graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 35 and 38 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 43 percent of Utah graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 42 and 45 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.
 - ~ In 2017, 34 percent of Utah graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 33 and 36 percent of 2016 and 2013 graduates, respectively.

STEM

- In 2017, 18,676 Utah graduates (44 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
- Compared to a 2017 Utah graduating class STEM average of 20.5, graduates in 2016 and 2013 had STEM averages of 20.2 and 20.7, respectively.
- In Utah, 2017 graduates taking three or more years of math had an average math score of 21.0 compared to the average math score of 16.9 for students taking less than three years of math.
- In Utah, 2017 graduates taking physics had an average science score of 22.3, compared to the average science score of 18.9 for students not taking physics.

Career Readiness

- 21,126 Utah graduates (50 percent) were likely to attain the Silver ACT WorkKeys® NCRC®, based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 49 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, 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." For comparison, individual student score reports classify those who scored 12 to 13, 14 to 17, and 18 and higher as making progress toward Bronze, Silver, and Gold certificates.

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2016 ACT-tested Utah high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2017 graduating class would result in:
 - ~ 88 more students enrolling in college.
 - ~ 105 more students persisting to year two.
 - ~ 84 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - ~ 159 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - ~ 120 more students persisting to year four.
 - ~ 130 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In the Utah ACT-tested graduating class of 2017, 24,372 (57 percent) took the ACT once and achieved an ACT Composite score of 20.1. 18,180 students (43 percent) took the ACT more than once and achieved a Composite score of 22.2.
 - ~ In Utah, 2017 graduates taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 23.5.
- Of Utah's 2017 graduating class, there were 532 (1 percent) African American students taking the ACT. This compares to 256,756 (13 percent) nationally.
- Of Utah's 2017 graduating class, there were 393 (1 percent) American Indian students taking the ACT. This compares to 16,135 (1 percent) nationally.
- Of Utah's 2017 graduating class, there were 28,741 (67 percent) White students taking the ACT. This compares to 1,062,439 (52 percent) nationally.
- Of Utah's 2017 graduating class, there were 6,563 (15 percent) Hispanic students taking the ACT. This compares to 347,906 (17 percent) nationally.
- Of Utah's 2017 graduating class, there were 836 (2 percent) Asian students taking the ACT. This compares to 96,097 (5 percent) nationally.
- Of Utah's 2017 graduating class, there were 561 (1 percent) Pacific Islander students taking the ACT. This compares to 6,503 (0 percent) nationally.
- For Utah's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were University of Utah, Utah Valley University, Utah State University, Brigham Young University, and Weber State University.
 - ~ For Utah's 2017 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were Brigham Young University-Idaho, Brigham Young University-Hawaii Campus, and Arizona State University.
- Compared to 73 percent of 2017 graduates nationally, 69 percent of Utah graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 85 percent of African American students nationally, 77 percent of Utah African American 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 76 percent of American Indian students nationally, 72 percent of Utah American Indian 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 69 percent of White students nationally, 69 percent of Utah White 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 83 percent of Hispanic students nationally, 77 percent of Utah Hispanic 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
 - ~ Compared to 76 percent of Asian students nationally, 77

percent of Utah Asian 2017 graduates opted into EOS.

- ~ Compared to 77 percent of Pacific Islander students nationally, 79 percent of Utah Pacific Islander 2017 graduates opted into EOS.
- ACT issued 2,858 ACT fee waivers to qualified Utah students. However, 864 students (30 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 656,061 issued nationally, of which 181,092 (28 percent) did not take advantage. Fee waivers represent a great opportunity for students with socio-economic challenges to retest without incurring any fees. Note: This is the number of fee waivers issued for the state, not specific to this graduating class.

Pipeline

- In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 2,427 (6 percent) aspired to attain an associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 16.6.
- In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 16,415 (39 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 20.5.
- In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 5,635 (13 percent) aspired to attain a graduate degree. They had an average Composite score of 23.4.
- In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 7,834 (18 percent) aspired to attain a professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 22.6.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2017 Utah graduates were: Undecided; Nursing, Registered (BS/RN); Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Business Administration and Management, General; and Computer Science and Programming.
 - ~ In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 4,483 (11 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 21.6.
 - ~ In the Utah graduating class of 2017, 1,597 (4 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 21.1.

ACT Footprint

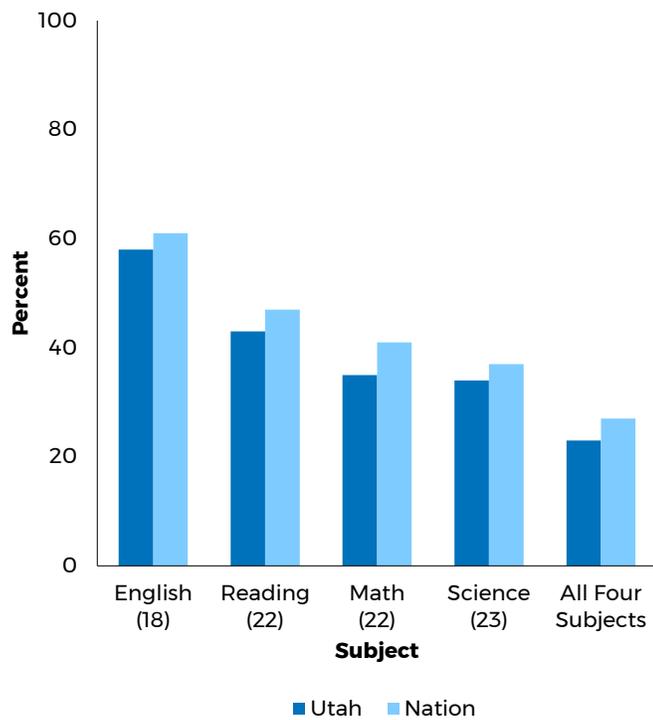
- Number of administrations:
 - ~ ACT Aspire® Summative: 20,270
 - ~ ACT Aspire Periodic: 1,762
 - ~ ACT Engage®: 370
 - ~ PreACT®: 10,058
 - ~ ACT WorkKeys: 797

Additional Points

- ACT conducted two fall ACT College and Career Readiness Workshops at the University of Utah and Brigham Young University.
- The Utah ACT State Organization conducted its annual conference in March. The conference was attended by 200 administrators and educators from across the state.
- Each year, the Utah ACT State Council recognizes exemplars as part of the ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign. In 2017, Brenda Payan from Carbon High School was honored as the student exemplar. The council also honored Enterprise High School as the exemplar for college and career readiness.

Utah College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

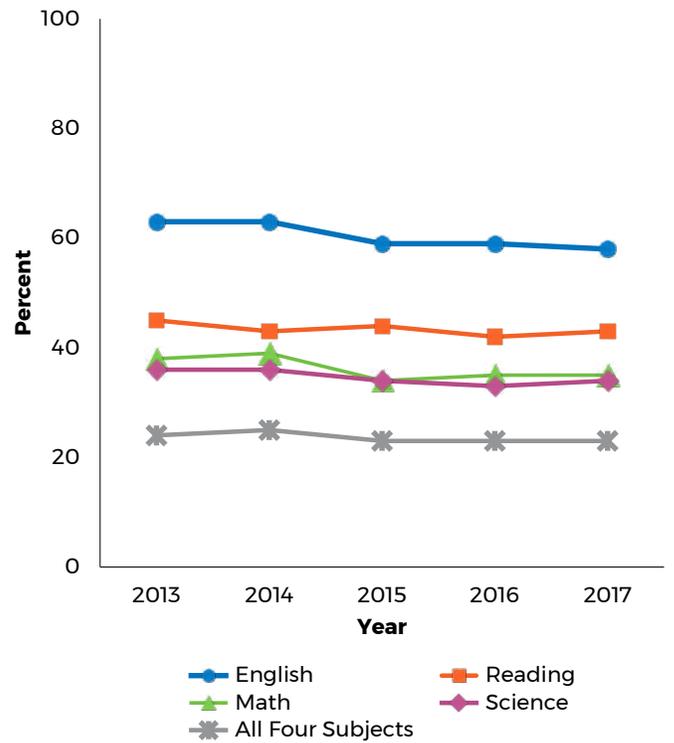
Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data from graph above:

State / Nation	English (18)	Reading (22)	Math (22)	Science (23)	All Four
Utah	58	43	35	34	23
Nation	61	47	41	37	27

Percent of 2013–2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

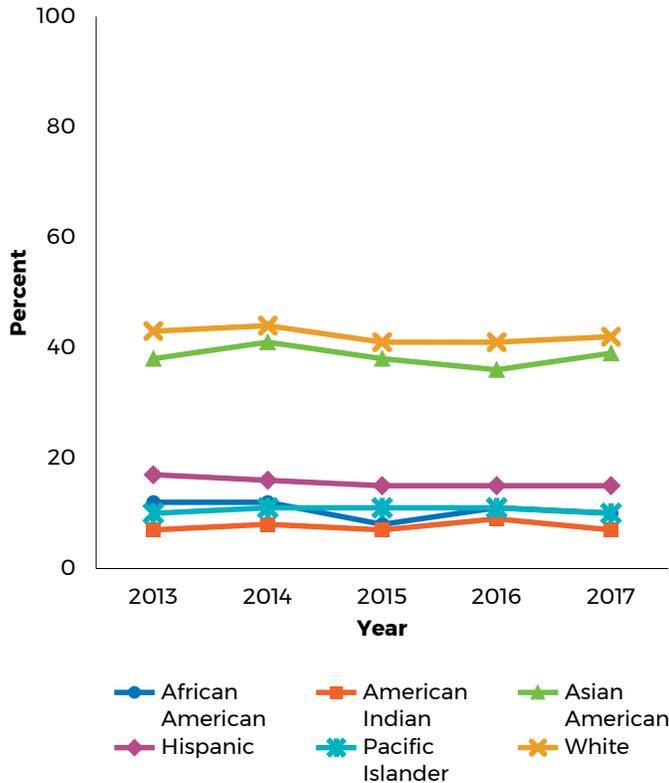


Data from graph above:

Subject	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
English	63	63	59	59	58
Reading	45	43	44	42	43
Math	38	39	34	35	35
Science	36	36	34	33	34
All Four Subjects	24	25	23	23	23

* 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 score values in parentheses ().

Percent of 2013-2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity*



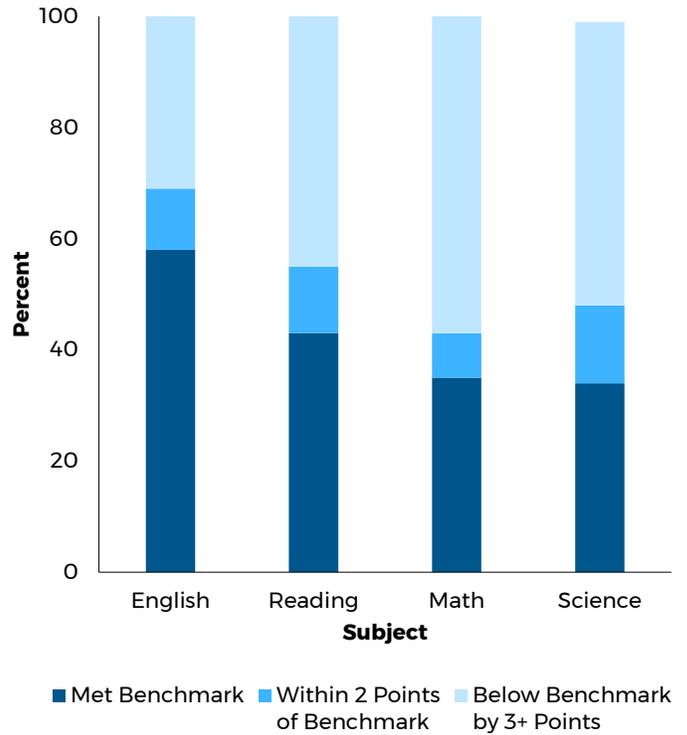
Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	12	12	8	11	10
American Indian	7	8	7	9	7
Asian American	38	41	38	36	39
Hispanic	17	16	15	15	15
Pacific Islander	10	11	11	11	10
White	43	44	41	41	42

* Percentages for groups with insufficient counts will be missing.

Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject

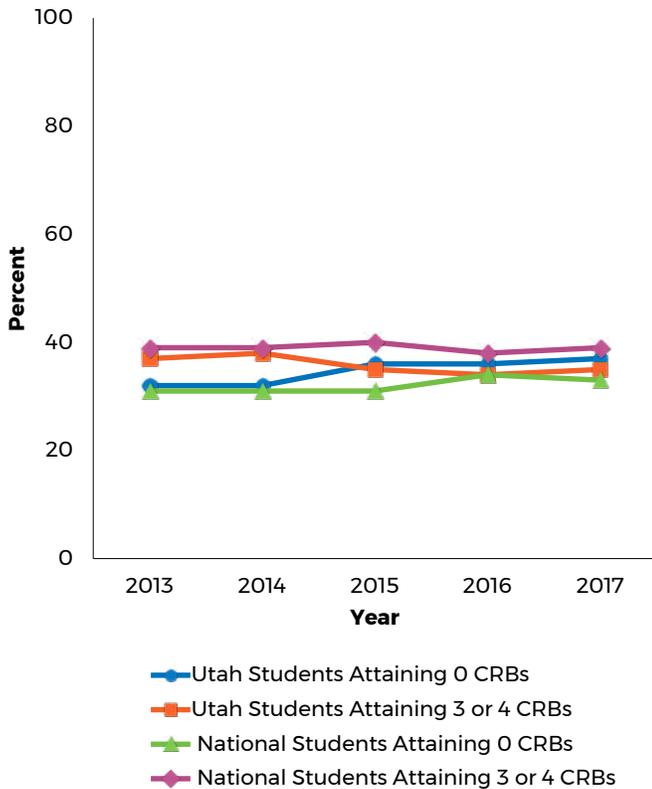
Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Values less than 0.5% will not appear.



Data from graph above:

Attainment	English	Reading	Math	Science
Met Benchmark	58	43	35	34
Within 2 Points of Benchmark	11	12	8	14
Below Benchmark by 3+ Points	31	46	57	51

Trends in Percent of ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks (CRBs) Attained

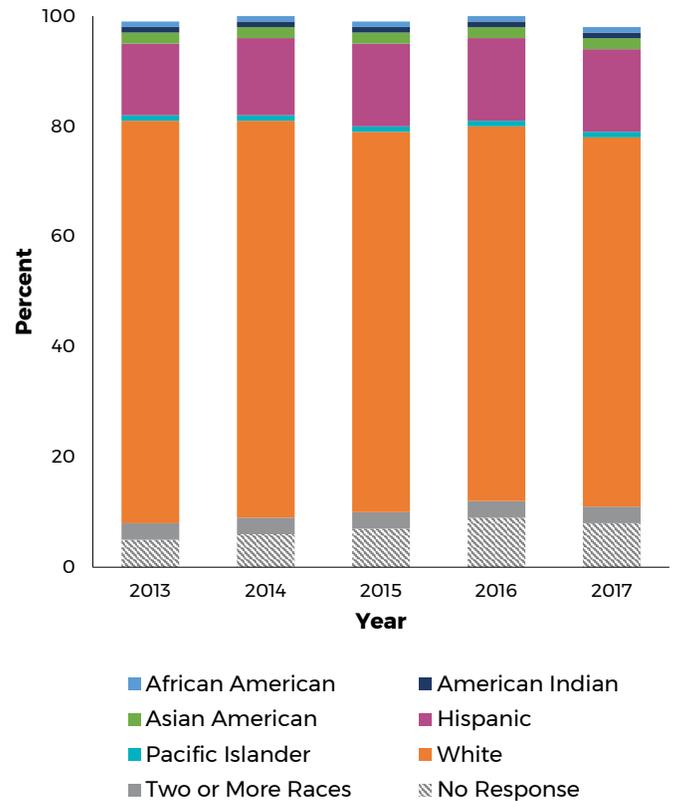


Data from graph above:

Attainment	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Utah Students Attaining 0 CRBs	32	32	36	36	37
Utah Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	37	38	35	34	35
National Students Attaining 0 CRBs	31	31	31	34	33
National Students Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	39	39	40	38	39

Percent of 2013–2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Values less than 0.5% will not appear.



Data from graph above:

Race	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
African American	1	1	1	1	1
American Indian	1	1	1	1	1
Asian American	2	2	2	2	2
Hispanic	13	14	15	15	15
Pacific Islander	1	1	1	1	1
White	73	72	69	68	67
Two or More Races	3	3	3	3	3
No Response	5	6	7	9	8

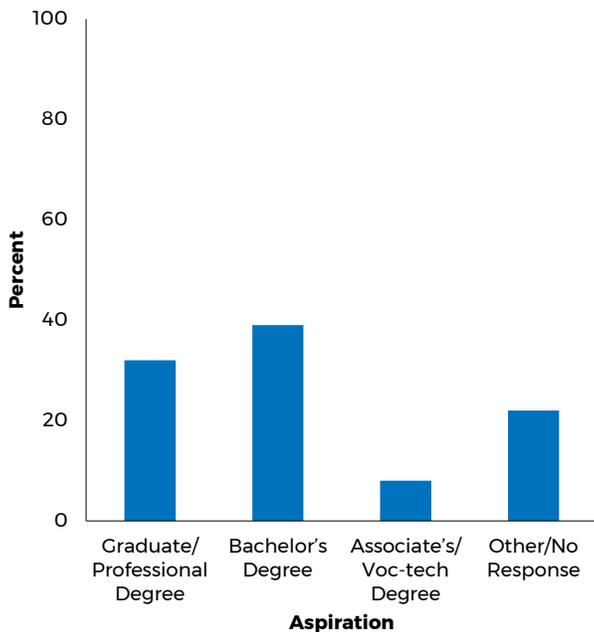
Utah: Between 2013 and 2017, the number of students taking the ACT in Utah increased by 8,066 students (23 percent).

Student Data Trends: 2013-2017, State vs. Nation

Outcome	Cohort	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent Tested	Utah	100	100	100	100	100
	Nation	54	57	59	64	60
N Tested	Utah	34,514	35,074	40,629	41,446	42,580
	Nation	1,799,243	1,845,787	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038
Average English Score	Utah	19.9	20.0	19.4	19.5	19.5
	Nation	20.2	20.3	20.4	20.1	20.3
Average Reading Score	Utah	21.3	21.3	20.9	20.9	20.8
	Nation	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.4
Average Math Score	Utah	20.2	20.3	19.8	19.7	19.9
	Nation	20.9	20.9	20.8	20.6	20.7
Average Science Score	Utah	20.8	20.9	20.4	20.3	20.6
	Nation	20.7	20.8	20.9	20.8	21.0
Average Composite Score	Utah	20.7	20.8	20.2	20.2	20.3
	Nation	20.9	21.0	21.0	20.8	21.0

Percent of 2017 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations

Note: Percents in this graph may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



There is good news in that 78% of Utah's 2017 ACT-tested graduates aspired to postsecondary education. Interestingly enough, 81% of Utah's 2016 ACT-tested graduating class aspired to enroll in postsecondary education, compared to 38% who actually did enroll. If we fully closed the aspirational gap, an additional 17,580 of the 2016 ACT-tested graduates from Utah would have enrolled in postsecondary education.

Data from graph

Aspiration	Percent
Graduate / Professional Degree	32
Bachelor's Degree	39
Associate's / Voc-tech Degree	8
Other / No Response	22



Utah State Exemplar

2017 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign

Brenda Payan

Carbon High School, Carbon School District

“College was never presented as a lofty dream to me, though not one person in my immediate family was educated beyond the ninth grade. Since elementary, my parents had embedded in my brain the value of education beyond high school.”

Brenda, an avid runner, also believes in challenging herself academically. She has taken many college-level courses throughout high school, served as a leader in several school clubs and student government, and engaged in many extracurricular academic endeavors such as research studies, internships, and science fairs.

Brenda plans to major in biomedical engineering at the University of Utah in order to prepare for a career designing medical devices for those with limited access to hospitals.

Information and products for further review

	Knowledge & Skills	Social & Emotional
Assessments	ACT Aspire®	ACT Tessera™
	PreACT®	ACT Engage®
	The ACT® Test	
	ACT WorkKeys®	
Research	Condition of College & Career Readiness	A Rosetta Stone for Noncognitive Skills
	ACT® National Curriculum Survey®	
	The Forgotten Middle	Tessera Comprehensive Theory of Action
	Rigor at Risk	
	ACT Holistic Framework™	
Resources	PLDs Learning Description Review	Tessera Teacher Playbook
	Curriculum Review Worksheets	
	OpenEd Learning Resources	
	Test Prep	
Training	Professional Learning Sessions	
	College & Career Readiness Workshops	
	Holistic Framework Webinars	

We are more than just the ACT test. ACT products and services encompass a variety of research- and assessment-based solutions.

As research leaders, we continue to innovate education and workforce solutions to help guide individuals to education and career success.

Find out more at www.act.org.

Key ACT Research

As students navigate their education and career journeys, it is critical for them to be ready for college and career success. College and career readiness is supported by the ACT Holistic Framework, a research-based, multidimensional model for understanding the essential knowledge and skills needed for success, and the solutions that can meet students' navigation needs. Visit act.org/condition2017 to access key reports listed below.

- Serving students' navigation needs from kindergarten to career requires a holistic approach:
 - ~ *Beyond Academics: A Holistic Framework for Enhancing Education and Workplace Success*
 - ~ *The Importance of Behavioral Skills and Navigation Factors for Education and Workforce Success*
- The ACT Holistic Framework is supported by prolific research:
 - ~ Core Academic Skills:
 - 2017 State and National Condition Reports
 - *Profiles of STEM Students: Persisters, Joiners, Changers, and Departers*
 - *ACT Composite Score by Parental Education Level, 2012-2016*
 - *Comparisons of Student Achievement Levels by District Performance and Poverty*
 - ~ Behavioral Skills (also called Social and Emotional Learning):
 - *The Development of Behavioral Performance Level Descriptors*
 - ~ Cross-Cutting Capabilities:
 - *ACT National Curriculum Survey 2016*
 - ~ Student journeys continue into postsecondary education and careers:
 - *Higher Education Research Digest*
 - *Predicted Attainment of ACT National Career Readiness Certificates for the 2016 ACT-tested High School Cohort*

Recommendations

- 1. Use a holistic assessment model for school accountability that measures student readiness for college and career across multiple domains.** While it is essential to measure students' academic achievement in assessing college and career readiness, it is not enough. Social and emotional learning skills are important and measurable, and they can be impacted. Assessment models should take into account core academic skills, behavioral skills, cross-cutting capabilities, and education and career navigation skills to provide an integrated picture of college and work readiness.
- 2. Make special efforts to ensure that underrepresented students have equal access and opportunity to pursue postsecondary education.** According to ACT research, most underrepresented students want to continue their education after high school, but they face many barriers. Ensuring they have access to the same rigorous core curriculum as others is just one step. Many also lack the resources, information, and familial and peer support they need to prepare for success after high school. Special efforts must be made to level the playing field for underrepresented students so they have equal opportunity to succeed.
- 3. Increase emphasis on STEM readiness initiatives, measures, and programs.** With technology advancing rapidly, the importance of STEM readiness is only increasing. The threat of robotic and computer-assisted technologies eliminating jobs is growing while the remaining and emerging jobs will likely require higher-level skills. ACT data continue to show that many graduates are not ready. Without improvement in STEM readiness, far too many will be ill-prepared for the future workforce.
- 4. Focus on fewer, higher, and clearer learning standards in K-12 schools.** Far too many students continue to graduate from high school without all of the core skills they will need to ably succeed at the next level. Many will struggle, and many will likely fail to realize their aspirations. The push toward raising the bar on learning standards and focusing on the essential skills necessary for success must continue.
- 5. Begin assessing learning and implementing intervention strategies early.** Early assessment and intervention are critical to improving educational outcomes. If students are not on track for college and career readiness by the time they reach middle school, it may be too late. Assessing learning and implementing intervention strategies to help students get on the right path for college and career readiness must begin in elementary school.