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For Immediate Release

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Utah's 2026 ACT Composite Score Rises to 20.1, Ranking First Among High-Participation States

SALT LAKE CITY – Utah's graduating class of 2026 improved its overall performance on the ACT while maintaining one of the nation's highest participation rates among states where nearly all students take the college entrance exam, according to new data released by ACT.

A total of 44,756 Utah public school students from the class of 2026 took the ACT, representing 91 percent of high school graduates. Utah's average composite score rose to 20.1, up from 19.9 in 2025 and well above the national average of 18.8.

"We are proud of the growth shown by Utah students, teachers, and schools as we focus on ensuring every student is prepared for postsecondary success," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Molly Hart.

Utah was one of 16 states that tested 90 percent or more of graduates. Within this high-participation group, Utah ranked first in average composite score (20.1), ahead of Wisconsin (19.4) and Montana (19.4), and led the nation in benchmark attainment across English, reading, math, and science.

Nationally, the average composite score for the class of 2026 was 18.8, with approximately 1.3 million test-takers participating nationwide.

Benchmark Performance

Among Utah public school graduates in the class of 2026:

- 57% met the English benchmark.
- 34% met the Math benchmark, up from 32% in 2025.
- 45% met the Reading benchmark, up from 43% in 2025.
- 33% met the Science benchmark.
- 27% met all three core benchmarks in English, math, and reading, up two percentage points from 2025.

Utah's average composite score has shown consistent strength, rising to 20.1 this year following stable performances of 19.9 over prior years. Meanwhile, students who retested demonstrated significant gains, achieving an average composite score of 25.8 on their superscores.

Utah remains one of only a few states that funds ACT testing for all high school juniors, ensuring access regardless of income or background. The Utah State Board of Education partners with ACT to provide the test each spring to every Utah public school junior at no cost.

About ACT Data

The ACT is a curriculum-based measure of college readiness. Beginning with the 2026 graduating class data release, ACT composite scores reflect performance across required subject areas. The annual graduating class data release includes all students who graduated in 2026 and took the ACT at any point between 10th and 12th grade.

More information about Utah's ACT scores can be found on the [USB E Data Gateway](#).

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