

# College Readiness and the ACT

Preparing Students for the Test and What Comes After

## The lack of college readiness is pandemic

Many new college students need remediation<sup>1</sup>

**20%**

of incoming freshmen at four-year institutions need remedial coursework

**52%**

of incoming freshmen at two-year institutions need remedial coursework

75% of students aren't prepared for college but their GPAs indicate that they are<sup>2</sup>

**20%**

of students with a GPA of 4.0 need remediation in math, English, or both

**80%**

of students in remedial classes graduated from high school with a GPA of 3.0 or higher

### The negative impacts of lack of college readiness

#### Workforce needs aren't met

Current college attainment rates are not keeping pace with the projected workforce needs of the U.S.<sup>3</sup>

#### Credit-bearing courses are postponed

**500,000 college students** must enroll in some type of remedial course after graduating high school before they can take credit-bearing classes.<sup>4</sup>

#### Remedial courses cost money

Remedial courses cost students **\$6.7 billion** per year.<sup>5</sup>

#### Students don't finish college

- Half of all college students drop out before earning a degree.
- **1 in 3 freshmen** don't complete the first year of college.<sup>6</sup>
- The dropout risk for four-year-degree-seeking students who need remediation is **74% higher** compared to non-remedial students.<sup>7</sup>

## The ACT as a college readiness exam

Four core subjects are tested with timed tests<sup>8</sup>



Reading

English

Math

Science

Percentage of 2016 graduates who took the ACT

2016

**64%**

2.1 million students

2015

**59%**

1.92 million students

Number of students who took the ACT in 2016 who scored college-ready

Percentage of graduating seniors who took the exam in 2016 and hit the college-ready benchmark in at least three of the subjects

2016

**38%**

2015

**40%**

Composite score

The composite score (an average of the four scores), used by many colleges as part of the admissions process:

2016

**20.8**

2015

**21**

### Percentage of students taking the ACT in 2016 who met benchmarks

Reading

**44%**

benchmark of 22 points

English

**61%**

benchmark of 18 points

Math

**41%**

benchmark of 22 points

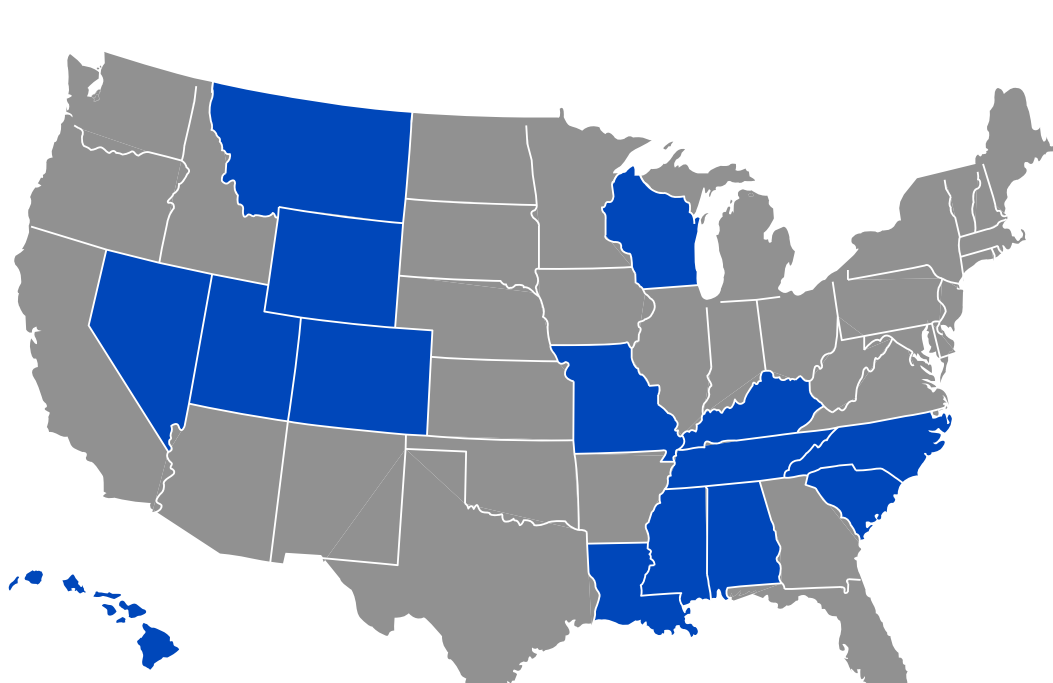
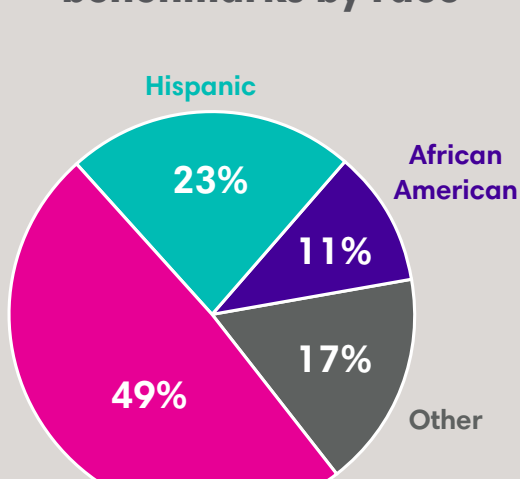
Science

**36%**

benchmark of 23 points

34% did not meet any of the four benchmarks

### Percentage of test-takers who met three or more benchmarks by race



#### 15 states required students to take the ACT during the 2015/2016 school year

Alabama	Mississippi	South Carolina
Colorado	Missouri	Tennessee
Hawaii	Montana	Utah
Kentucky	Nevada	Wisconsin
Louisiana	North Carolina	Wyoming

#### Seven states use the ACT for federal accountability as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Hawaii	Tennessee
Kentucky	Wisconsin
Mississippi	Wyoming
Montana	

Digital curriculum offers flexible, engaging, personalized learning experiences for all students, resulting in better prepared students, higher exam scores and improved overall readiness for college, work and life.

## Preparing students for the ACT

Failing to prepare = Preparing to fail

### Studying for the test vs. knowing the material

The ACT tends to be more about content than process. Students need to increase content knowledge (not test-taking strategies) to prepare for the test.

#### Ways to prepare for the ACT

- Private tutor
- Class
- Immersion, such as a camp
- Online
- Books
- Practice tests
- Personalized tutorials that identify the areas students should focus on

#### Effective ACT preparation should offer

- Targeted, individualized learning based on assessment
- Instruction; not just "test prep" but a deeper understanding of concepts tested
- Student-centered active learning

Visit our website to learn more about ACT Readiness Tutorials.

[ApexLearning.com/exam-prep](http://ApexLearning.com/exam-prep) @Apex\_Learning

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ccrcenter.org/sites/default/files/NHSC\\_CollegeCareerReadinessFactSheet\\_Oct12.pdf](http://www.ccrcenter.org/sites/default/files/NHSC_CollegeCareerReadinessFactSheet_Oct12.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.collegeathome.com/blog/2013/01/17/unprepared-for-college>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ed.gov/k-12reforms/standards>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.usnewsuniversitydirectory.com/articles/remedial-high-school-courses-required-by-colleges\\_15528.aspx](http://www.usnewsuniversitydirectory.com/articles/remedial-high-school-courses-required-by-colleges_15528.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.nber.org/papers/w18457.pdf?new\\_window="](http://www.nber.org/papers/w18457.pdf?new_window=)

<sup>6</sup> <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/freshmen-least-most-likely-return>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/files/files/EdReformNow%20O-P%20Embargoed%20Final.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2016-08-24/bigger-numbers-of-high-school-grads-taking-act-college-test>