



The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2014

Hispanic Students

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June 2015

ACT and *Excelencia* in Education are united in our desire to help all people succeed in education and the workplace, and we share a commitment to the effective use of data and analysis to support the continuous improvement of individuals, organizations, and systems.

Excelencia in Education and ACT are proud to collaborate on this report, which is an extension of the annual ACT *Condition of College and Career Readiness* report series. This report provides a national snapshot of academic performance among Hispanic students in the high school graduating class of 2014 who took the ACT® college readiness assessment. Through this snapshot, we can begin to address questions of critical importance to our nation. Are Hispanic high school students prepared for college and career? Are younger Hispanic students on target for college and career? Are enough Hispanic students taking core courses that will prepare them for college and career? Are Hispanic students who are ready for college and career actually succeeding?

To put this year's report in context, it is worth noting that students of color (Latino, African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Native American students) became the majority of students in our nation's public K–12 schools in the 2014–15 school year, driven largely by growth in the Latino population. Today, about one in four public school students are Hispanic, and that share will continue to increase in the years to come.

Over the past decade, significant progress has been made in both the percentage of Hispanic students who are graduating from high school and in the percentage enrolling in postsecondary education. In addition, the number of Latinos completing an associate's degree or higher also increased from 3.8 million in 2004 to 6.5 million in 2013. However, while many Hispanic high school students are making progress toward college and career readiness, overall levels of readiness among Hispanic students are not yet where they should be.

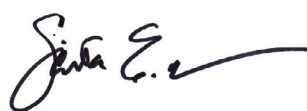
Progress will require that we look to the evidence of what works. To that end, this report offers several recommendations for improving readiness for Hispanic students and all students by establishing clear, high, and common academic standards in the classroom; increasing the rigor of high school core courses; monitoring student performance beginning in the early grades; and making academic interventions with students who are off target as soon as possible, based on timely and reliable performance data.

We worked together to share this rigorous data analysis with you, and it is our hope to work with you to increase college and career readiness among Hispanic students so they are prepared for success on their educational pathways after high school. We hope that the information in this report will assist states, districts, schools, and educators who play such important and interdependent roles in preparing Hispanic students—and all students—to thrive in education, career, and life.

Jon Whitmore
CEO, ACT



Sarita E. Brown
President, *Excelencia* in Education



Hispanic Students

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2014

The *Condition of College & Career Readiness 2014* is ACT's and *Excelencia* in Education's annual report on the progress of the graduating class relative to college readiness. This year, 57% of the graduating class took the ACT® college readiness assessment. The increased number of test takers over the past several years enhances the breadth and depth of the data pool, providing a comprehensive picture of the current graduating class in the context of readiness levels as well as offering a glimpse of the emerging educational pipeline.

Our Commitment to College and Career Readiness and Success

As a research-based nonprofit, ACT is committed to providing solutions across a wide range of life decision points in an increasingly individualized manner so everyone can benefit. A not-for-profit organization, *Excelencia* in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by providing data-driven analysis of the educational status of Latinos and by promoting education policies and institutional practices that support their academic achievement.

Investing now in college and career readiness is critical for the future. Government, foundation, and community leaders have identified goals to increase college completion and benefit the nation's economic competitiveness, citizen engagement, and community leadership. Reaching these goals will require intentional and tactical strategies to increase the college readiness and success of the growing Latino population.

The Importance of Latino Student Success

Hispanics are the second-largest racial/ethnic group in the United States, and their representation is growing. The US Census Bureau estimates Hispanics represented 17% (53 million)¹ of the US population in 2012 and are projected to represent 31% of the population by 2060.² Hispanic representation is even larger within younger segments of the population. Hispanics now represent more than 25% of all children under the age of five³ and are projected to represent 39% of the population under the age of five

by 2060.⁴ Among high school students, Hispanics represent 22% of all students, the second-highest representation behind Whites. Between 2008 and 2019, the number of Hispanic public high school graduates is projected to increase 41%.⁵ In higher education, Hispanics represent 16% of college undergraduates⁶, and the US Department of Education projects Latino postsecondary enrollment will grow by 27% between 2011 and 2022—the largest rate of increase of all racial and ethnic groups.⁷

The majority of Hispanic high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education the fall after their graduation. In 2013, Hispanic high school graduates had a college-going rate of 60%.⁸ This is a promising sign of increased college aspirations, readiness, and access. However, there is much room to grow in order to translate college enrollment into increased educational attainment. In 2014, 23% of Hispanic adults had earned an associate's degree or higher compared to 46% of non-Hispanic Whites.⁹ In short, while the Hispanic share of the population is increasing and more Hispanic students are going to college, degree completion rates remain lower than that of other groups. Increased college readiness is a necessary precursor to increased college success.

Using This Report¹⁰

- This report is designed to help inform the following questions driving national efforts to strengthen P–16 education.
- Are Hispanic students prepared for college and career?
- Are enough Hispanic students taking core courses?
- Are core courses rigorous enough?
- Are younger Hispanic students on target for college and career?
- What other dimensions of college and career readiness should we track?
- Are Hispanic students who are ready for college and career actually succeeding?

Key Findings

Condition of College & Career Readiness 2014— Hispanic Students

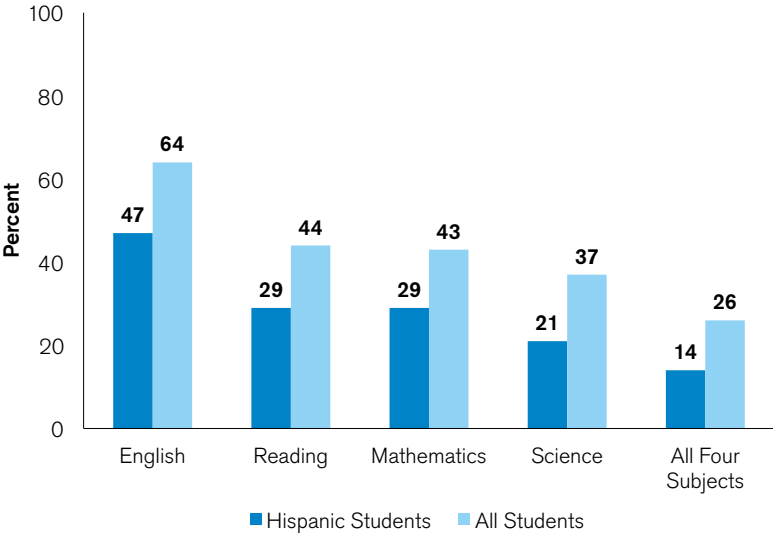
Key Findings	Recommendations
<p>Academic readiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students aren't academically ready for college • This is unchanged since 2010 • Most aren't close to being academically ready <p>See graphs on pp. 6–7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in early childhood education programs so that more children are ready to learn. Latinos represent more than a quarter of children under the age of five. Investing in early education programs for Latinos is crucial for an academically ready student population.
<p>Academic readiness and race/ethnicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race/ethnicity and readiness are related; Hispanic students are less likely to be academically ready, regardless of subject <p>See graphs on pp. 8–9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance college and career readiness through a renewed focus on teaching and learning. Although Latinos are more likely to need remedial education and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores remain lower than other groups, they continue to make progress. Renewing focus on teaching and learning empowers educators to support their students in achievement.
<p>Core course taking and readiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who take a core high school curriculum are more likely to be academically ready • Readiness rates for Hispanic students remain low regardless of core course taking <p>See graph on p. 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement monitoring and early warning systems that help educators identify and intervene with at-risk students. In addition, outreach to Latino parents increases involvement in their child's education and allows parents to support their progress and intervene if their child falls behind.
<p>A look at STEM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity/race and readiness are related for students with an interest in STEM fields <p>See graph on p. 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase support for the development of STEM-related courses to meet the coming demand for a larger STEM workforce. Outreach and STEM pathways in middle and high school introduce Latinos to these subjects early, increasing preparedness and sparking interest in STEM fields.
<p>Postsecondary aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students aspire to some postsecondary education <p>See graph on p. 14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support programs targeted at developing behaviors that aid students' academic success. Many Latinos are the first in their families to enroll in postsecondary education. Strategies to increase Latino student success, such as student support services and mentoring, should be implemented to increase their likelihood of success.
<p>College enrollment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic readiness and college enrollment are related; less prepared students have more limited postsecondary education opportunities <p>See graph on p. 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide all students with access to a rigorous high school core curriculum. Access to rigorous curriculum prepares students for academic success in postsecondary education. It is critical that Latinos have access to and enroll in these courses so that they are prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce.

Hispanic Students

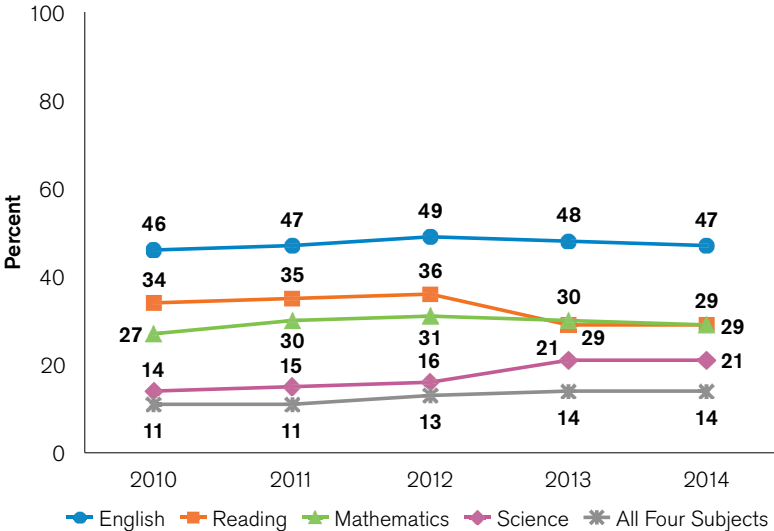
Attainment of College and Career Readiness

- 281,216 Hispanic high school 2014 graduates took the ACT.
- From 2010–2014, the number of ACT test-taking Hispanic graduates has increased by about 78 percent.

Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Subject



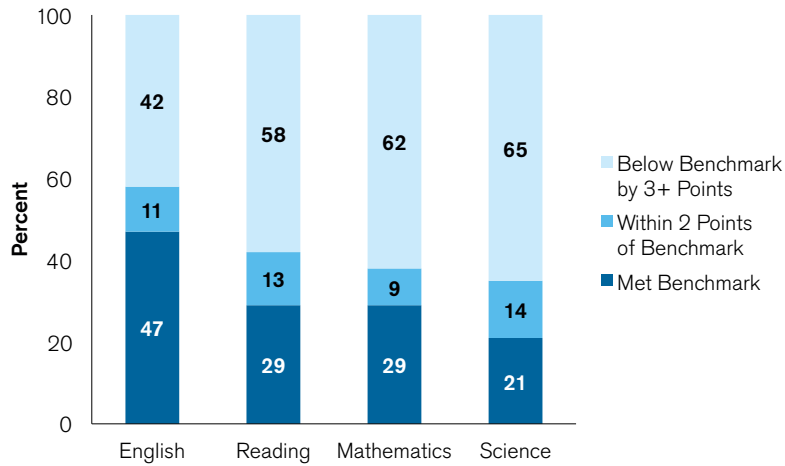
Percent of 2010–2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks



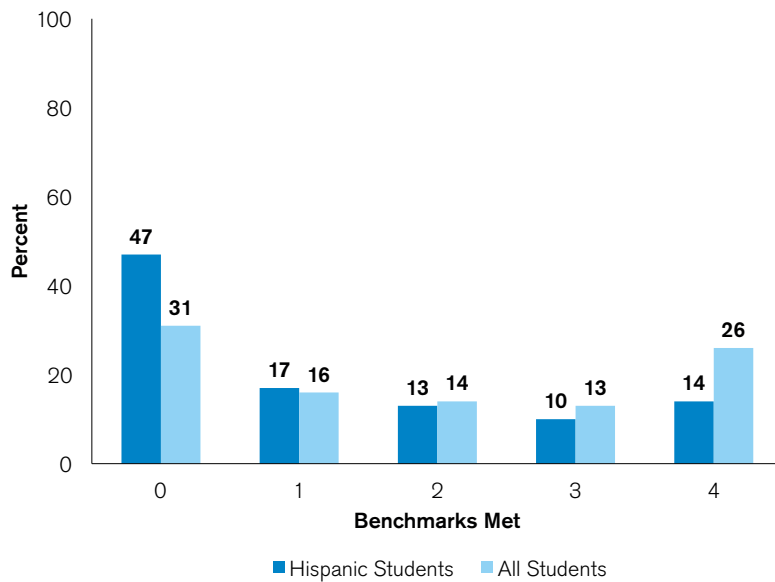
Note: Percents in this report may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Near Attainment of College and Career Readiness

Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Attained

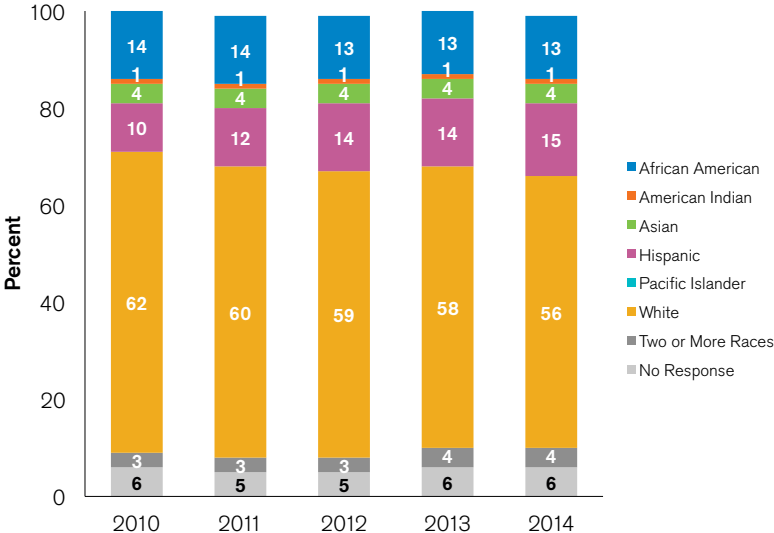


Hispanic Students

Participation and Opportunity

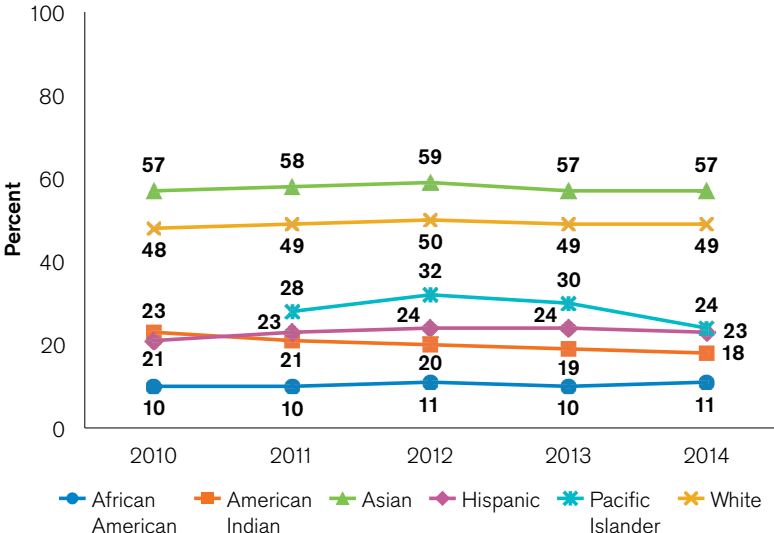
Over the past decade, ACT has experienced unprecedented growth in the number of students tested, as well as statewide partnerships in 13 states and in many districts across the country. As a result, the 2014 *Condition of College & Career Readiness* report provides a much deeper and more representative sample in comparison to a purely self-selected college-going population.

Percent of 2010–2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity*



Note: Values less than 0.5% will not appear.

Percent of 2010–2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity*

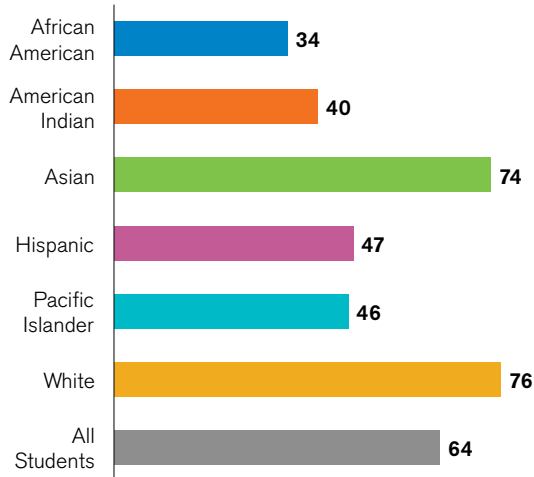


* Race/ethnicity categories changed in 2011 to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements.¹¹

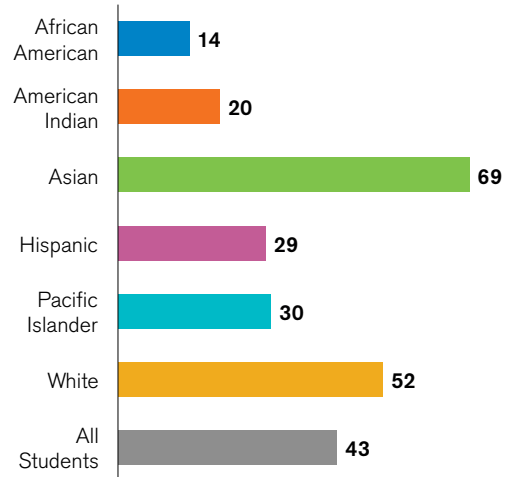
Participation and Opportunity by Subject

Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject*

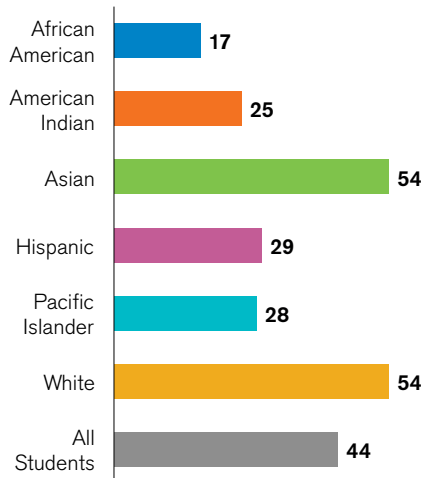
English



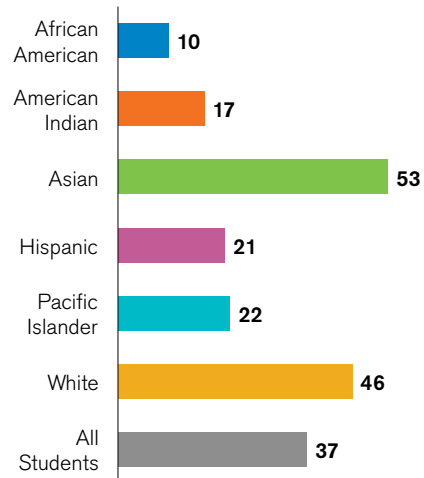
Mathematics



Reading



Science



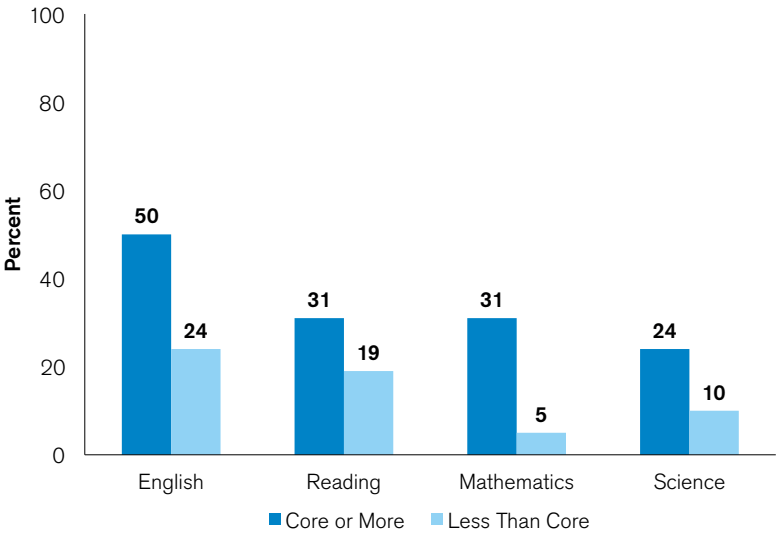
* Race/ethnicity categories changed in 2011 to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements.¹¹

Hispanic Students

Course-Taking Patterns and Benchmark Performance

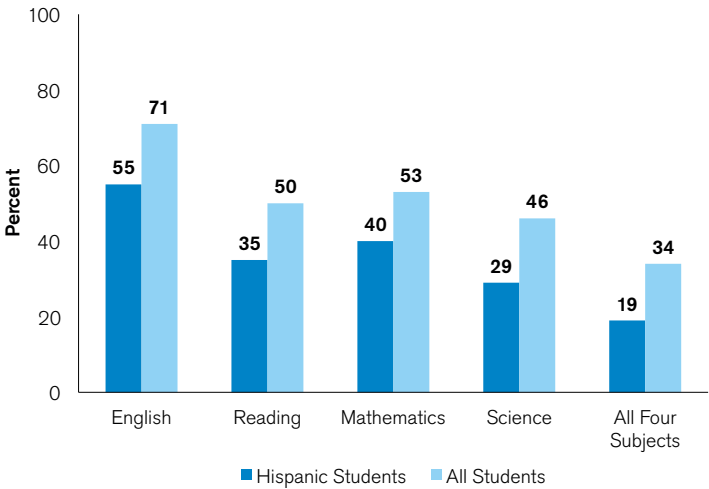
Within subjects, ACT has consistently found that students who take the recommended core curriculum are more likely to be ready for college or career than those who do not. A core curriculum is defined as four years of English and three years each of mathematics, social studies, and science.¹²

Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates in Core or More vs. Less Than Core Courses Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Subject



A First Look at STEM

Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates with an Interest in STEM Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Subject

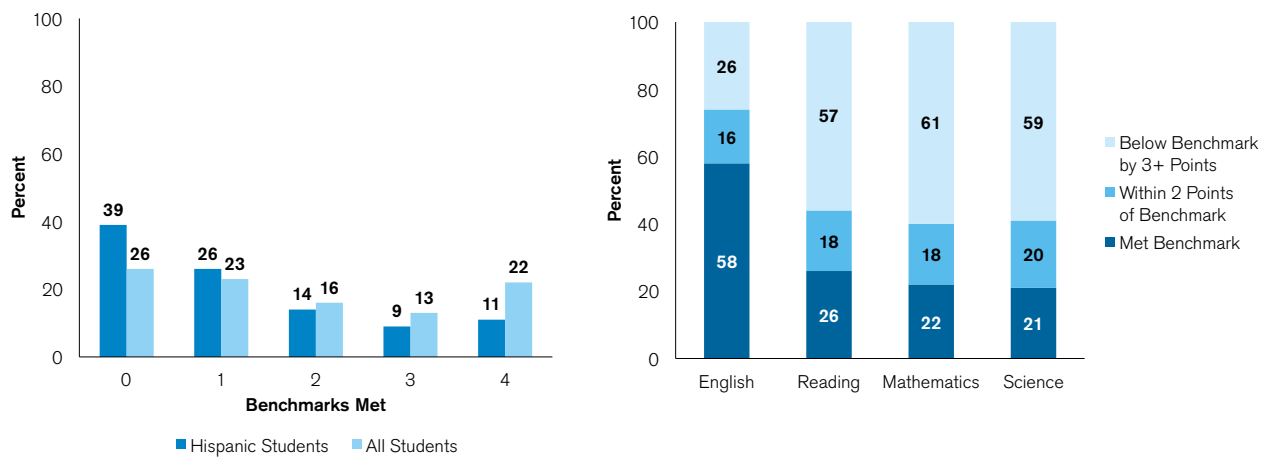


This chart describes ACT College Readiness Benchmark attainment for 2014 low-income high school graduates nationwide who have an interest in STEM majors or occupations. Characteristics of students with an interest in STEM were addressed in greater depth in the *ACT Condition of STEM 2014* report.

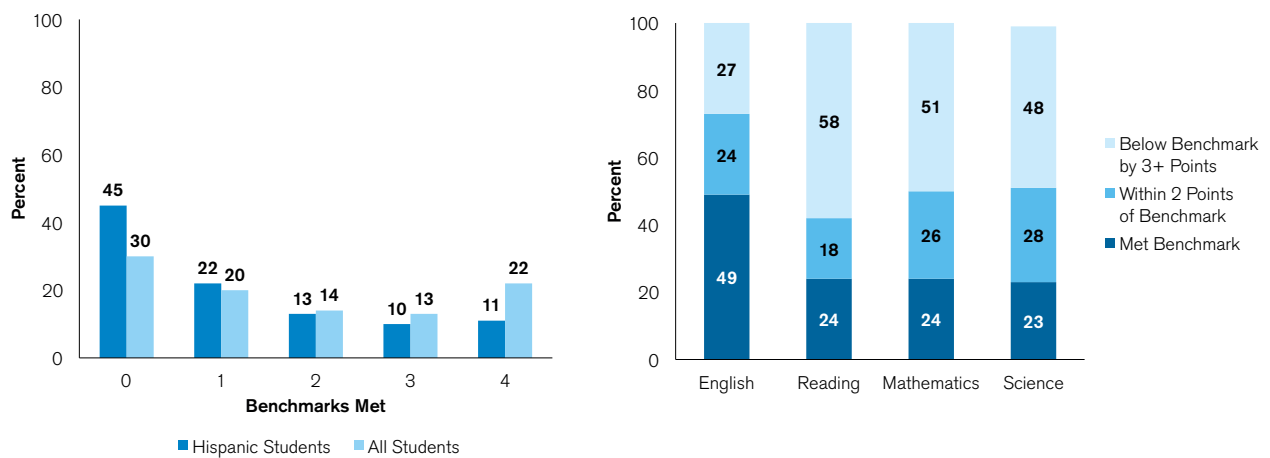
Early Preparation

ACT research shows that younger students who take rigorous curricula are more prepared to graduate from high school ready for college or career. Moreover, our research (*The Forgotten Middle*, 2008) found that “the level of academic achievement that students attain by 8th grade has a larger impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school than anything that happens academically in high school.”

Percent of 2013–2014 ACT Plan®–Tested Hispanic 10th Graders Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks (N = 168,467)



Percent of 2013–2014 ACT Explore®–Tested Hispanic 8th Graders Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks (N = 126,705)



Hispanic Students

ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment for Top Planned College Majors: 2014 Graduates

When students register for the ACT, they can select a college major—from a list of 294 majors—that they plan to pursue in college. Among recent ACT-tested high school graduates nationwide, about 80% selected a specific planned major, whereas about 20% indicated that they were undecided or did not select a major.

This table ranks the nation's top (most frequently selected) majors among 2014 graduates. The percentages of students meeting the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are shown for each major. Across these planned majors, there are considerable differences in the percentage of students who are ready to succeed in college.

Major Name	N	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four
Undecided	36,870	47	29	29	21	14
No Major Indicated	19,128	22	11	9	7	3
Nursing, Registered (BS/RN)	12,201	42	22	19	13	6
Medicine (Pre-Medicine)	10,564	71	50	52	40	29
Criminology	7,658	37	19	18	12	6
Business Administration and Management, General	7,655	49	28	31	21	12
Mechanical Engineering	5,459	51	33	48	32	22
Law (Pre-Law)	5,315	49	33	30	23	15
Biology, General	4,622	70	48	50	38	28
Medical Assisting	4,438	28	12	11	7	3
Psychology, Clinical and Counseling	4,186	60	38	29	21	14
Accounting	3,547	49	27	41	24	14
Psychology, General	3,368	64	42	34	27	18
Physical Therapy (Pre-Physical Therapy)	2,948	52	29	29	22	12
Hospital/Facilities Administration	2,789	31	15	14	9	4
Biochemistry and Biophysics	2,727	70	50	53	41	31
Computer Science and Programming	2,575	66	46	53	41	30
Athletic Training	2,572	46	25	24	18	9
Engineering (Pre-Engineering), General	2,399	64	43	59	44	32
Aerospace/Aeronautical Engineering	2,335	70	47	62	46	33
Graphic Design	2,282	46	26	20	16	8
Civil Engineering	2,175	61	38	59	36	24
Elementary Education	2,129	42	23	19	13	7
Veterinary Medicine (Pre-Veterinarian)	2,122	51	31	27	22	13
Pharmacy (Pre-Pharmacy)	2,119	59	36	42	29	19
Health-Related Professions and Services, General	2,027	52	31	32	21	13
Architecture, General	2,019	46	25	36	22	13
Computer Engineering	1,985	59	37	53	36	26
Nursing, Practical/Vocational (LPN)	1,942	28	13	12	7	3
Music, General	1,901	47	25	22	17	11

Note: *Undecided* and/or *No Major Indicated* are included in the table, if applicable. The former refers to students who selected the option *Undecided* from the list of majors. The latter refers to students who did not respond to the question.

ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment for the Top Planned College Majors with Good Fit: 2014 Graduates

Many students gravitate toward majors that align with their preferred activities and values. ACT research has shown that greater *interest-major fit* is related to important student outcomes such as persistence in a major or college. This table shows, for each planned major, the numbers and percentages of students displaying good interest-major fit¹³, as well as the percentages of students meeting the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. Since only students who completed the ACT Interest Inventory during ACT registration are included here, this table shows results for a subset of the students in the prior table. These planned majors vary considerably in the percentage of students displaying good interest-major fit and meeting the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. The results highlight the importance of examining multiple predictors of college success and affirm the value of a holistic view of college readiness.

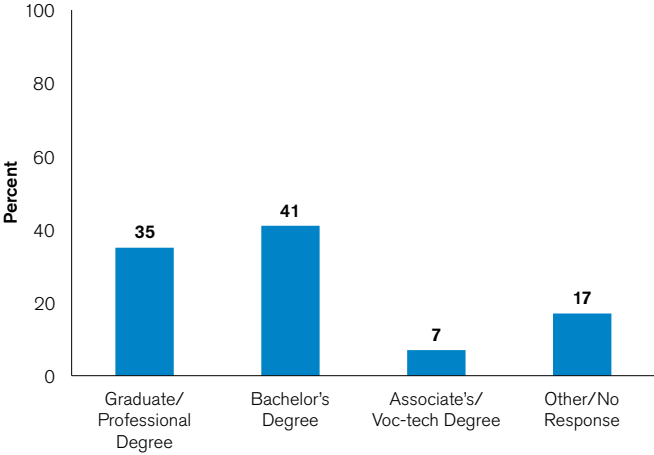
Major Name	N Fit	% Fit	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four
Undecided			No profile available				
No Major Indicated			No profile available				
Nursing, Registered (BS/RN)	3,397	28	50	26	23	17	9
Medicine (Pre-Medicine)	4,850	46	76	54	56	44	32
Criminology	847	11	47	29	20	17	8
Business Administration and Management, General	2,542	33	50	28	34	22	13
Mechanical Engineering	1,428	26	54	34	50	35	24
Law (Pre-Law)	1,515	29	63	45	41	33	22
Biology, General	2,289	50	73	51	51	40	29
Medical Assisting	1,084	24	29	13	13	8	3
Psychology, Clinical and Counseling	659	16	72	50	34	29	18
Accounting	1,788	50	53	30	45	26	17
Psychology, General	715	21	71	51	37	31	23
Physical Therapy (Pre-Physical Therapy)	781	26	60	34	34	26	14
Hospital/Facilities Administration	366	13	32	12	15	8	4
Biochemistry and Biophysics	1,412	52	73	54	56	46	34
Computer Science and Programming	632	25	66	48	53	43	31
Athletic Training	495	19	56	27	31	24	13
Engineering (Pre-Engineering), General	632	26	61	40	54	43	29
Aerospace/Aeronautical Engineering	711	30	70	49	63	47	34
Graphic Design	935	41	52	29	20	17	9
Civil Engineering	522	24	62	34	60	36	22
Elementary Education	487	23	51	29	22	14	6
Veterinary Medicine (Pre-Veterinarian)	760	36	59	38	34	30	18
Pharmacy (Pre-Pharmacy)	805	38	64	41	48	34	22
Health-Related Professions and Services, General			No profile available				
Architecture, General	366	18	46	27	31	23	14
Computer Engineering	472	24	64	44	60	44	33
Nursing, Practical/Vocational (LPN)	452	23	38	17	17	9	5
Music, General	803	42	55	30	23	18	11

Note: *Undecided* and/or *No Major Indicated* are included in the table, if applicable. The former refers to students who selected the option *Undecided* from the list of majors. The latter refers to students who did not respond to the question.

Hispanic Students

Other College and Career Readiness Factors

Percent of 2014 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations

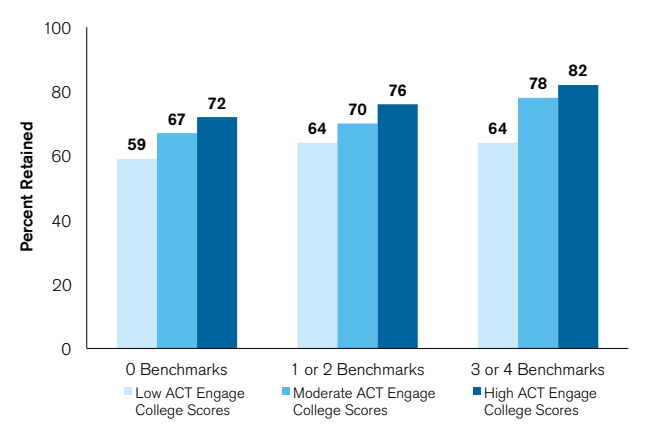


Aligning Student Behaviors, Planning, and Aspirations

Most students aspire to a post-high school credential. To help them meet those aspirations, educational planning, monitoring, and interventions must be aligned to their aspirations, begin early, and continue throughout their educational careers.

Academic Achievement, Behaviors, and College Retention

College Retention Rates by Number of ACT Benchmarks Met and ACT Engage® College Scores*



Across all ACT College Readiness Benchmark attainment levels, students with higher ACT Engage College scores (based on the mean percentile scores of ACT Engage scales Academic Discipline, Commitment to College, and Social Connection) remain enrolled in a postsecondary institution after the first year of college at substantially higher rates than students with lower ACT Engage College scores.

* Based on N = 13,697 ACT-tested graduates of 2011 and 2012 who also took the ACT Engage College assessment and enrolled in college. Students with a mean percentile score of less than 25 were classified as low, those with scores between 25 and 75 were classified as moderate, and those with scores greater than 75 were classified as high.

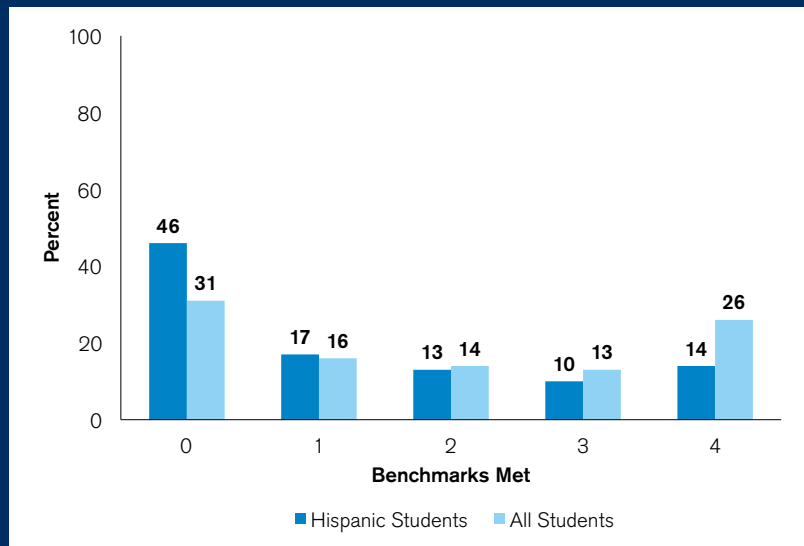
Looking Back at the Class of 2013

Hispanic Students

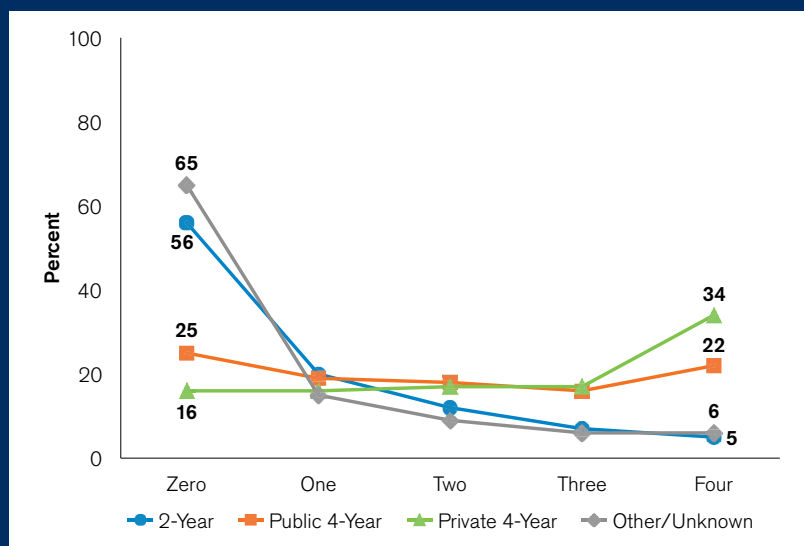
ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and Fall 2013 College Enrollment

Academic achievement, as measured by ACT College Readiness Benchmark attainment, has a clear and distinctive relationship with the path taken by high school graduates. Those who were more academically ready were more likely to enroll in 4-year institutions. Graduates who enrolled in 2-year colleges or pursued other options after high school were more likely to have met fewer Benchmarks. For the sizable number of 2013 graduates who did not meet any Benchmarks, their post-high school opportunities appear to have been limited compared to their college-ready peers.

Percent of 2013 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Attained



Percent of 2013 ACT-Tested Hispanic High School Graduates by Number of ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Attained and Fall 2013 College Enrollment Status



Policies and Practices

How to Increase Readiness

Since 2009, the number of ACT-tested Hispanic students has increased significantly. Hispanic student performance relative to the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks shows mixed results. Approximately 14% of all 2014 ACT-tested Hispanic high school graduates met all four of the Benchmarks, which indicate academic readiness for credit-bearing first-year college courses in English Composition, College Algebra, Biology, and the social sciences. At the same time, 17% of all 2014 ACT-tested Hispanic high school graduates met only one Benchmark, and 47% met none.

The value of ACT College Readiness Benchmark analysis depends on how the analysis is used to inform educational policy and practices for improvement. What can educators and policymakers do to improve college readiness? Further, how do we know that such efforts will work for the young and fast-growing Hispanic population? While the second question is beyond the scope of this report, there are some concrete recommendations to improve college readiness based on decades of ACT research, as well as *Excelencia* in Education's studies of effective practices.

Advance college and career readiness through a renewed focus on teaching and learning. Given that less than one-quarter of Latino high school graduates achieved the ACT Benchmarks, it is imperative to focus on increasing college and career readiness. Some studies show Latinos are more likely to need remedial education, and while they are making progress, their National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores remain lower than that of other groups. With the majority of states and the District of Columbia having adopted more rigorous college and career readiness standards—and assessments to measure student progress toward those standards—it is more important than ever for state and local systems to align other educational elements to these standards. These elements include curriculum alignment to standards; experiential learning opportunities; and teacher professional development, especially as it relates to integrating the standards into current teaching practices and increasing assessment literacy. Research shows that systemic alignment of key policies and school activities empowers educators to support students in making notable gains in student achievement.

Set clear performance standards to evaluate college and career readiness. States must define performance standards so that everyone knows “how good is good enough” for students to have a reasonable chance of success at college or on the job. ACT defines college readiness in English, reading, math, and science using decades of student performance data. For each area, students who are considered college ready have a 50% chance of earning a B or higher or about a 75% chance of earning a C or higher in the corresponding first-year English Composition, introductory social science, College Algebra, or Biology course. Longitudinal, real-world data and research on what constitutes student success are now available to every state and district, as are standards and benchmarks against which the performance of students and schools can be measured and state progress noted.

In turn, data should be used diagnostically to inform improvements to education.

Implement a high-quality student assessment system. As states adopt and implement new high-quality assessment systems, they should ensure that those systems measure and provide timely and actionable information about student performance aligned to college and career readiness.

High-quality assessments must:

- Monitor growth over a student's educational experience, starting in elementary school and through high school, so that educators can make timely instructional decisions and interventions based on reliable information.
- Be aligned, linked, and longitudinal in nature to be an effective tool for students, teachers, administrators, and parents in monitoring student progress.
- Be mindful of and incorporate the unique accessibility needs of English language learners and students with disabilities, and the tests must be constructed in deep consultation with experts on these populations.
- Vary according to the type of standards that need to be measured. These multiple measures can be used to offer more comprehensive evaluations of student achievement, from multiple-choice and constructed-response assessments to performance tasks and project-based learning.
- Be offered through multiple platforms. While computer-based testing is highly applicable to formative assessments that can be conducted on an on-demand basis, paper-and-pencil testing may be a reality for states and districts with less technological capacity. Until computer and broadband access for such large groups of students are sufficiently widespread in schools, both platforms must be available.
- Offer multiple stakeholders—especially teachers—ongoing, real-time, interactive reporting and access to assessment results and other related data.

These principles are consistent with the goals of other principles for high-quality college and career readiness assessments set forth by experts in the field.¹⁴ Some effective practices implement testing in the 11th grade and use it in the 12th grade to improve the college and career readiness of Latino students.

Support programs targeted at developing behaviors that aid students' academic success. Monitoring students' academic performance is critical, but certain academically related behaviors also contribute to student persistence and success. Many Latinos are the first in their families to enroll in postsecondary education. Strategies that work for Latinos include offering and expanding student support services, such as tutoring, the development of study skills, mentoring, and supplemental instruction. Developing college knowledge, including choosing where to enroll and available financial aid, are crucial to Latino student success. Cultivating behavioral habits that contribute to postsecondary and workforce achievement can have a noticeable impact on students' achievement and persistence levels.

Policies and Practices

Provide all students with access to a rigorous high school core curriculum.

While in recent years, most states have increased course requirements for high school graduation, too often those requirements have not specified the particular courses that prepare students for postsecondary success. In the absence of such specific and rigorous high school graduation requirements, too many Latino students are not taking either the right number or the right kinds of courses they need to be prepared for college and the workforce after graduating from high school. All states, therefore, should specify the number and kinds of courses that students need to take to graduate academically ready for life after high school. At minimum, ACT recommends the following:

- Four years of English
- Three years of mathematics, including rigorous courses in Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II
- Three years of science, including rigorous courses in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics
- Three years of social studies

Invest in early childhood education programs so that more children are ready to learn.

In 2012, Latinos represented 26% of the US population under the age of five.¹⁵ This number is projected to increase to 39% by 2060.¹⁶ Improving college and career readiness for all students begins as early as kindergarten—where gaps between low-income students and their more advantaged peers already exist.¹⁷ Large numbers of underserved students enter kindergarten behind academically in early reading and mathematics skills, oral language development, vocabulary, and general knowledge. Gaps also exist in the development of academic and social behaviors such as listening, following instructions, and resolving conflicts. States should not only continue to invest in, but also expand access to, high-quality, research-based early learning opportunities for Hispanic students from prekindergarten to third grade to address learning gaps well before 8th grade, by which time these gaps become much more difficult to reverse.

Continue to implement monitoring and early warning systems that help educators identify and intervene with at-risk students.

Outreach strategies to monitor student growth should involve parents. Latino parents greatly value the education of their children, and their engagement is vital for Latino student success. In 2011–12, more than 90% of Latino parents expected their child to obtain some level of higher education.¹⁸ Involving parents in their child's education informs them of the expectations set for their students and allows parents to help intervene if their child falls behind. An effective monitoring system should provide an evolving picture of students over time and identify their unique learning needs at various points along their educational careers. Adoption of such systems in states where they do not yet exist—as well as expansion of system capabilities in states where they currently exist—will support earlier and more effective interventions by providing teachers with information to implement the necessary interventions to maximize student potential. Teachers, who have been consistently identified as the most important school-based

factor in student achievement, should be equipped with as much relevant data as possible to inform and supplement their efforts.¹⁹ The data should help to identify students in need of intervention and model student growth toward college and career readiness.

Continue development of thoughtful and fair teacher evaluation systems that include multiple measures of performance—including student growth data.

High-quality teachers are important for high academic achievement of Latino and low-income students. Less than 10% of all public school elementary and secondary teachers are Latino.²⁰ To help ensure that teachers and administrators have access to relevant feedback about their effectiveness at preparing all students for college and career, it is critical to offer continued support for developing and implementing robust teacher evaluation systems that include multiple measures of performance. Such development and implementation must proceed thoughtfully and be accompanied by education and communication about the appropriate use of student growth data in these systems.

Increase support for the development of STEM-related courses to meet the coming demand for a larger STEM workforce.

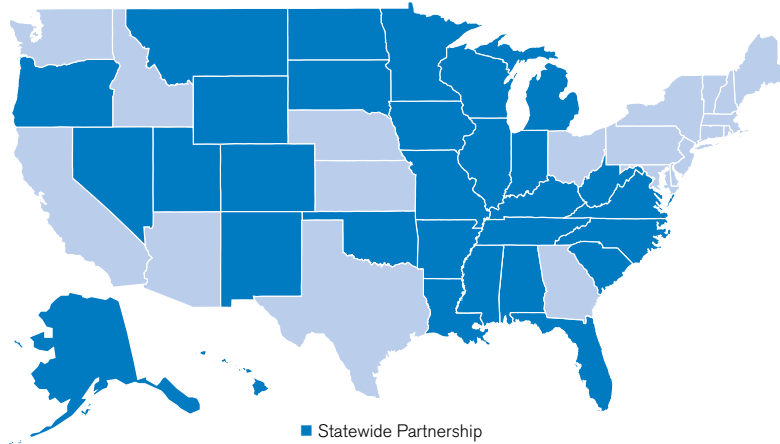
Education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is vital to the ability of the United States to maintain its position of global leadership and economic competitiveness. With more than 8.6 million STEM-related jobs anticipated by the year 2018, preparing and encouraging students to pursue STEM majors and careers becomes even more important. In 2012, 42% of Latino freshmen indicated their desire to pursue STEM degrees.²¹ To identify new programs that will better attract Latino students to and retain them in STEM-related careers, states should seek opportunities to collaborate with multiple entities, including business; national workforce and job readiness groups; local chambers of commerce; and universities, community colleges, and technical schools. STEM pathways should include targeted approaches to introduce these subjects to Latinos. For example, STEM programs for middle school students allows them to gain access to the subject areas, increase preparedness, and spark interest in STEM careers.

Implement policies for data-driven decision making. Data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity to examine how Latinos compare to other groups, as well as how Latinos compare to themselves year after year. Teachers must have access to high-quality, actionable data that can be used to improve instruction. Without such data, opinion can overly influence key instructional decisions. To address this challenge, states have been hard at work developing longitudinal P–16 data systems. This work should continue, but more must be done. To ensure that students are prepared for the 21st century, states must have systems that allow schools and districts to closely monitor student performance at every stage of the learning pipeline, from preschool through college. Policies governing teacher and administrator preparation and professional development must include an emphasis on developing skills to use data appropriately to improve the practices of teaching and learning for all students in the pipeline.

Resources

Statewide Partnerships in College and Career Readiness

States that incorporate ACT college and career readiness solutions as part of their statewide assessments provide greater access to higher education and increase the likelihood of student success in postsecondary education. Educators also have the ability to establish a longitudinal plan using ACT assessments, which provide high schools, districts, and states with unique student-level data that can be used for effective student intervention plans.



State administration of ACT programs and services:

- Increases opportunities for minority and middle- to low-income students.
- Promotes student educational and career planning.
- Reduces the need for remediation.
- Correlates with increases in college enrollment, persistence, and student success.
- Aligns with state standards.

ACT[®] Aspire[™]	ACT[®] Explore[™]	ACT[®] Plan[™]	The ACT[®]	ACT[®] QualityCore[™]	ACT[®] WorkKeys[™]		ACT National Career Readiness Certificate[™]
3rd- through 8th-grade students	8th- and 9th-grade students	10th-grade students	11th- and 12th-grade students	8th- through 12th-grade students	11th- and 12th-grade students		
Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alaska	Alabama	Oklahoma
South Carolina	Arkansas	Arkansas	Arkansas	Kentucky	Illinois	Alaska	Oregon
	Hawaii	Florida	Colorado		Hawaii	Arkansas	South Carolina
	Illinois	Hawaii	Hawaii		Michigan	Indiana	South Dakota
	Kentucky	Illinois	Illinois		North Carolina	Iowa	Tennessee
	Louisiana	Kentucky	Kentucky		North Dakota	Kentucky	Tennessee
	Michigan	Louisiana	Louisiana		Wyoming	Minnesota	Utah
	Minnesota	Michigan	Michigan			Missouri	Virginia
	North Carolina	Minnesota	Minnesota			New Mexico	Wisconsin
	Oklahoma	New Mexico	Mississippi			North Carolina	
	South Carolina	North Carolina	Missouri				
	Tennessee	Carolina	Montana				
	Utah	Oklahoma	Nevada				
	West Virginia	Tennessee	North Carolina				
	Wyoming	Utah	North Dakota				
		West Virginia	South Carolina				
		Wyoming	Tennessee				
			Utah				
			Wisconsin				
			Wyoming				

All listed partnerships are effective as of December 31, 2014.

ACT Research

The continued increase of test takers enhances the breadth and depth of the data pool, providing a comprehensive picture of the current college readiness levels of the graduating class as well as offering a glimpse of the emerging national educational pipeline. It also allows us to review various aspects of the ACT-tested graduating class, including the following reports:

Releasing in the 2014–2015 Academic Year

- *The Condition of STEM 2014*
- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—African American Students*
- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—American Indian Students*
- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—Asian Students*
- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—Hispanic Students*

- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—Pacific Islander Students*
- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—First-Generation Students*
- *The Condition of College & Career Readiness—Students from Low-Income Families*

Other ACT Research Reports

College Choice Report (for the graduating class of 2012)

- *Part 1: Preferences and Prospects*—November 2012
- *Part 2: Enrollment Patterns*—July 2013
- *Part 3: Persistence and Transfer*—April 2014

College Choice Report (for the graduating class of 2013)

- *Part 1: Preferences and Prospects*—November 2013
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- *Part 3: Persistence and Transfer*—April 2015

To be notified of exact release dates, please subscribe here:

www.act.org/research/subscribe.html.

How Does ACT Determine if Students Are College Ready?

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. Based on a nationally stratified sample, the Benchmarks are median course placement values for these institutions and represent a typical set of expectations. ACT College Readiness Benchmarks were revised for 2013 graduating class reporting. The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are:

College Course	Subject Area Test	Original ACT College Readiness Benchmark	Revised ACT College Readiness Benchmark
English Composition	English	18	18
Social Sciences	Reading	21	22
College Algebra	Mathematics	22	22
Biology	Science	24	23

Notes

1. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics 2014, Table 101.20: *Estimates of resident population, by race/ethnicity and age group: Selected years, 1980 through 2013.*
2. US Census Bureau, *2012 National Population Projections: Summary Tables*, Table 4. Projections of the Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2015 to 2060. 2012.
3. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics 2014, Table 101.20: *Estimates of Resident Population, by Race/Ethnicity and Age Group: Selected Years, 1980 Through 2013.*
4. US Census Bureau, *2012 National Population Projections: Summary Tables, Table 4. Projections of the Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2015 to 2060.* 2012.
5. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity*, December 2012.
6. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics 2014, Table 306.10: *Total Fall Enrollment in Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions, by Level of Enrollment, Sex, Attendance Status, and Race/Ethnicity of Student: Selected Years, 1976 Through 2013.*
7. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2022 41st Edition*, Figure 21, 2014.
8. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics 2014, Table 302.20: *Percentage of Recent High School Completers Enrolled in 2- and 4-Year Colleges, by Race/Ethnicity: 1960 Through 2013.*
9. US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2014 *Annual Social and Economic Supplement*, Table 1: Educational Attainment.
10. The data presented herein are based on the *ACT Profile Report—State: Graduating Class 2014 for Hispanic/Latino Students*, accessible at www.act.org/readiness/2014. With the exception of the top graph on page 8, data related to students who did not provide information or who responded “Other” to questions about gender, race/ethnicity, high school curriculum, etc., are not presented explicitly.
11. The race/ethnicity categories changed in 2011 to reflect updated US Department of Education reporting requirements; trends to previous reports may not be available for all race/ethnicity categories.
12. Data reflect subject-specific curriculum. For example, English “Core or More” results pertain to students who took at least four years of English, regardless of courses taken in other subject areas.
13. The interest-major fit score measures the strength of the relationship between the student's profile of ACT Interest Inventory scores and the profile of students' interests in the major shown. Interest profiles for majors are based on a national sample of undergraduate students with a declared major and a GPA of at least 2.0. Major was determined in the third year for students in 4-year colleges and in the second year for students in 2-year colleges. Interest-major fit scores range from 0–99, with values of 80 and higher indicating good fit.
14. See, for example, Council of Chief State School Officers, *Transition to High-Quality, College- and Career-Ready Assessments: Principles to Guide State Leadership and Federal Requirements* (Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers, May 23, 2013), http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2013/CCSSO_State_Principles_on_Assessment_Transition_5-23-13.pdf; and Linda Darling-Hammond et al., *Criteria for High-Quality Assessment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, June 2013), https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/criteria-higher-quality-assessment_2.pdf.
15. NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, Table 101.20: Estimates of Resident Population, by Race/Ethnicity and Age Group: Selected Years, 1980 Through 2012.
16. US Census Bureau, Population Division, *Projected Population by Single Year of Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2012 to 2060*, December 2012.
17. Chrys Dougherty, *College and Career Readiness: The Importance of Early Learning Success* (Iowa City, IA: ACT, February 2013), <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ImportanceofEarlyLearning.pdf>.
18. NCES, *Parent and Family Involvement in Education, from the National Household Education Surveys Program of 2012, First Look*, 2013, Table 5.
19. Daniel F. McCaffrey, J.R. Lockwood, Daniel M. Koretz, and Laura S. Hamilton, *Evaluating Value-Added Models for Teacher Accountability* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003), http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2004/RAND_MG158.pdf.
20. NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*. Table 209.10: *Number and Percentage Distribution of Teachers in Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Schools, by Selected Teacher Characteristics: Selected Years, 1987–88 Through 2011–12.*
21. National Science Foundation. National Science Board. *Science and Engineering Indicators 2014*. Chapter 2, Appendix Table 2–16.

ACT is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides assessment, research, information, and program management services in the broad areas of education and workforce development. Each year, we serve millions of people in high schools, colleges, professional associations, businesses, and government agencies, nationally and internationally. Though designed to meet a wide array of needs, all ACT programs and services have one guiding purpose—helping people achieve education and workplace success.

For more information, visit www.act.org.



Excelencia in Education accelerates Latino student success in higher education by promoting Latino student achievement, conducting analysis to inform educational policies, and advancing institutional practices while collaborating with those committed and ready to meet the mission. Launched in 2004 in the nation's capital, *Excelencia* is building a network of results-oriented educators and policymakers to address the US economy's need for a highly educated workforce and engaged civic leadership.

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A copy of this report can be found at
www.act.org/readiness/2014