

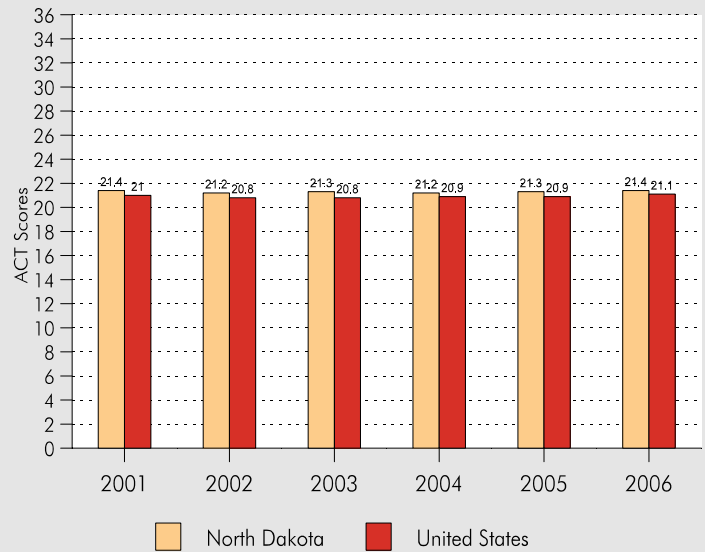
## ACT Scores for 2006 North Dakota High School Graduates

American College Testing (ACT) program scores are designed to predict a student's potential for success in college. According to ACT, Inc., 82 percent of the 2006 North Dakota graduating seniors took the ACT assessment during their sophomore, junior, or senior year. This proportion is up from 75 percent in 1994. If a student was tested more than once, only the most recent test record was used.

Of the 2006 North Dakota high school graduates who were tested, the average ACT composite score was 21.4 out of a possible 36. Nationally, the average composite score for 2006 graduates was slightly lower at 21.1 (based on the 40 percent of 2006 graduates nationwide who were tested) (Figure 1).

ACT has developed benchmarks to measure what it takes to be successful in standard first-year college courses in the areas of English, math, reading, and science. A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses, which include English Composition, Algebra, Social Science, and Biology. According to these benchmarks, 70 percent of ACT-tested 2006 North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 47 percent were ready for college math, 55 percent were ready for college reading, and 30 percent were ready for college science. The proportion of North Dakota students who met all four benchmarks was 23 percent (Table 1). Visit [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) for more information on college readiness.

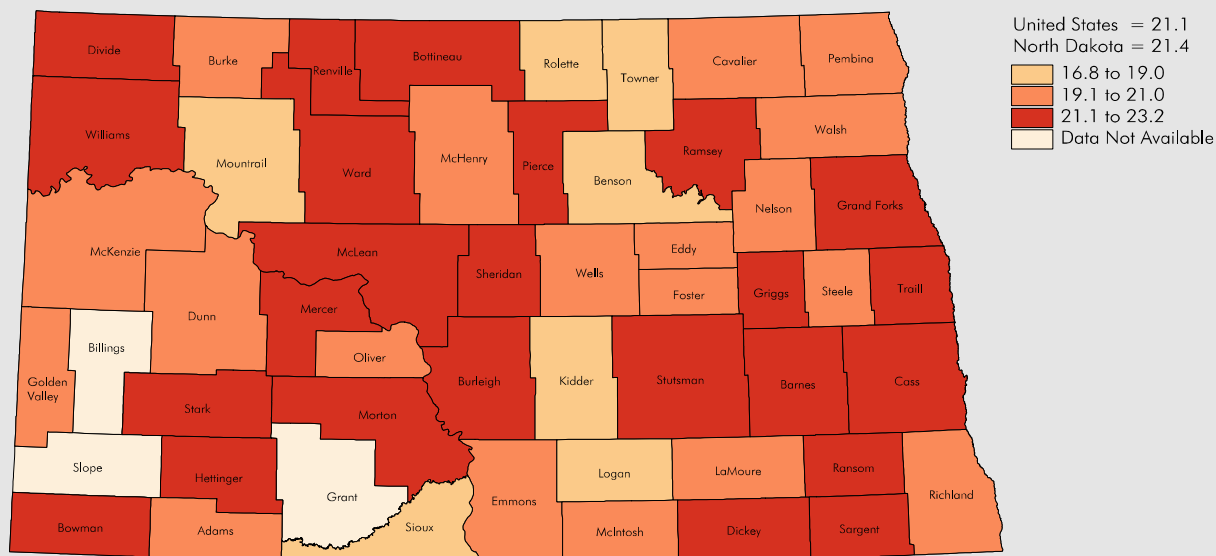
Figure 1. Average ACT Composite Scores for High School Graduates in North Dakota and the United States: 2001 to 2006



Note: The highest possible score is 36. Source: ACT, [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

Figure 2. Average ACT Composite Scores for 2006 North Dakota Public High School Graduates by County

Notes: The county reflects the location in which the student attended high school. The highest possible score is 36.  
Source: ACT, Department of Program Evaluation and Institutional Research Services, Research Division.



**Table 1. ACT-Tested 2006 High School Graduates Meeting the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Scores**

Note: "--" indicates that data are not available. County data reflect Public High School graduates only.

Source: ACT, Department of Program Evaluation and Institutional Research Services, Research Division, and www.act.org.

United States and North Dakota Counties	Average ACT Composite Scores (Highest possible score=36)	Percent of 2006 High School Graduates ACT-Tested	Percent of ACT-Tested 2006 Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks				
			English (Benchmark=18)	Math (Benchmark=22)	Reading (Benchmark=21)	Science (Benchmark=24)	Meeting All Four ACT Benchmarks
United States	21.1	40%	69%	42%	53%	27%	21%
North Dakota	21.4	82%	70%	47%	55%	30%	23%
Adams	19.2	90%	54%	8%	31%	19%	4%
Barnes	21.5	73%	73%	37%	57%	33%	25%
Benson	17.1	74%	38%	15%	23%	2%	2%
Billings	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bottineau	21.8	90%	74%	47%	64%	32%	27%
Bowman	22.0	82%	70%	53%	48%	30%	30%
Burke	19.3	100%	48%	33%	29%	19%	10%
Burleigh	21.8	76%	72%	51%	58%	31%	24%
Cass	22.7	78%	80%	55%	64%	40%	32%
Cavalier	20.6	96%	63%	45%	43%	28%	20%
Dickey	21.3	98%	69%	41%	59%	28%	17%
Divide	23.2	96%	76%	88%	60%	44%	40%
Dunn	20.1	83%	68%	27%	50%	21%	18%
Eddy	20.2	82%	71%	39%	45%	16%	13%
Emmons	19.8	94%	63%	35%	33%	20%	14%
Foster	19.7	100%	58%	37%	37%	17%	10%
Golden Valley	19.9	100%	59%	41%	56%	19%	19%
Grand Forks	22.0	76%	75%	51%	55%	33%	24%
Grant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Griggs	21.3	58%	77%	42%	54%	31%	27%
Hettinger	21.3	97%	69%	56%	56%	28%	22%
Kidder	18.9	88%	49%	27%	32%	14%	5%
LaMoure	21.0	100%	62%	41%	56%	25%	18%
Logan	18.3	78%	38%	14%	38%	5%	5%
McHenry	20.8	77%	61%	50%	46%	33%	19%
McIntosh	20.4	94%	64%	36%	49%	33%	22%
McKenzie	20.1	80%	63%	40%	54%	13%	10%
McLean	21.1	89%	63%	53%	54%	25%	23%
Mercer	21.7	88%	78%	48%	63%	33%	22%
Morton	21.2	84%	68%	43%	55%	28%	23%
Mountrail	19.0	63%	43%	32%	38%	19%	11%
Nelson	21.0	79%	68%	44%	35%	27%	18%
Oliver	19.9	77%	50%	35%	40%	25%	20%
Pembina	20.9	61%	70%	40%	60%	34%	27%
Pierce	21.5	88%	64%	57%	52%	33%	33%
Ramsey	21.4	70%	71%	54%	51%	28%	21%
Ransom	21.2	79%	70%	42%	55%	34%	25%
Renville	21.5	83%	75%	41%	61%	31%	25%
Richland	20.9	82%	71%	45%	48%	25%	19%
Rolette	17.7	60%	36%	16%	28%	9%	4%
Sargent	21.4	90%	78%	45%	63%	22%	14%
Sheridan	22.3	75%	67%	50%	67%	33%	17%
Sioux	16.8	--	36%	6%	27%	3%	0%
Slope	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Stark	21.5	69%	70%	52%	59%	27%	24%
Steele	19.6	91%	48%	41%	55%	14%	7%
Stutsman	21.4	82%	70%	49%	59%	30%	25%
Towner	18.8	89%	43%	26%	31%	17%	12%
Traill	21.5	77%	61%	49%	51%	27%	21%
Walsh	20.6	86%	72%	41%	52%	22%	15%
Ward	21.8	71%	71%	50%	59%	33%	25%
Wells	19.9	82%	56%	44%	37%	17%	14%
Williams	21.5	80%	74%	51%	60%	30%	25%

Date of Release: April 5, 2007

## Despite ACT Scores Above the National Average, Less than One in Four ACT-Tested North Dakota High School Graduates are College-Ready

The American College Testing (ACT) program has developed benchmarks to measure what it takes to be successful in standard first-year college courses in the areas of English, math, reading, and science. A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses, which include English Composition, Algebra, Social Science, and Biology. According to these benchmarks, 70 percent of ACT-tested 2006 North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 47 percent were ready for college math, 55 percent were ready for college reading, and 30 percent were ready for college science. The proportion of North Dakota students who met all four benchmarks was 23 percent, less than one in four - a proportion that has remained relatively unchanged over the past several years. "The key to improving college readiness is by encouraging students to take more courses," said Richard Rathge, Director of the State Data Center. North Dakota students who added an additional year of math (such as Trigonometry or Calculus) to their core requirement of Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry increased their likelihood of college-readiness from 26 percent to 69 percent. Similarly, in the sciences, North Dakota students who added Physics to their general core of General/Physical/Earth Sciences, Biology, and Chemistry increased their likelihood of college-readiness from 27 percent to 48 percent.

This month's "Population Bulletin," a monthly publication from the North Dakota State Data Center at North Dakota State University, focuses on American College Testing (ACT) program scores released by ACT, Inc., which are designed to predict a student's potential for success in college. According to ACT, 82 percent of the 2006 North Dakota graduating seniors took the ACT assessment during their sophomore, junior, or senior year. This proportion is up from 75 percent in 1994. If a student was tested more than once, only the most recent test record was used. Of the 2006 North Dakota high school graduates who were ACT-tested, the average composite ACT score was 21.4 out of a possible 36. Nationally, the composite score for ACT-tested 2006 graduates was slightly lower at 21.1.

Analysis of North Dakota ACT scores reveals a disparity in college readiness by gender and race, as well as by county. Of the ACT-tested 2006 North Dakota male high school graduates, 26 percent met all four subject-area benchmarks compared to 20 percent of female students. An even greater disparity exists among racial groups. Approximately one-third of Asian students met all four benchmarks (36 percent) compared to 24 percent of white students, 16 percent of Hispanic students, 12 percent of black students, and 5 percent of American Indian students. In terms of geography, 10 counties had at least one in four ACT-tested graduates meeting all four benchmarks; nine counties had less than 1 in 10.

\*\*\*

<p><b>North Dakota State Data Center</b> North Dakota State University IACC Building, Room 424 or PO Box 5636 Fargo, North Dakota 58105-5636 Ph: (701) 231-7980 Fax: (701) 231-9730</p>	<p>For more information, contact:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="548 1927 870 2009"> <p>Dr. Richard Rathge, Director (701) 231-8621 richard.rathge@ndsu.edu</p> </td> <td data-bbox="870 1927 1195 2009"> <p>Karen Olson, Information Specialist (701) 231-1060 k.olson@ndsu.edu</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Dr. Richard Rathge, Director (701) 231-8621 richard.rathge@ndsu.edu</p>	<p>Karen Olson, Information Specialist (701) 231-1060 k.olson@ndsu.edu</p>	<p>View publication online at: <a href="http://www.ndsu.edu/sdc/publications.htm">www.ndsu.edu/sdc/publications.htm</a></p>
<p>Dr. Richard Rathge, Director (701) 231-8621 richard.rathge@ndsu.edu</p>	<p>Karen Olson, Information Specialist (701) 231-1060 k.olson@ndsu.edu</p>				