

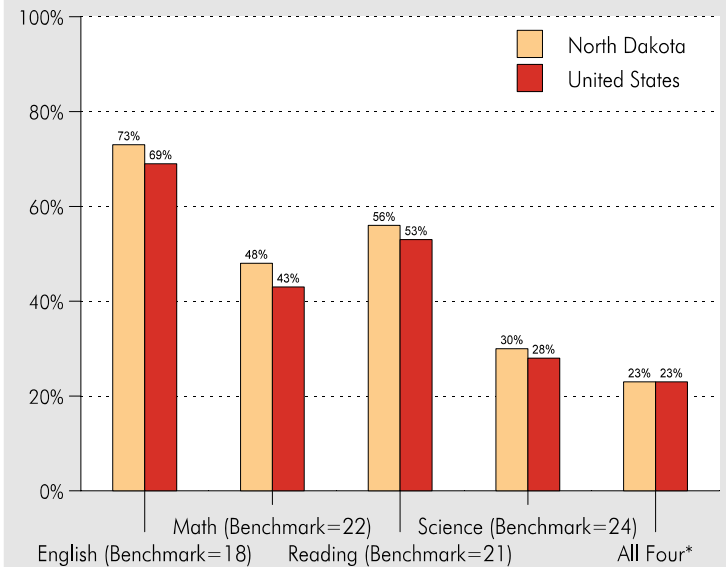
ACT Scores for 2007 North Dakota High School Graduates

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 2007 North Dakota graduating seniors took the ACT assessment during their sophomore, junior, or senior year. This proportion is up from 78 percent in 1997. If a student was tested more than once, only the most recent test record was used.

Of the 2007 North Dakota high school graduates who were tested, the average ACT composite score was 21.6 out of a possible 36. Nationally, the average composite score for 2007 graduates was slightly lower at 21.2 (based on the 42 percent of 2007 graduates nationwide who were tested) (Table 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, 73 percent of ACT-tested 2007 North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 48 percent were ready for college math, 56 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 (Figure 1). Visit www.act.org for more information on college readiness.

Figure 1. Percent of ACT-Tested Students Ready for College-Level Coursework: North Dakota and the United States, 2007



Note: *Students meeting all four ACT benchmark scores. Benchmark scores are out of a possible 36. Source: ACT, www.act.org

Figure 2. Average ACT Composite Scores for 2007 North Dakota High School Graduates by County

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

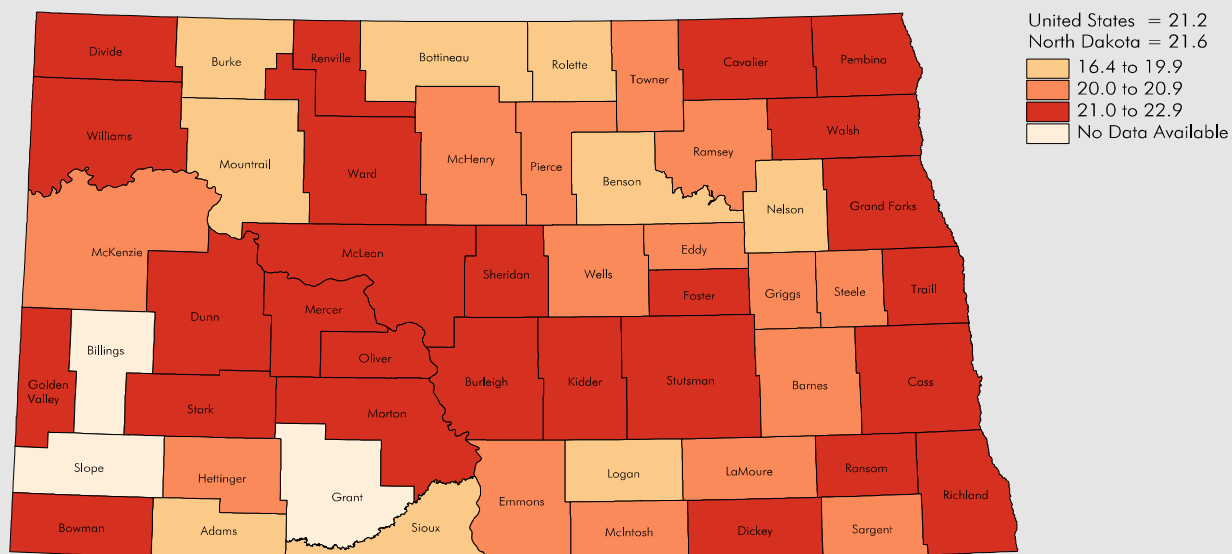


Table 1. ACT-Tested 2007 High School Graduates Meeting the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Scores

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 2007 ACT Composite Scores (Highest possible score=36)	Percent of 2007 High School Graduates ACT-Tested	Percent of ACT-Tested 2007 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	21.2	42%	69%	43%	53%	28%	23%
North Dakota	21.6	82%	73%	48%	56%	30%	23%
Adams	19.6	93%	74%	26%	48%	11%	11%
Barnes	20.4	63%	71%	29%	50%	17%	13%
Benson	17.2	94%	34%	14%	20%	1%	1%
Billings	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bottineau	19.9	82%	66%	30%	54%	18%	11%
Bowman	21.1	100%	74%	42%	63%	19%	14%
Burke	19.8	100%	57%	33%	43%	24%	19%
Burleigh	22.1	76%	77%	49%	60%	33%	28%
Cass	22.7	82%	81%	54%	63%	36%	28%
Cavalier	21.0	100%	69%	35%	52%	24%	22%
Dickey	21.8	84%	74%	54%	61%	24%	20%
Divide	22.1	81%	71%	62%	57%	19%	14%
Dunn	21.8	59%	83%	38%	75%	38%	25%
Eddy	20.0	71%	67%	26%	48%	22%	11%
Emmons	20.4	96%	65%	31%	44%	19%	17%
Foster	21.2	100%	72%	52%	52%	26%	22%
Golden Valley	21.1	83%	58%	53%	37%	26%	21%
Grand Forks	22.9	78%	84%	61%	61%	41%	33%
Grant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Griggs	20.2	42%	63%	53%	42%	11%	5%
Hettinger	20.9	92%	68%	41%	47%	21%	12%
Kidder	21.2	76%	66%	44%	53%	22%	16%
LaMoure	20.7	100%	71%	39%	49%	22%	10%
Logan	19.4	96%	46%	31%	27%	15%	8%
McHenry	20.8	75%	61%	47%	53%	24%	17%
McIntosh	20.5	69%	70%	33%	58%	24%	18%
McKenzie	20.6	83%	58%	54%	42%	22%	18%
McLean	21.7	77%	70%	47%	59%	26%	21%
Mercer	21.8	75%	71%	59%	60%	31%	26%
Morton	21.4	88%	72%	46%	56%	31%	24%
Mountrail	19.6	69%	53%	40%	40%	12%	9%
Nelson	19.5	88%	55%	34%	42%	16%	5%
Oliver	21.4	73%	58%	37%	68%	32%	21%
Pembina	21.6	67%	82%	45%	58%	27%	19%
Pierce	20.9	92%	66%	48%	50%	30%	25%
Ramsey	20.9	59%	62%	56%	52%	23%	21%
Ransom	21.1	79%	63%	45%	57%	30%	22%
Renville	21.7	54%	76%	55%	66%	29%	29%
Richland	21.2	68%	76%	44%	52%	27%	21%
Rolette	17.6	48%	39%	17%	22%	9%	3%
Sargent	20.1	91%	65%	33%	58%	17%	15%
Sheridan	22.4	100%	64%	64%	55%	36%	27%
Sioux	16.4	79%	23%	5%	23%	5%	2%
Slope	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Stark	21.6	76%	74%	49%	55%	30%	22%
Steele	20.3	94%	57%	37%	47%	20%	17%
Stutsman	21.5	86%	68%	50%	58%	33%	27%
Towner	20.7	38%	67%	33%	33%	17%	17%
Traill	21.1	88%	70%	48%	50%	29%	23%
Walsh	21.2	89%	72%	43%	43%	28%	20%
Ward	22.1	70%	79%	52%	60%	34%	26%
Wells	20.5	96%	71%	35%	48%	29%	19%
Williams	21.8	60%	80%	51%	60%	31%	24%

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North Dakota ACT Scores Rise for Third Year in a Row, But Few Students are Ready for College

Of the North Dakota high school graduates who were ACT-tested, the average composite ACT score in 2007 was 21.6 out of a possible 36. This score is up from 21.2 in 2004. Nationally, the composite score for ACT-tested 2007 graduates was 21.2, up from 20.9 in 2004.

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 2007 North Dakota graduating seniors took the ACT assessment during their sophomore, junior, or senior year. This proportion is up from 78 percent in 1997. If a student was tested more than once, only the most recent test record was used.

The 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, 73 percent of ACT-tested 2007 North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 48 percent were ready for college math, 56 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. "We live in an increasingly competitive global environment and these scores should remind us how challenging our task is to successfully prepare our students for future careers," said Richard Rathge, Director of the State Data Center. "Most of our high school graduates go on to college and we need to improve our ability to get them prepared for that experience," said Rathge.

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 27 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 47 percent.

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 2007 North Dakota male high school graduates, 25 percent met all four subject-area benchmarks compared to 22 percent of female students. An even greater disparity exists among racial groups. Nearly one-fourth of white students met all four benchmarks (24 percent) compared to 19 percent of Asian students, 17 percent of Hispanic students, 3 percent of American Indian students, and 3 percent of black students. In terms of geography, 10 counties had at least one in four ACT-tested graduates meeting all four benchmarks; seven counties had fewer than 1 in 10.

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