

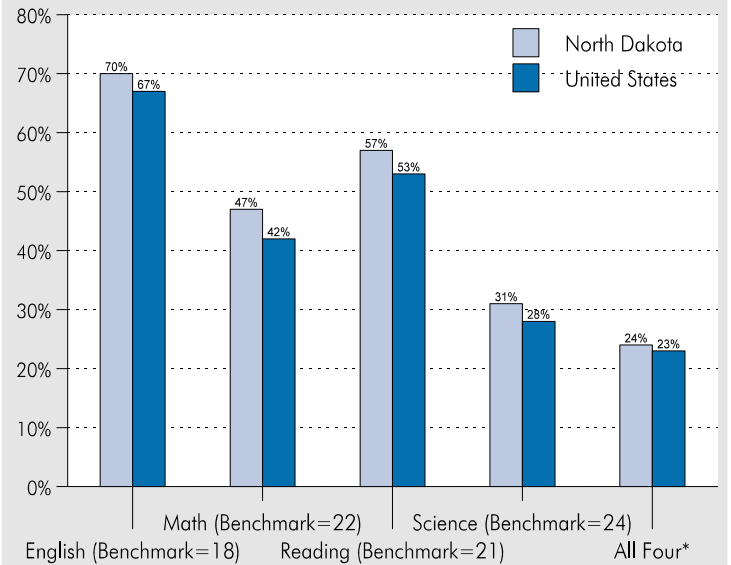
ACT Scores for 2009 North Dakota High School Graduates

American College Testing (ACT) program scores are designed to predict a student's potential for success in college. According to ACT, Inc., 78 percent of 2009 North Dakota graduating seniors took the ACT assessment during their sophomore, junior, or senior year. If a student was tested more than once, only the most recent test record was used.

Of the 2009 North Dakota high school graduates who were tested, the average ACT composite score was 21.5 out of a possible 36. Nationally, the average composite score for 2009 graduates was 21.1 (based on the 45 percent of 2009 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, 70 percent of ACT-tested 2009 North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 47 percent were ready for college math, 57 percent were ready for college reading, and 31 percent were ready for college science. The proportion of North Dakota students who met all four benchmarks was 24 percent (Figure 1). Visit <http://www.act.org> for more information on college readiness.

Figure 1. Percent of ACT-Tested High School Graduates Ready for College Coursework: North Dakota and the United States, 2009



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

Figure 2. Proportion of ACT-Tested 2009 North Dakota High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

Note: Students meeting ACT college readiness benchmarks achieved all of the following scores: at least 18 in English, 22 in Math, 21 in Reading, and 24 in Science (out of a possible 36 in each subject).

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

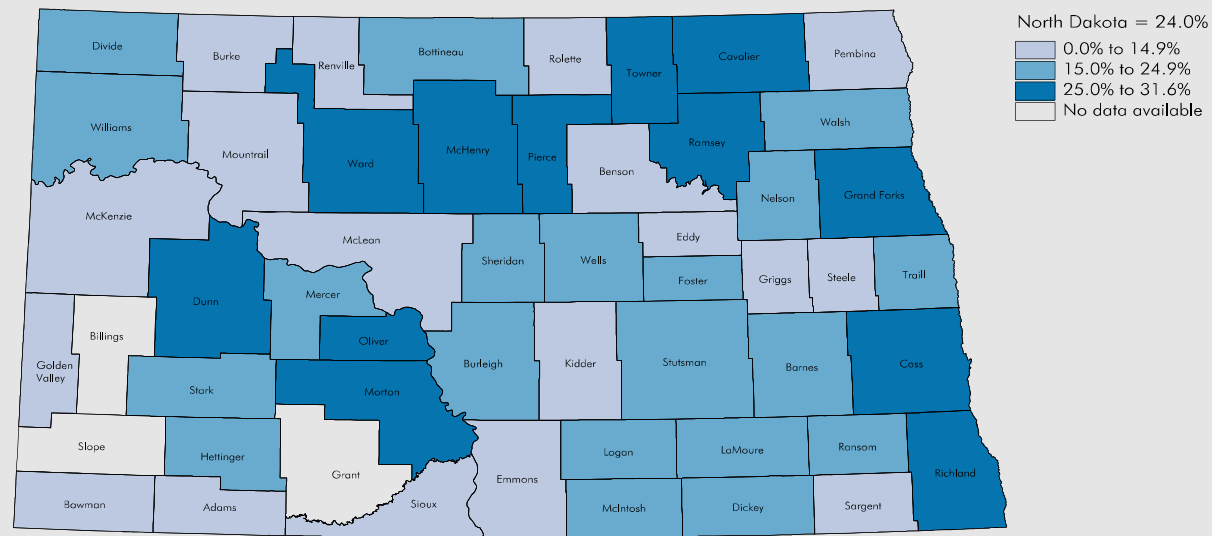


Table 1. ACT-Tested 2009 High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Scores

Note: "--" indicates that data are not available.

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

United States and North Dakota Counties	Average 2009 ACT Composite Scores (Highest possible score=36)	Percent of 2009 High School Graduates ACT-Tested	Percent of ACT-Tested 2009 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	45.0%	67.0%	42.0%	53.0%	28.0%	23.0%
North Dakota	21.5	78.0%	70.0%	47.0%	57.0%	31.0%	24.0%
Adams	19.2	95.7%	54.5%	27.3%	77.3%	45.5%	4.5%
Barnes	20.9	59.8%	67.1%	38.4%	52.1%	32.9%	23.3%
Benson	17.5	67.1%	36.2%	38.3%	40.4%	14.9%	0.0%
Billings	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bottineau	20.8	73.8%	67.1%	34.2%	49.4%	22.8%	22.8%
Bowman	21.2	88.5%	64.8%	48.1%	46.3%	20.4%	14.8%
Burke	19.9	84.4%	59.3%	25.9%	40.7%	18.5%	3.7%
Burleigh	21.7	71.3%	72.4%	50.1%	59.7%	31.7%	24.6%
Cass	22.4	65.9%	76.5%	60.9%	69.9%	43.8%	31.6%
Cavalier	21.4	85.2%	76.9%	53.8%	65.4%	28.8%	25.0%
Dickey	22.0	93.3%	82.1%	28.6%	51.8%	23.2%	21.4%
Divide	20.5	96.3%	57.7%	69.2%	61.5%	34.6%	19.2%
Dunn	22.2	82.5%	69.7%	36.4%	42.4%	30.3%	30.3%
Eddy	20.9	63.2%	66.7%	25.0%	45.8%	4.2%	8.3%
Emmons	20.2	93.8%	63.9%	24.6%	36.1%	11.5%	13.1%
Foster	21.4	100.0%	64.6%	40.0%	38.5%	13.8%	24.6%
Golden Valley	19.8	75.0%	52.4%	23.8%	38.1%	14.3%	14.3%
Grand Forks	22.6	71.4%	78.8%	68.6%	74.0%	42.4%	28.2%
Grant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Griggs	20.8	64.3%	66.7%	29.6%	25.9%	22.2%	0.0%
Hettinger	21.4	72.4%	76.2%	114.3%	104.8%	38.1%	19.0%
Kidder	18.1	89.3%	32.0%	44.0%	56.0%	36.0%	8.0%
LaMoure	21.1	100.0%	62.5%	58.9%	67.9%	26.8%	17.9%
Logan	21.0	78.3%	72.2%	55.6%	66.7%	22.2%	16.7%
McHenry	20.8	78.7%	61.0%	55.9%	45.8%	33.9%	28.8%
McIntosh	19.4	95.8%	52.2%	43.5%	69.6%	26.1%	17.4%
McKenzie	19.7	84.0%	59.5%	47.6%	57.1%	26.2%	9.5%
McLean	20.3	83.2%	55.1%	56.2%	60.7%	37.1%	14.6%
Mercer	21.8	82.7%	73.9%	47.0%	48.7%	26.1%	23.5%
Morton	21.6	78.4%	73.4%	50.0%	56.9%	32.1%	25.2%
Mountrail	20.4	61.3%	63.3%	36.7%	46.9%	16.3%	12.2%
Nelson	20.0	86.1%	71.0%	64.5%	77.4%	45.2%	19.4%
Oliver	20.6	100.0%	54.5%	22.7%	27.3%	9.1%	27.3%
Pembina	20.8	58.3%	68.3%	58.3%	63.3%	40.0%	13.3%
Pierce	21.7	86.5%	64.4%	75.6%	55.6%	35.6%	26.7%
Ramsey	21.3	77.6%	63.1%	51.4%	56.8%	23.4%	27.0%
Ransom	20.9	89.4%	68.4%	40.8%	48.7%	21.1%	23.7%
Renville	21.2	73.2%	68.3%	46.3%	53.7%	26.8%	14.6%
Richland	21.9	83.4%	73.1%	38.7%	45.2%	25.8%	25.8%
Rolette	17.6	48.1%	32.6%	23.6%	36.0%	18.0%	4.5%
Sargent	19.7	84.0%	47.6%	45.2%	57.1%	28.6%	11.9%
Sheridan	20.1	77.8%	64.3%	14.3%	35.7%	21.4%	21.4%
Sioux	16.0	93.6%	18.2%	6.8%	15.9%	4.5%	2.3%
Slope	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Stark	21.3	61.1%	71.2%	37.4%	44.9%	21.2%	22.7%
Steele	19.7	71.9%	56.5%	39.1%	47.8%	26.1%	4.3%
Stutsman	21.1	79.3%	65.3%	43.2%	54.5%	27.3%	23.3%
Towner	21.0	100.0%	65.0%	60.0%	70.0%	35.0%	30.0%
Traill	21.7	83.9%	70.2%	41.3%	51.9%	28.8%	24.0%
Walsh	21.8	75.8%	72.4%	37.9%	44.8%	21.6%	24.1%
Ward	21.9	62.3%	73.7%	58.6%	68.3%	40.1%	26.3%
Wells	21.1	81.0%	64.7%	43.1%	52.9%	21.6%	17.6%
Williams	21.5	65.3%	72.8%	46.9%	61.2%	29.3%	21.8%

Date of Release: June 1, 2010

North Dakota's Composite ACT Score, Though Unchanged, Continues to Rank Above Average

Of the North Dakota high school graduates who took the American College Testing (ACT) examination, the average composite ACT score in 2009 was 21.5 out of a possible 36. This score is relatively unchanged from 21.6 in 2008. Nationally, the composite score for ACT-tested 2009 graduates was 21.1, which is unchanged from 2008.

This month's "Population Bulletin," a monthly publication from the North Dakota State Data Center at North Dakota State University, focuses on ACT scores released by ACT, Inc., which are designed to predict a student's potential for success in college. According to ACT, 78 percent of 2009 North Dakota graduating seniors took the ACT assessment during their sophomore, junior, or senior year. If a student was tested more than once, only the most recent test record was used. Nationally, 45 percent were tested.

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, 70 percent of ACT-tested 2009 North Dakota high school graduates were ready for college English, 47 percent were ready for college math, 57 percent were ready for college reading, and 31 percent were ready for college science. The proportion of North Dakota students who met all four benchmarks was 24 percent. This proportion has remained relatively unchanged over the past several years.

"These data highlight the challenges of education in a global competitive market where well-rounded education is critical," said Richard Rathge, Director of the State Data Center.

North Dakota students who added an additional course of advanced math (such as trigonometry or calculus) to their core requirement of algebra I, algebra II, and geometry increased their likelihood of college-readiness (in math) from 25 percent to 65 percent. Similarly, in the sciences, North Dakota students who added physics to their general core of general sciences, biology, and chemistry increased their likelihood of college-readiness (in science) from 28 percent to 49 percent.

Analysis of North Dakota ACT scores reveals a disparity in college readiness by gender, race, and county. Of the ACT-tested 2009 North Dakota male high school graduates, 27 percent met all four subject-area benchmarks, compared to 21 percent of female students.

An even greater disparity exists among racial groups. One-fourth of white students met all four benchmarks, compared to 30 percent of Asian students, 11 percent of black students, 11 percent of Hispanic students, and 4 percent of American Indian students.

In terms of geography, 12 counties had at least one in four ACT-tested graduates meeting all four benchmarks. Ten counties had fewer than 1 in 10.

North Dakota State Data Center

North Dakota State University - IACC Building, Room 424
PO Box 6050, Dept. 8000
Fargo, North Dakota 58108-6050
Ph: (701) 231-7980 Fax: (701) 231-9730

For more information, contact:

Dr. Richard Rathge, Director
(701) 231-8621
richard.rathge@ndsu.edu

Karen Olson, Information Specialist
(701) 231-1060
k.olson@ndsu.edu

View publication online at:
<http://www.ndsu.edu/sdc/publications.htm>