

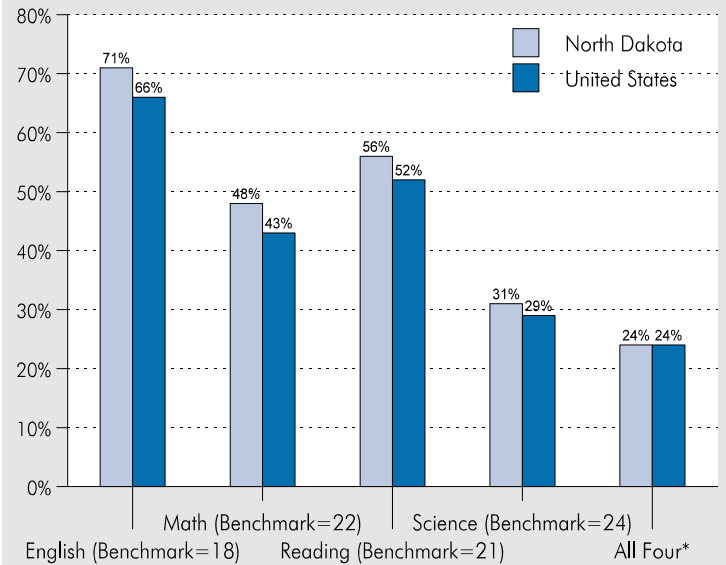
## ACT Scores for 2010 North Dakota High School Graduates

American College Testing (ACT) program scores are designed to predict a student's potential for success in college. According to ACT, Inc., 80 percent of 2010 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 2010 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 2010 graduates was 21.0 (based on the 48 percent of 2010 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, 71 percent of ACT-tested 2010 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 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, 2010

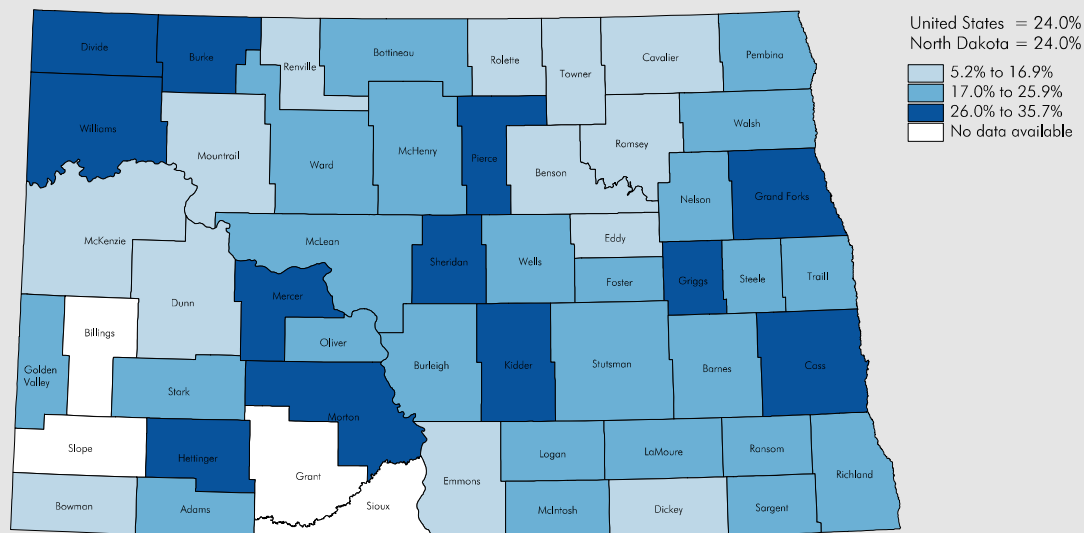


Note: \*Students meeting all four ACT college-readiness benchmark scores. Benchmark scores are out of a possible 36. Source: ACT, <http://www.act.org>

Figure 2. Proportion of ACT-Tested 2010 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 2010 High School Graduates Meeting ACT College-Readiness Benchmark 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 2010 ACT composite scores (highest possible score=36)	Percent of 2010 high school grads who are tested	Percent of ACT-Tested 2010 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	21.0	47.5%	66.0%	43.0%	52.0%	29.0%	24.0%
North Dakota	21.5	80.0%	71.0%	48.0%	56.0%	31.0%	24.0%
Adams	20.4	100.0%	55.6%	25.9%	44.4%	25.9%	25.9%
Barnes	21.6	53.1%	75.0%	39.7%	58.8%	36.8%	23.5%
Benson	16.4	84.1%	24.1%	8.6%	20.7%	5.2%	5.2%
Billings	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bottineau	21.5	72.5%	74.0%	52.0%	54.0%	30.0%	22.0%
Bowman	20.7	80.5%	57.6%	45.5%	57.6%	24.2%	15.2%
Burke	21.9	88.2%	73.3%	46.7%	60.0%	26.7%	26.7%
Burleigh	21.8	72.7%	74.0%	48.3%	58.0%	31.1%	25.2%
Cass	22.2	68.7%	75.5%	54.8%	63.5%	37.5%	29.5%
Cavalier	20.8	81.5%	65.9%	36.4%	54.5%	31.8%	15.9%
Dickey	21.6	87.7%	75.4%	40.4%	66.7%	28.1%	15.8%
Divide	22.5	100.0%	87.0%	56.5%	73.9%	30.4%	30.4%
Dunn	20.3	96.0%	62.5%	33.3%	58.3%	25.0%	16.7%
Eddy	20.1	100.0%	62.5%	25.0%	41.7%	20.8%	12.5%
Emmons	20.4	95.2%	70.0%	41.7%	41.7%	21.7%	16.7%
Foster	21.4	91.2%	67.3%	51.9%	55.8%	26.9%	25.0%
Golden Valley	20.7	100.0%	66.7%	55.6%	48.1%	22.2%	22.2%
Grand Forks	22.5	76.0%	79.8%	56.2%	64.4%	38.5%	32.6%
Grant	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Griggs	20.9	63.0%	70.6%	41.2%	58.8%	41.2%	35.3%
Hettinger	22.3	87.9%	82.8%	55.2%	62.1%	37.9%	34.5%
Kidder	20.9	83.3%	60.0%	40.0%	43.3%	33.3%	26.7%
LaMoure	20.5	100.0%	56.1%	42.4%	43.9%	27.3%	21.2%
Logan	21.9	74.1%	80.0%	50.0%	50.0%	30.0%	20.0%
McHenry	20.3	83.3%	65.7%	50.0%	40.0%	22.9%	20.0%
McIntosh	20.9	100.0%	74.1%	51.9%	55.6%	25.9%	18.5%
McKenzie	20.3	77.6%	65.8%	42.1%	55.3%	15.8%	15.8%
McLean	20.7	77.9%	61.3%	36.8%	50.9%	28.3%	20.8%
Mercer	21.7	76.9%	77.8%	53.3%	63.3%	30.0%	27.8%
Morton	21.8	76.3%	75.2%	50.4%	57.0%	33.9%	26.9%
Mountrail	18.7	65.4%	49.0%	31.4%	31.4%	7.8%	5.9%
Nelson	21.2	91.1%	68.6%	49.0%	60.8%	25.5%	23.5%
Oliver	21.5	81.0%	70.6%	35.3%	58.8%	29.4%	23.5%
Pembina	21.2	45.0%	77.8%	48.9%	51.1%	26.7%	22.2%
Pierce	22.2	91.1%	78.4%	54.9%	56.9%	29.4%	27.5%
Ramsey	19.8	77.3%	52.6%	44.8%	34.5%	24.1%	16.4%
Ransom	21.4	83.6%	71.4%	55.4%	55.4%	23.2%	21.4%
Renville	21.1	81.4%	68.6%	34.3%	54.3%	28.6%	14.3%
Richland	21.6	83.6%	71.8%	49.1%	50.9%	32.5%	22.1%
Rolette	17.8	49.8%	39.6%	15.8%	28.7%	13.9%	7.9%
Sargent	21.3	79.7%	70.9%	49.1%	52.7%	20.0%	18.2%
Sheridan	23.1	100.0%	71.4%	50.0%	71.4%	42.9%	35.7%
Sioux	15.6	83.6%	19.6%	2.0%	13.7%	--	--
Slope	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Stark	21.4	58.8%	71.7%	50.8%	53.4%	27.7%	22.0%
Steele	19.9	75.0%	66.7%	40.7%	51.9%	18.5%	18.5%
Stutsman	21.1	75.5%	64.9%	46.1%	54.5%	31.2%	25.3%
Towner	21.0	88.5%	65.2%	39.1%	56.5%	13.0%	13.0%
Traill	21.6	85.3%	72.4%	46.0%	51.7%	29.9%	23.0%
Walsh	20.5	99.2%	62.8%	42.1%	43.0%	20.7%	18.2%
Ward	21.7	67.8%	71.7%	51.7%	59.4%	28.8%	22.2%
Wells	20.8	74.5%	65.7%	40.0%	57.1%	25.7%	20.0%
Williams	22.8	65.4%	77.4%	58.7%	62.6%	41.9%	30.3%



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## 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 2010 was 21.5 out of a possible 36. This score is relatively unchanged from 2009. Nationally, the composite score for ACT-tested 2010 graduates was 21.0.

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, 80 percent of 2010 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, 48 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, 71 percent of ACT-tested 2010 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 31 percent were ready for college science.

North Dakota students who added at least one 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 26 percent to 68 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 30 percent to 48 percent.

“The data are very convincing. If we want to increase our students’ probability of success in college, we need to increase their exposure to subject matter. This should be a collaboration with parents/guardians encouraging their children to take more classes and school officials optimizing the number and diversity of courses students can take,” said Richard Rathge, director of the State Data Center.

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. Analysis of North Dakota ACT scores reveals a disparity in college readiness by gender, race, and county. Of the ACT-tested 2010 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. Twenty-six percent of white students met all four benchmarks, compared to 35 percent of Asian students, 21 percent of Hispanic students, and 4 percent of American Indian students.

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

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