



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE
No. 13-082

August 21, 2013

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 3 A.M. ET, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2013

****NOTE: ACT DOES NOT PROVIDE DISTRICT- OR SCHOOL-LEVEL SCORES TO THE KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AS PART OF ITS GRADUATING CLASS SCORE RELEASE****

GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SHOW CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT ON ACT

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Kentucky public high school graduates continue to make steady gains on the ACT college entrance exam with more students achieving college-readiness, as defined by state benchmarks. Students have gained nearly one point in English, a half-point in math, and a half-point on the composite score since 2009, the first year results included all Kentucky high school juniors as well as public school college-bound seniors.

The graduating class of 2013 registered the highest scores in the past five years, up slightly over the previous year. The composite score increased one-tenth of a point to 19.6 on a 36-point scale. Scores also went up in English, mathematics, and science; reading scores did not change from 2012.

ACT RESULTS -- KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES*

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
English	18.3	18.3	18.7	19.0	19.2
Mathematics	18.7	18.8	18.8	19.1	19.2
Reading	19.4	19.2	19.6	19.8	19.8
Science	19.4	19.2	19.3	19.5	19.7
Composite	19.1	19.0	19.2	19.5	19.6
Number taking test	40,906	41,277	42,196	41,851	41,858

*Includes standard time students only

“The trend data show our students and teachers have made steady progress the past five years; teachers and students should be very proud of what they have accomplished,” said Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. “The increases we have seen can be attributed, at least in part, to implementation of our comprehensive Unbridled Learning plan including, more rigorous Kentucky Core Academic Standards in English/language arts and mathematics, balanced assessments, professional development for our teachers, as well as our focus on college/career-readiness for all students,” he said.

(more)

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While Kentucky students trail their counterparts nationally by 1.4 points overall, the percentage of public high school graduates meeting or exceeding the state’s college readiness benchmarks is up. The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) benchmarks are the scores used to determine whether a student is college ready under the Unbridled Learning Assessment and Accountability System and are the minimum scores that guarantee entry into corresponding credit-bearing college courses without the need for developmental education or supplemental courses.

**PERCENTAGES OF KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES MEETING
CPE STANDARDS FOR COLLEGE READINESS**

COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSE*	BENCHMARK	2012 GRADUATES MEETING BENCHMARK	2013 GRADUATES MEETING BENCHMARK
English	18	56.2%	57%
Mathematics	19	41.6%	43%
Reading	20	46.5%	48%

* CPE has not set a state science benchmark. Includes standard time students only.

“Though progress is slower than we’d like, we’re moving in the right direction,” said Holliday, “the work is hard; we are constantly evaluating new strategies that will engage students and increase results so we can meet our goal of college and career readiness for all students,” he said.

This year, ACT updated its college-readiness benchmarks (which differ from CPE benchmarks), based on gradual changes identified through ACT’s routine practice of monitoring the predictive validity of the ACT. Students who reach the ACT benchmarks have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of earning a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college course. As a result, two benchmark scores were adjusted: The benchmark score in reading went up by 1 point (from 21 to 22) on the 1 to 36 scoring scale; the score in science went down by 1 point (24 to 23). The English (18) and math (22) benchmarks remained the same.

In addition, college-reportable scores for all students with ACT-approved accommodations were included in the national ACT report this year for the first time. In prior years, scores for students receiving time-extended accommodations were not included in the summary reporting. These two changes in the ACT reports affect the ability to make direct comparison in some areas, particularly in the trend data.

(more)

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Holliday said next year Kentucky will have a new baseline for the graduating class report that includes these two changes. ACT has chosen to report the data this year nationally he said, but “it’s apples to oranges” and cannot be compared with prior years. The data presented here, provided to the state by ACT, is “apples to apples,” he said.

The ACT changes, including students with accommodations and changing in benchmark scores, do not affect the statewide administration test results that are used for state accountability. Those scores are reported using CPE benchmarks which have not changed; Kentucky’s junior results have always included the scores of all students including those who receive extended time on the test.

Individual school ACT data for the junior class who took the ACT in March 2013 will be released in the School Report Card at the end of September.

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