



NEWS RELEASE

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NEBRASKA STUDENTS CONTINUE TO OUTPERFORM PEERS ON ACT

Nebraska achievement levels continue to remain above the national average on the ACT college entrance exam that measures college readiness in English, reading, mathematics, and science.

Nebraska's average 2017 ACT composite score of 21.4 was higher than the national average of 21.0, and remained steady at last year's average state score. The national average was 20.8 in 2016. The highest possible ACT score is 36.

The number of graduating seniors who took the ACT rose by almost 400, up from 18,598 in 2016 to 18,993 in 2017. Eighty-four percent of graduating seniors in Nebraska took the ACT compared to just 60 percent nationally.

Of the 22 states with 80 percent or more graduates taking the ACT, only Minnesota and South Dakota scored better. This is significant. States that test a high percentage of graduates tend to have lower averages as the scores include more students who are not on a college course-taking track.

In 2018, Nebraska ACT results will have nearly 100 percent participation with the offering of the free ACT to all juniors attending public schools this past spring.

The following are among the other key findings from this year's Nebraska ACT data:

- Nebraska students scored higher than the national average in all four ACT subject areas.
- Nebraska students showed increases in both reading and math while maintaining the same 2016 scores in science and English.

- 90% of students who took the ACT have postsecondary education plans.
- Nebraska's STEM score—a combined measure of math and science designed to predict readiness for success in STEM majors in college—is higher than the national average (21.5 versus 21.0) and up from the 2016 state score of 21.4.
- Nebraska achievement gaps between Hispanic and African American students and their white and Asian American counterparts remain substantial. While 43 percent of Asian American students and 50 percent of white students showed strong readiness for college coursework, just 18 percent of Hispanic students and only 13 percent of African American students earned that same level of achievement.

The national and state ACT *Condition of College & Career Readiness 2017* reports can be viewed and downloaded on the ACT website at:

<http://www.act.org/conditionreport2017>.

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