



TEXAS
College and
Career Readiness

NCEA | ACT[®]

2011

The National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA) is a department of ACT, Inc., a not-for-profit organization committed to helping people achieve education and workplace success. NCEA builds the capacity of educators and leaders to create educational systems of excellence for all students. We accomplish this by providing research-based solutions and expertise in higher performing schools, school improvement, and best practice research that lead to increased levels of college and career readiness.



Texas College and Career Readiness
2011

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The following document presents the percentage of Texas students achieving the National Center for Educational Achievement's (NCEA) College and Career Readiness Targets and ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks.

The key to all students graduating college and career ready is to be able to identify, beginning in elementary school, whether or not students are on the path to college and career readiness. NCEA provides educators with the opportunity to monitor students' progress on this path. NCEA's College and Career Readiness Targets, developed for the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), act as grade-level indicators of whether students are on pace to graduate from high school college and career ready. NCEA's College and Career Readiness Targets combined with ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT tests offer educators a system of indicators that can be used to monitor students' progress toward college and career readiness.

NCEA CCR Targets for Texas

Grades 3–7 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

NCEA linked 2007-08 ACT and 2002-03 Grade 7 TAKS scores, for the same students, to identify the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Targets on the TAKS. These Targets were converted from the horizontal to the vertical scale for TAKS using the scale link from the 2008-09 TAKS. NCEA established CCR Targets for Grades 3-6 TAKS by identifying comparable scores to the Grade 7 CCR Targets.

NCEA's Grades 3-7 CCR Targets are generally between the state's Passing and Commended standards in reading and mathematics.

**Grades 3-7 CCR Targets
on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills**

	Mathematics			Reading		
	Passing	CCR Target	Commended	Passing	CCR Target	Commended
Grade 3	500	607	640	483	630	659
Grade 4	554	654	698	554	670	725
Grade 5	603	690	738	620	712	763
Grade 6	637	718	783	644	725	797
Grade 7	670	732	823	670	766	829

ACT College Readiness Benchmarks for Texas

EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT

ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks

Test	EXPLORE Score	PLAN Score	The ACT Score
English	13	15	18
Mathematics	17	19	22
Reading	15	17	21
Science	20	21	24

The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are scores on the ACT that represent the level of achievement required for all students to have a high probability of success in selected credit-bearing, first-year college courses.

ACT has also established College Readiness Benchmarks for EXPLORE and PLAN. These scores indicate whether students, based on their performance on EXPLORE (Grade 8) or PLAN (Grade 10), are on target to be ready for first-year college-level work when they graduate from high school.¹

¹ Excerpt from: ACT. (2008). *The Forgotten Middle: Ensuring that All Students Are on Target for College and Career Readiness before High School*. Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

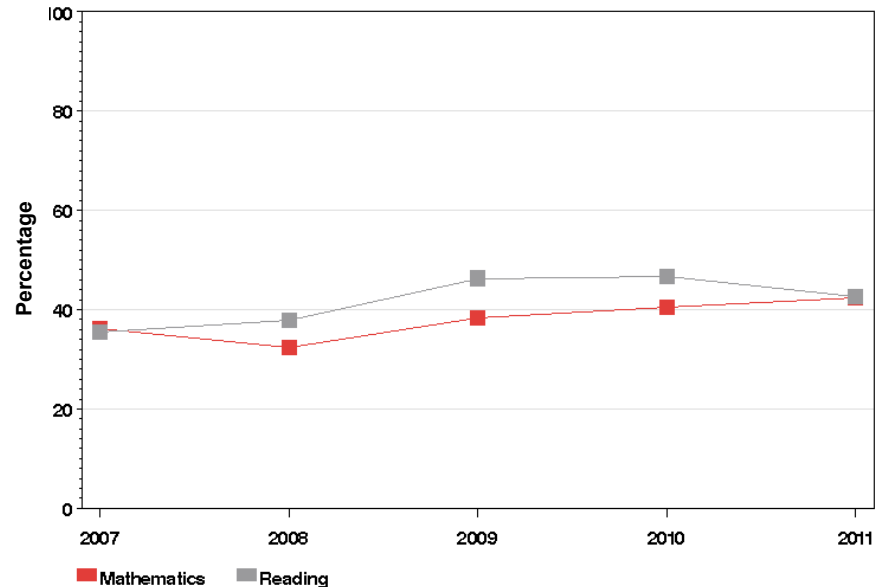
Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 3 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

For reading, the percentage of students achieving the Target grew from 35 percent in 2007 to 43 percent in 2011.

The percentage of students reaching the NCEA CCR Target for mathematics increased over the last four years. The percentage of all students reaching the mathematics Target rose from 36 percent in 2007 to 42 percent in 2011.

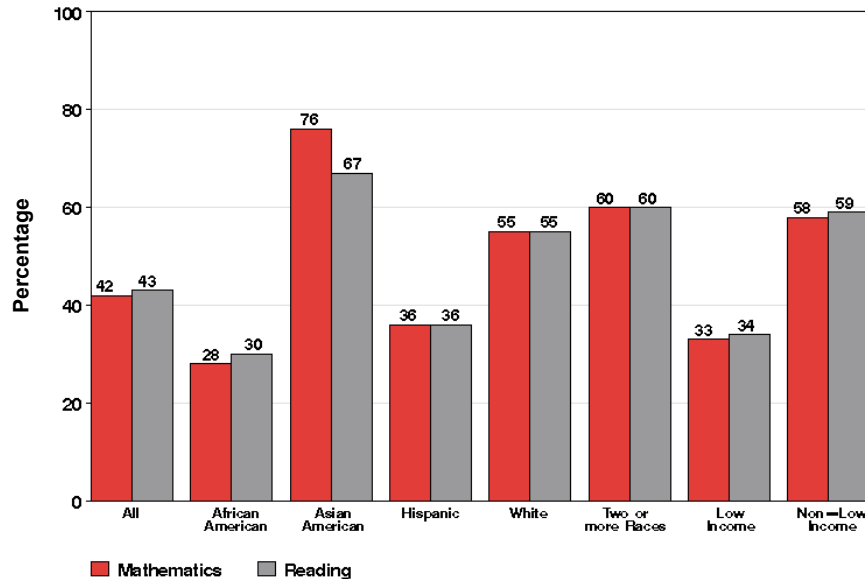
**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
in Grade 3, 2007-2011**



Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 3 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
by Demographics in Grade 3, 2011**



In 2011, 43 percent of all students reached the NCEA CCR Target in reading for Grade 3. By subgroup, 59 percent of non-low-income students and 34 percent of low-income students achieved the Target for reading.

For mathematics, 42 percent of students overall hit the Target. By subgroup, 58 percent of non-low-income students and 33 percent of low-income students met the Target for mathematics in Grade 3.

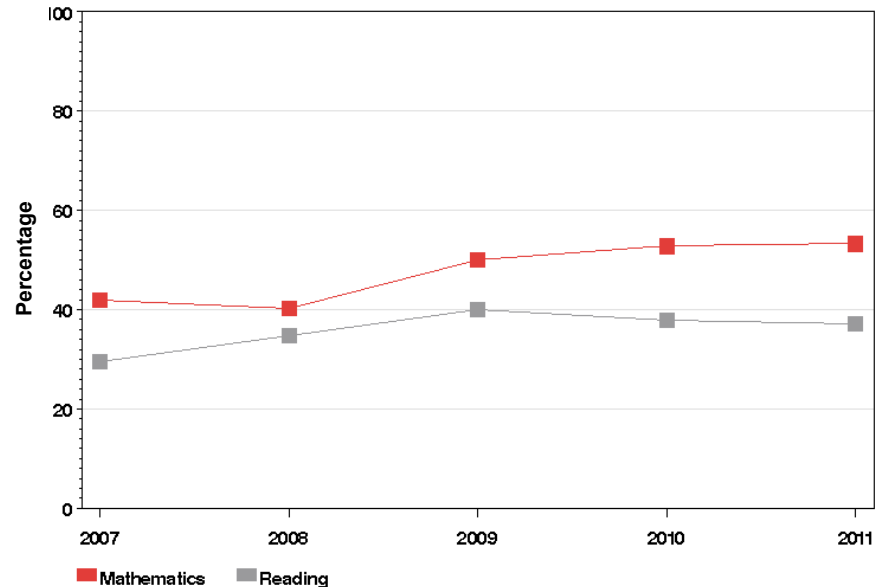
Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 4 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

After a slight increase in the percentage of all students reaching the CCR Target for reading in Grade 4 between 2007 and 2009, the percentage of students achieving the Target decreased slightly from 40 in 2009 to 37 percent in 2011.

The percentage of students achieving the Target for mathematics increased from 40 percent in 2008 to 53 percent in 2011

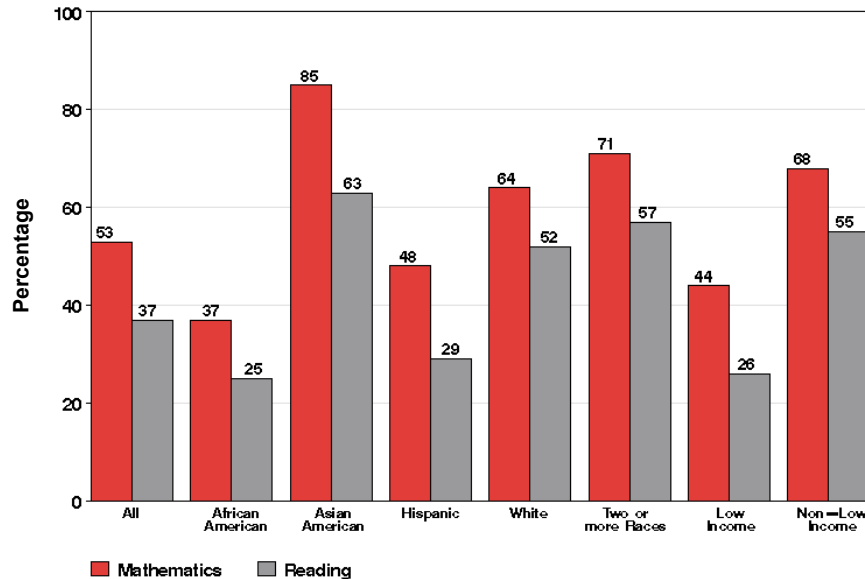
**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
in Grade 4, 2007-2011**



Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 4 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
by Demographics in Grade 4, 2011**



In 2011, 37 percent of all students achieved the CCR Target for reading in Grade 4. By subgroup, 25 percent of African American, 29 percent of Hispanic, 63 percent of Asian, and 52 percent of White students achieved this goal.

For mathematics, 44 percent of low-income students achieved the Target compared to 68 percent of non-low-income.

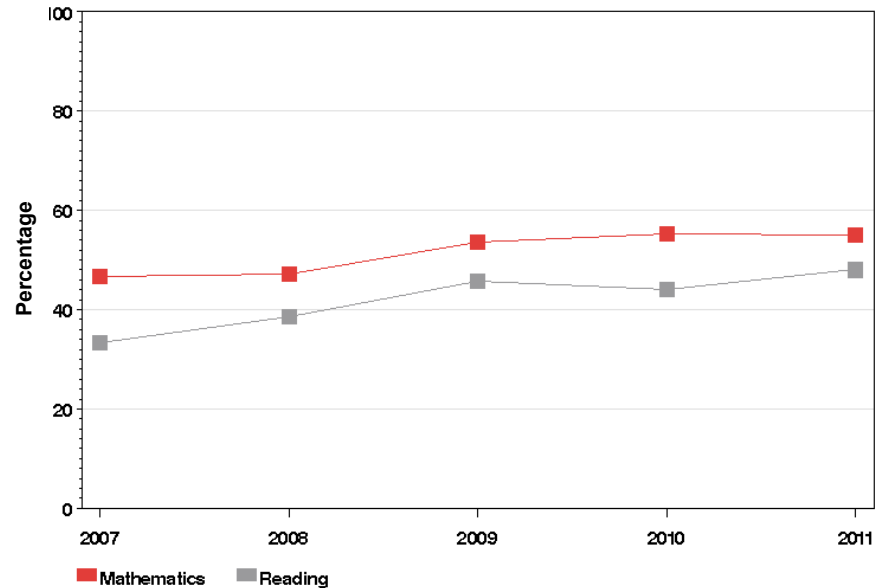
Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 5 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

For reading, the percentage of students reaching the CCR Target in Grade 5 increased from 33 percent in 2007 to 48 percent in 2011.

In 2006, 47 percent of students achieved the mathematics Target. By 2011, 5 percent of students achieved the Target in mathematics.

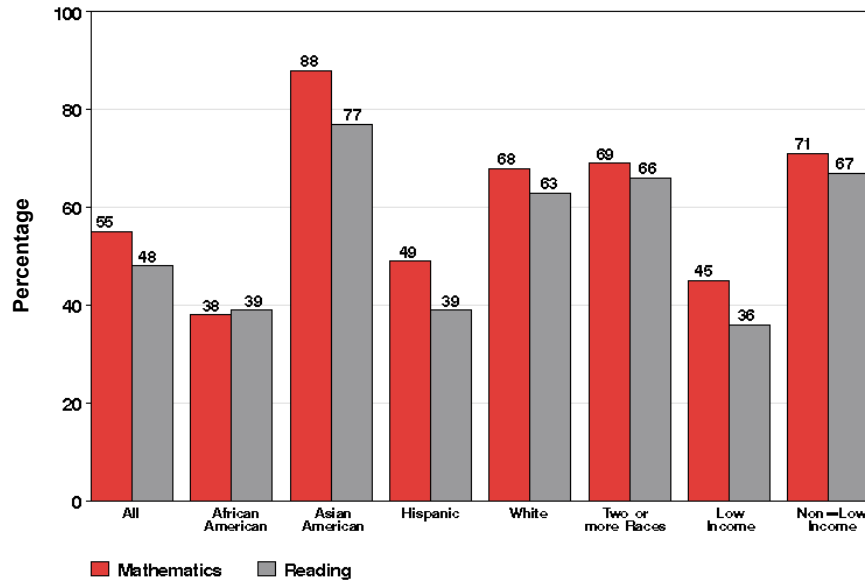
**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
in Grade 5, 2007-2011**



Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 5 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
by Demographics in Grade 5, 2011**



In 2011, 48 percent of all students achieved the CCR Target for reading in Grade 5. Thirty-eight percent of African American, 39 percent of Hispanic, 77 percent of Asian, and 63 percent of White students achieved the Target.

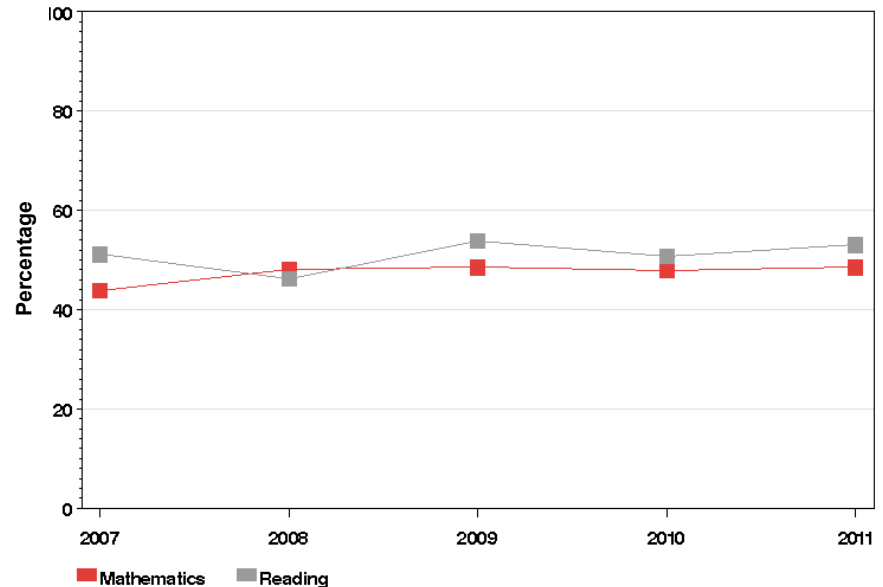
For mathematics, 38 percent of African American, 49 percent of Hispanic, 88 percent of Asian, and 68 percent of White students achieved the Target in 2011.

Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 6 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Across the five years shown, with the exception of 2008 when the percentage of students is approximately the same, a greater percentage of Grade 6 students met the CCR Target in reading than met the Target for mathematics. In 2007, 51 percent of students achieved the reading Target, while only 44 percent of students scored at or above the mathematics Target. In 2011, 53 percent of Grade 6 students achieved the reading Target, while 48 percent hit the mathematics Target.

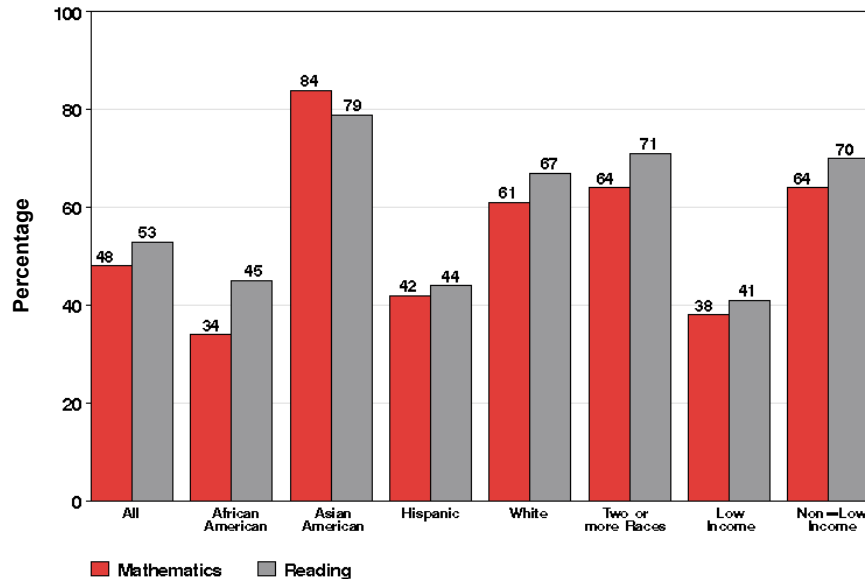
**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
in Grade 6, 2007-2010**



Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 6 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
by Demographics in Grade 6, 2011



Forty-five percent of African American students achieved the reading Target, while only 34 percent of students from the same population scored at or above the mathematics Target. Sixty-seven percent of White students scored at or above the reading Target, while 61 percent of students from the same population achieved the mathematics Target. For low-income students, 41 percent achieved the reading Target, while 38 percent of the same population achieved the mathematics Target.

The pattern in the percentage of students meeting the Grade 6 CCR Targets varied by subgroup. African American were 11 percent more likely to reach the reading Target than the mathematics Target while Asian students were 5 percent more likely to meet the mathematics Target than the reading Target.

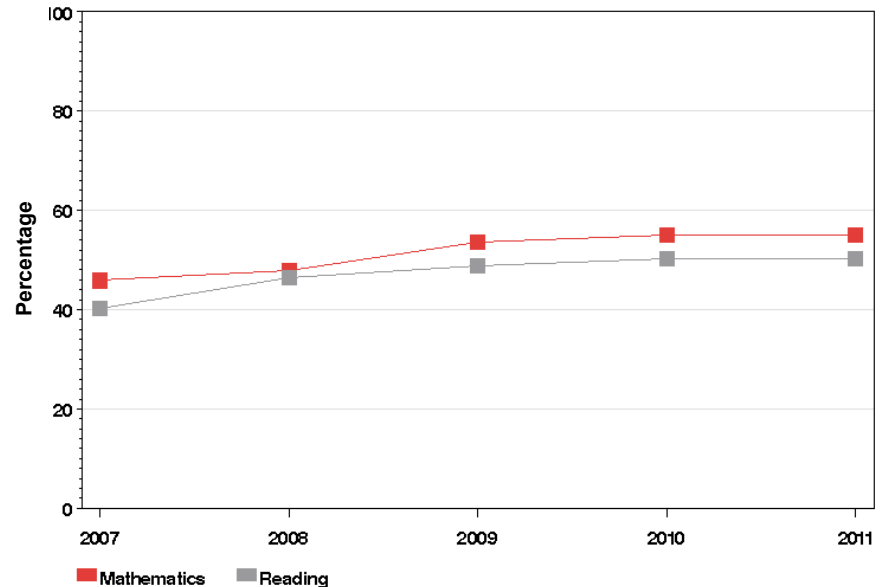
Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 7 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

The percentage of Grade 7 students achieving the reading and mathematics CCR Targets has increased over the last five years. In 2007, 40 percent of students reached the reading Target. This number increased to 50 percent in 2011.

For mathematics, 46 percent of students reached the Target in 2007. By 2011, 55 percent of all Grade 7 students scored at or above the Target.

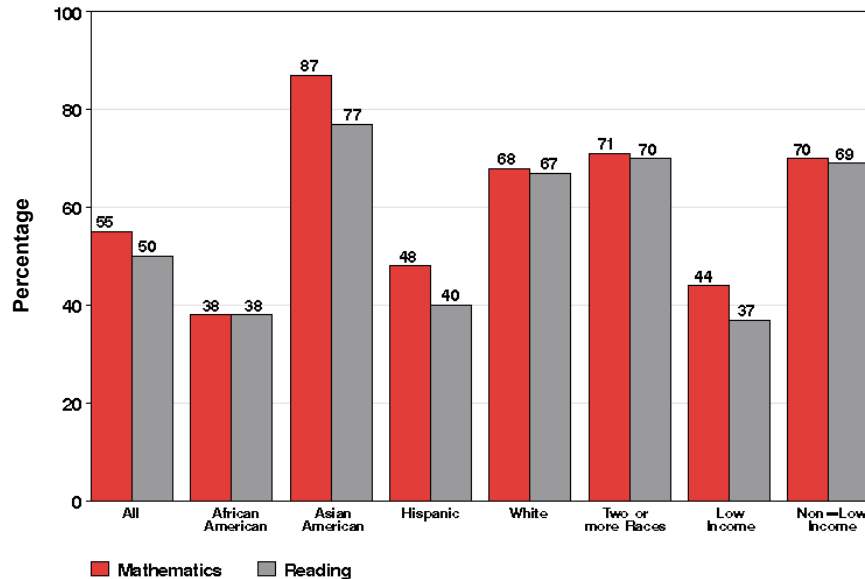
**Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
in Grade 7, 2007-2011**



Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets

Grade 7 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Percentage of Students Meeting NCEA CCR Targets
by Demographics in Grade 7, 2011



By subgroup, 38 percent of African American, 40 percent of Hispanic, 77 percent of Asian, and 67 percent of White students achieved the reading Target.

For mathematics, there is a gap between the 70 percent of non-low-income students reaching the mathematics Target and the 44 percent of low-income students achieving the same Target.

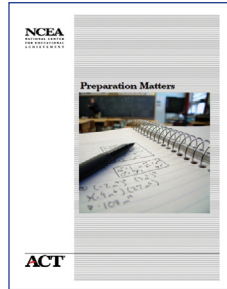
ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

ACT has compiled an extensive database of course grade and test score data from a large number of first-year students and across a wide range of postsecondary institutions. These data provide an overall measure of what it takes to be successful in selected first-year college courses. Data from 98 institutions and over 90,000 students were used to establish the Benchmarks. The data were weighted so that they would be nationally representative of two and four-year postsecondary institutions nationwide.

The College Readiness Benchmarks for EXPLORE and PLAN were developed using about 150,000 records of students who had taken EXPLORE, PLAN, and the ACT. First, ACT estimated the probabilities at each EXPLORE and PLAN test score point associated with meeting the appropriate Benchmark for the ACT. ACT then identified EXPLORE and PLAN scores on English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science that corresponded most closely to a 50 percent probability of success at meeting each of the four Benchmarks established for the ACT.²

² Excerpt from: ACT. (2010). *What Are ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks?* Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

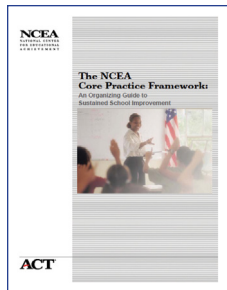
Additional Resources



Preparation Matters

This paper expands on NCEA's *Orange Juice or Orange Drink?* argument that putting students into courses with the right titles does not always lead to college readiness. Students may be placed in AP courses, but are they learning the content implied by the course title? And are students academically prepared for these courses? Course rigor and student academic preparation are at the forefront of education policy. This paper discusses the importance of rigorous courses and why preparing students in early education—not high school alone—is key to student success.

Additional Resources



The NCEA Core Practice Framework: An Organizing Guide to Sustained School Improvement

What education must encompass has grown over the past several decades. The NCEA Core Practice Framework is designed to help educators and policymakers develop and support a coherent, comprehensive, and sustained approach to their improvement efforts. The Framework provides both *structure*—a way of categorizing those educational practices that distinguish higher performing schools from others—and *content*—a collection of information on the practices themselves. As such, it provides an organizing guide for all improvement decisions.

For more on NCEA's latest research and findings, please visit our online library at [**www.nc4ea.org**](http://www.nc4ea.org).



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