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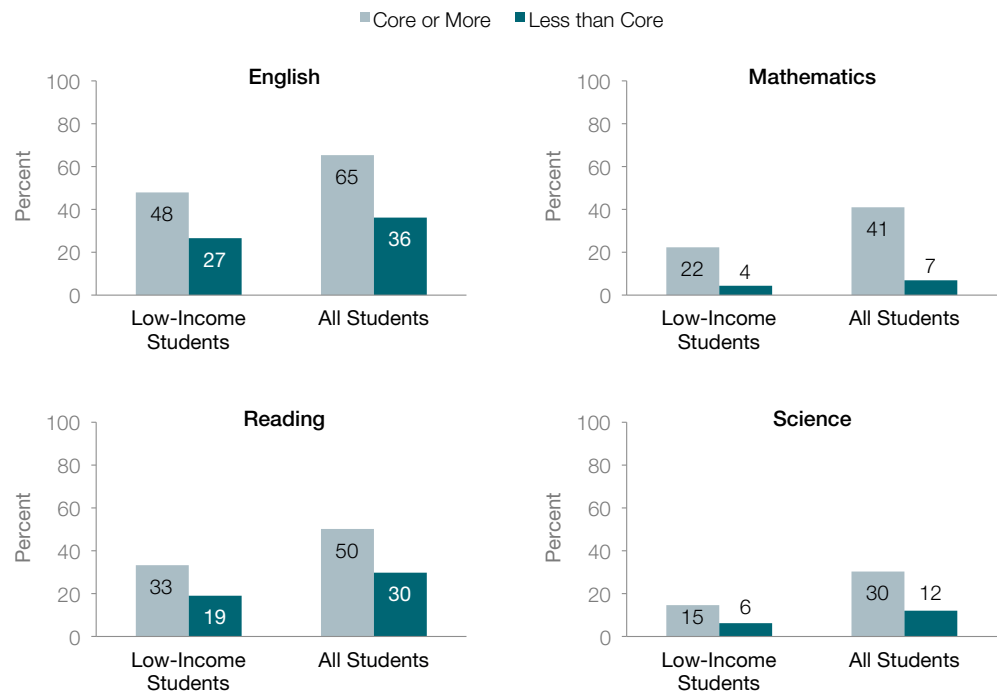
Information Brief

Low-Income Students, Course-taking, and ACT College Readiness Benchmark Performance

April 2013

Low-income students (students with a family income of less than \$36,000 per year) benefit from exposure to a core curriculum consisting of four years of English and three years each of mathematics, science, and social studies. Using data from nine states that require all students to take the ACT® college readiness assessment, the percentage of low-income students who meet the corresponding ACT College Readiness Benchmark increased when students took a core curriculum in high school. The greatest gain was in English, where the percentage meeting the benchmark rose from 27% to 48% when taking a core curriculum. The next largest increase was in mathematics, where the percentage of low-income students meeting the mathematics benchmark increased from 4% to 22%. There were also gains in benchmark attainment for low-income students in both reading and science (19% to 33% and 6% to 15%, respectively.)

Percent of 2012 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Participating in State-Mandated Testing Meeting College Readiness Benchmarks by Number of Years of Courses Within Subject



Note: Data are from the 513,827 ACT-tested 2012 high school graduates who lived in one of nine states participating in statewide ACT testing. 137,812 students identified themselves as low-income with their family income less than \$36,000 a year.

infobrief@act.org for more information or to suggest ideas for future ACT Information Briefs.



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