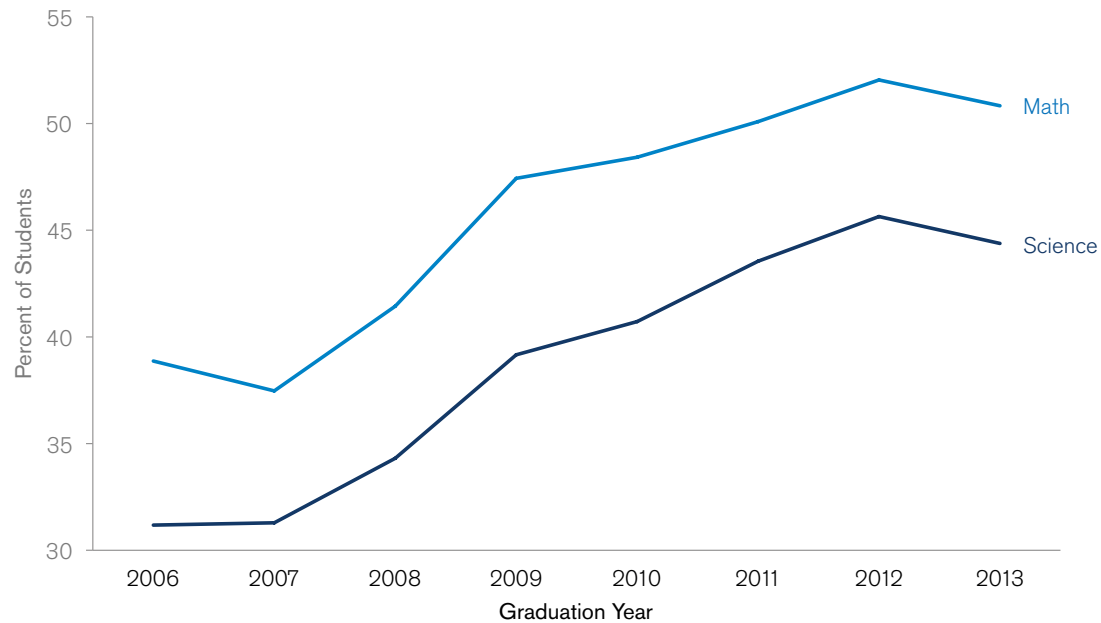


More Graduates Are Taking at Least Four Years of High School Math or Science

RICHARD BUDDIN

Percent of ACT-Tested High School Students Taking at Least 4 Years of Math or Science by Year



Note: Data come from 12,066,671 high school graduates who took the ACT® college readiness assessment from 2006 to 2013.

ACT data show that 39% of graduates completed at least four years of high school math in 2006 compared to 51% of graduates in 2013. In science, 31% of 2006 graduates completed at least four years of science courses; 44% of 2013 graduates did the same.

There are several potential reasons for the rise in the number of students taking math and science courses. First, media coverage has highlighted several studies on the importance of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses for college and career

success. This coverage and the underlying evidence may encourage students and their parents to pursue more STEM coursework. Second, several states have increased minimum graduation requirements in STEM fields. Finally, recent cohorts may have greater interest in these subjects than previous cohorts. Whatever the underlying reasons, graduates are now leaving high school with more STEM coursework than in the past several years.