

The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019

Virginia Key Findings

Performance of 2019 Graduates

- In the 2019 Virginia graduating class, 19,062 graduates (an estimated 21 percent) took the ACT test with a Composite score average of 24.0. This compares to 25,038 (an estimated 30 percent) with an average of 23.1 in 2015. Nationally, an estimated 52 percent of 2019 graduates took the ACT with an average Composite score of 20.7.
 - There were 2,781 African American graduates from Virginia who took the ACT (15 percent) with an average Composite score of 19.1. This compares to 3,238 (15 percent) with an average of 18.9, and 4,011 (16 percent) with an average of 18.3, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 10,338 White graduates from Virginia who took the ACT (54 percent) with an average Composite score of 24.9. This compares to 11,946 (55 percent) with an average of 24.9, and 14,379 (57 percent) with an average of 24.2, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 1,519 Hispanic graduates from Virginia who took the ACT (8 percent) with an average Composite score of 22.8. This compares to 1,760 (8 percent) with an average of 22.6, and 1,937 (8 percent) with an average of 22.1, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
 - There were 1,765 Asian graduates from Virginia who took the ACT (9 percent) with an average Composite score of 27.2. This compares to 1,965 (9 percent) with an average of 26.7, and 1,847 (7 percent) with an average of 25.7, for the 2018 and 2015 graduating classes, respectively.
- In 2019, 46 percent of Virginia graduates met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 45 and 41 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 16 percent of Virginia graduates met zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks. This compares to 16 and 18 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 80 percent of Virginia graduates met the ACT English College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 80 and 77 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 60 percent of Virginia graduates met the ACT Math College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 60 and 58 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 67 percent of Virginia graduates met the ACT Reading College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 66 and 61 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
 - In 2019, 57 percent of Virginia graduates met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark. This compares to 57 and 53 percent of 2018 and 2015 graduates, respectively.
- 67 percent of 2019 Virginia graduates were Proficient or Above Proficient in understanding complex texts.
- 33 percent of 2019 Virginia graduates were Below Proficient in understanding complex texts.

STEM

- In 2019, 10,583 Virginia graduates (56 percent) indicated having an interest in STEM majors and/or careers.
 - Nationally, 43 percent of graduates indicated having an interest in STEM.
- Compared to a 2019 Virginia graduating class average ACT STEM score of 23.7, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM averages of 23.7 and 23.0, respectively.
- Compared to 37 percent of 2019 Virginia graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark, graduates in 2018 and 2015 had STEM Benchmark percentages of 36 and 32, respectively.
 - 67 percent of 2019 Virginia graduates taking physics met the ACT Science College Readiness Benchmark, compared to 37 for students not taking physics.
 - 2019 Virginia graduates meeting the ACT STEM College Readiness Benchmark had an average math score of 29.2. This compares to 28.9 in 2015.

Career Readiness Indicator

- In 2019, 12,282 Virginia graduates (64 percent) were likely to attain the Gold ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 726,923 (41 percent) nationally.
 - The ACT Composite scores associated with a 50% chance of earning each ACT WorkKeys NCRC level or higher are: 13 for Bronze, 17 for Silver, 22 for Gold, and 27 for Platinum. Based on those cut scores, students who earned an ACT Composite score of less than 13 would be classified as “Needs Improvement,” 13 to 16 as “Bronze,” 17 to 21 as “Silver,” and 22 or above as “Gold or Higher.”
- In 2019, 16,987 Virginia graduates (90 percent) were likely to attain the Silver ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate or higher based upon ACT Composite score, compared to 1,267,654 (71 percent) nationally.

Impact

- Based on the actual test volume and ACT score distributions of 2019 ACT-tested Virginia high school graduates, ACT research estimates that an increase of 0.1 in state average ACT Composite score for the 2019 graduating class would result in:
 - 39 more students enrolling in college.
 - 45 more students persisting to year two.
 - 28 fewer students needing remedial English.
 - 49 fewer students needing remedial math.
 - 53 more students persisting to year four.
 - 58 more students earning a postsecondary degree within six years.

Behaviors that Impact Access and Opportunity

- In Virginia, 6,203 of the 2019 graduates (32.5 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 25.8, compared to an average of 23.2 for 12,859 of the 2019 graduates (67.5 percent) who took the ACT only once.
 - Nationwide, 765,568 of the 2019 graduates (42.9 percent) taking the ACT two or more times had an average Composite score of 22.7, compared to an average of 19.2 for 1,017,252 of the 2019 graduates (57.1 percent) who took the ACT only once.
- 26,255 score reports were sent to colleges by 2019 Virginia ACT-tested graduates.
 - 13,191 score reports were sent to in-state public colleges by 2019 Virginia ACT-tested graduates.
 - For Virginia's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top five schools to which scores were sent were Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, James Madison University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and George Mason University.
 - For Virginia's 2019 ACT-tested graduates, the top three out-of-state schools to which scores were sent were the University of South Carolina - Columbia, the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, and West Virginia University.
- Compared to 66 percent of 2019 graduates nationally, 63 percent of Virginia graduates opted into the ACT Educational Opportunity Service (EOS). EOS is a free service that allows students to gain exposure to recruitment, scholarship agencies, colleges, and universities that students may not have accessed on their own. The ACT Get Your Name in the Game initiative encourages colleges and universities to recruit underserved EOS participants to increase access and opportunity for all.
- In the 2018-2019 academic year, ACT issued 4,224 ACT fee waivers to qualified Virginia students across all grades. However, 1,430 students (33.9 percent) did not take advantage of this opportunity to test for free. This compares to 487,749 waivers issued nationally, of which 135,569 (27.8 percent) students did not take advantage. This represents a great opportunity for high schools within the state to increase the socioeconomic diversity of its students tested.
 - While African American Virginia students represent 52 percent of fee waivers issued, they account for 56 percent of unused fee waivers. This compares to 32 and 34 nationally.

Postsecondary Aspirations

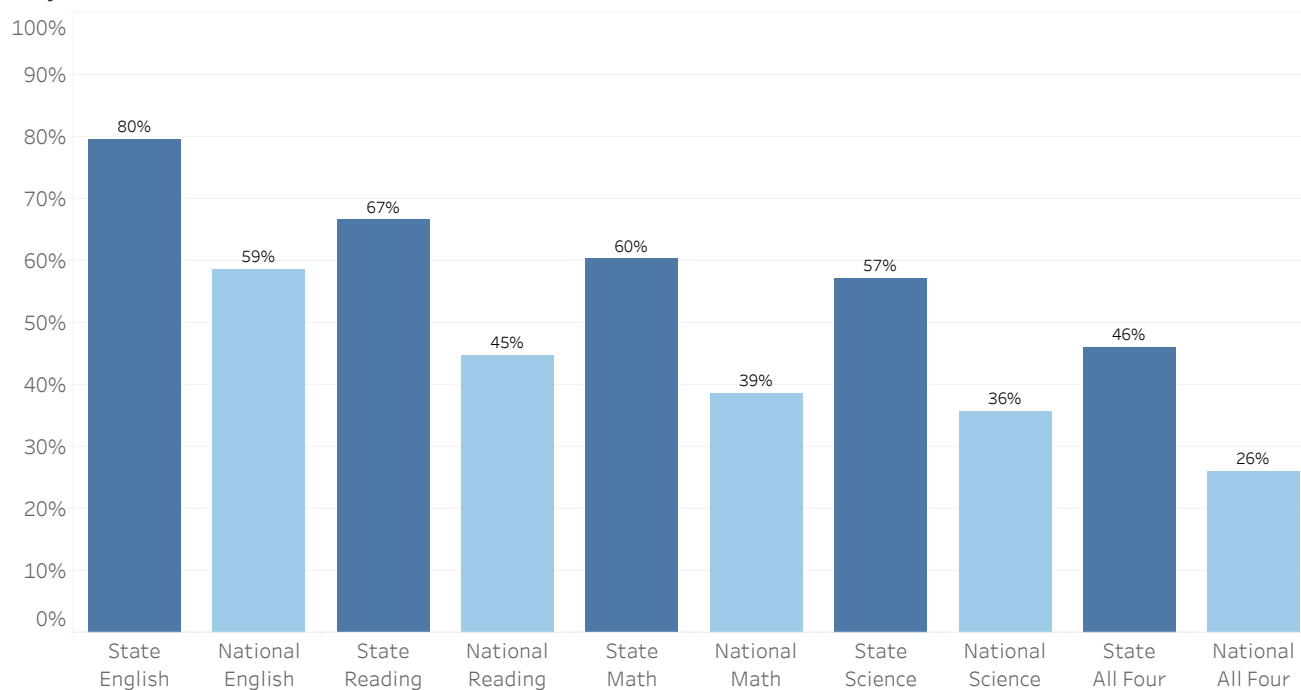
- Aspirations matter. Students who aspire to a higher level of postsecondary education typically achieve higher ACT Composite scores.
 - 9,989 students (52 percent) aspired to attain a graduate or professional degree. They had an average Composite score of 25.5.
 - 7,023 students (37 percent) aspired to attain a bachelor's degree. They had an average Composite score of 21.9.
 - 139 students (1 percent) aspired to attain a vocational/technical or associate's degree. They had an average Composite score of 17.6.
- In the Virginia graduating class of 2019, 1,376 students (7 percent) had parents who did not attend college.
- In order of prevalence, the five most commonly indicated college majors of interest for 2019 Virginia graduates were: Undecided; Medicine (Pre-Medicine); Biology, General; Computer Science and Programming; and Nursing, Registered (BS/RN).
 - In the Virginia graduating class of 2019, 3,413 students (18 percent) indicated being undecided about their college major. They had an average Composite score of 24.3. Decision making regarding college major can be facilitated through activities included in ACT Aspire and PreACT testing experiences. In addition, the Student Score Report is a valuable tool for conversations using the College and Career Planning and Interest-Major Fit sections.
 - In the Virginia graduating class of 2019, 535 (3 percent) indicated planning on majoring in education. They had an average Composite score of 21.8.

Additional Points

- The Virginia ACT State Organization continues to grow in membership and in diversity, with more than 285 members from across the state. The membership includes educators from state agencies, K-12, access, and postsecondary institutions, as well as members involved in workforce development.
- In 2019, ACT honored College and Career Readiness Champions in most states. The Virginia honorees were:
 - High school senior: Amber Williams, Windsor High School; K-12 professional: Anne Christie, Matthew Fontaine Maury High School; Postsecondary professional: Iona Black, James Madison University; Workforce professional: Debra Crowder, South Central Workforce Development Board.

VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks* by Subject



Data From Graph Above

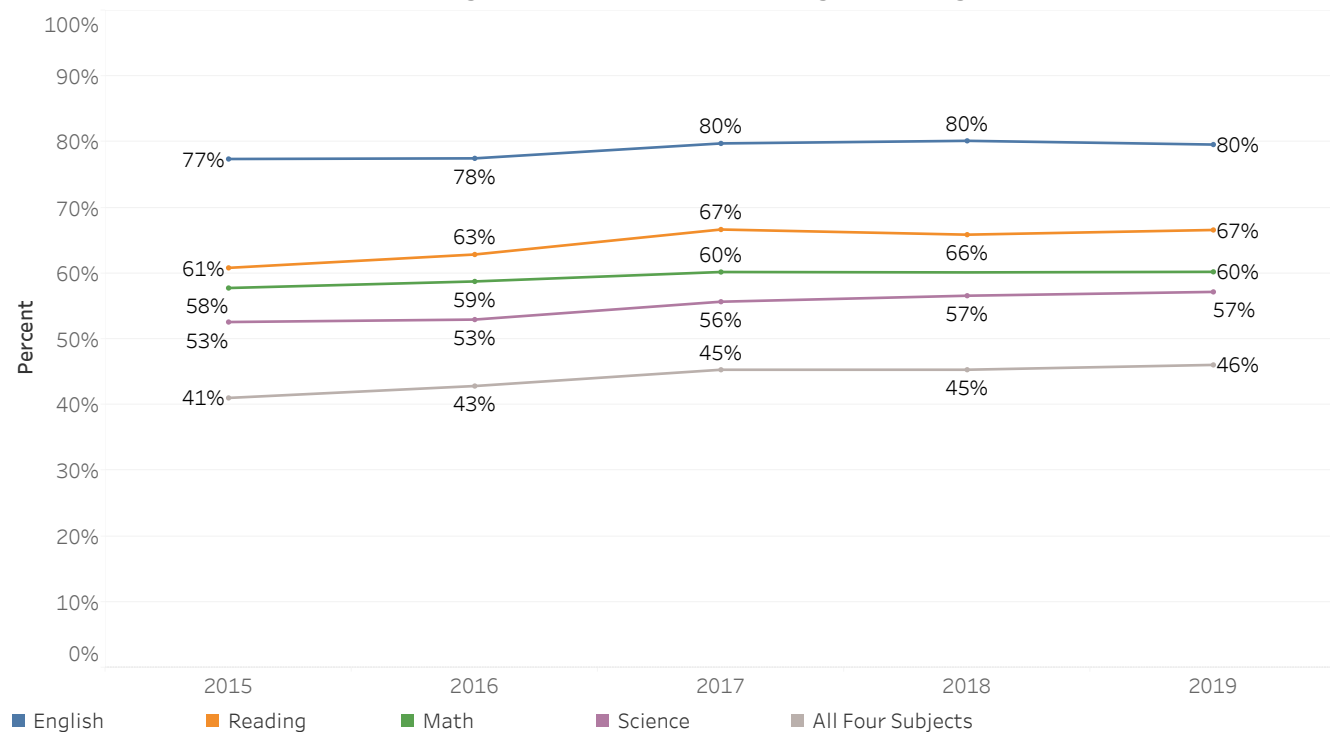
State English	National English	State Reading	National Reading	State Math	National Math	State Science	National Science	State All Four	National All Four
80%	59%	67%	45%	60%	39%	57%	36%	46%	26%

* The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are scores on the ACT subject area tests that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses. Throughout this report, benchmark attainment corresponds with students meeting or exceeding 18 in English, 22 in Reading, 22 in Math and 23 in Science.

Note, missing data points in tables and graphs reflect insufficient data for reporting.

VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015–2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



Data From Graph Above

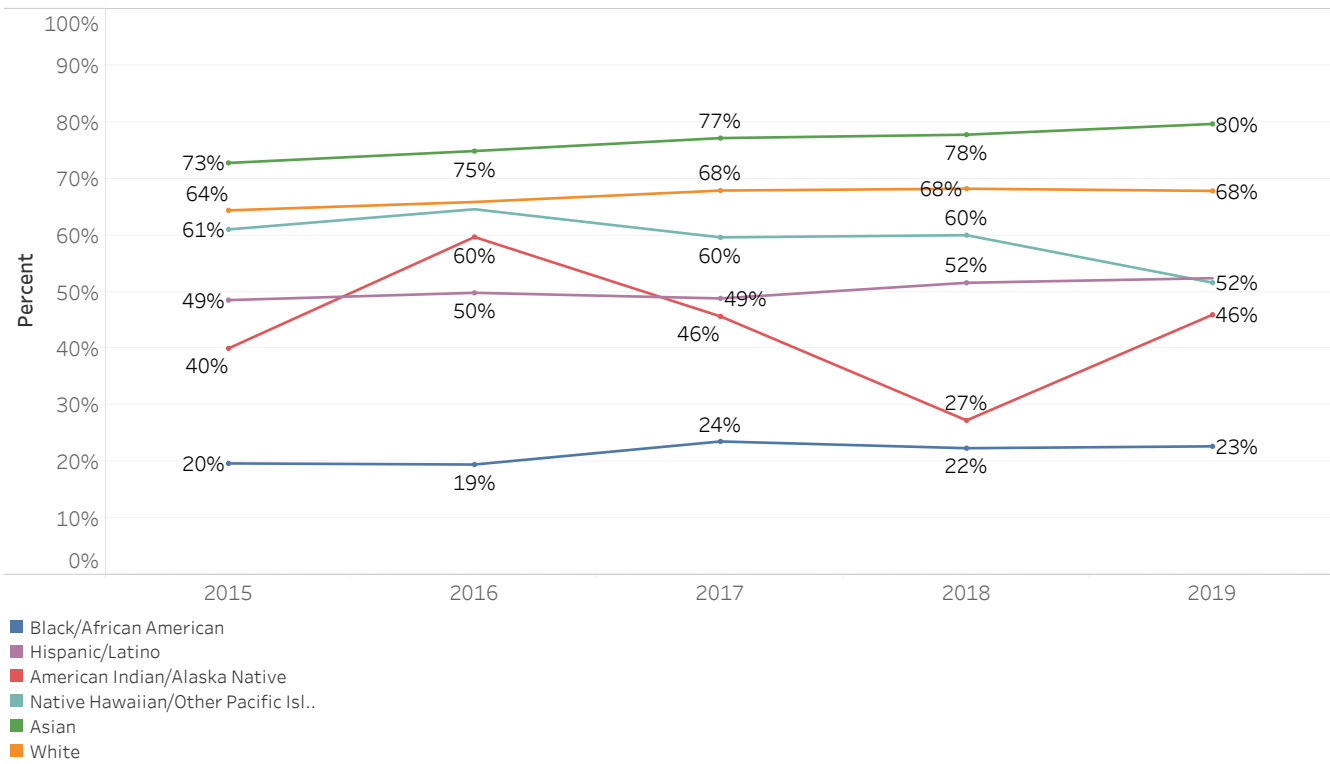
	English	Reading	Math	Science	All Four Subjects
2015	77%	61%	58%	53%	41%
2016	78%	63%	59%	53%	43%
2017	80%	67%	60%	56%	45%
2018	80%	66%	60%	57%	45%
2019	80%	67%	60%	57%	46%

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VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015-2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting Three or More Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity



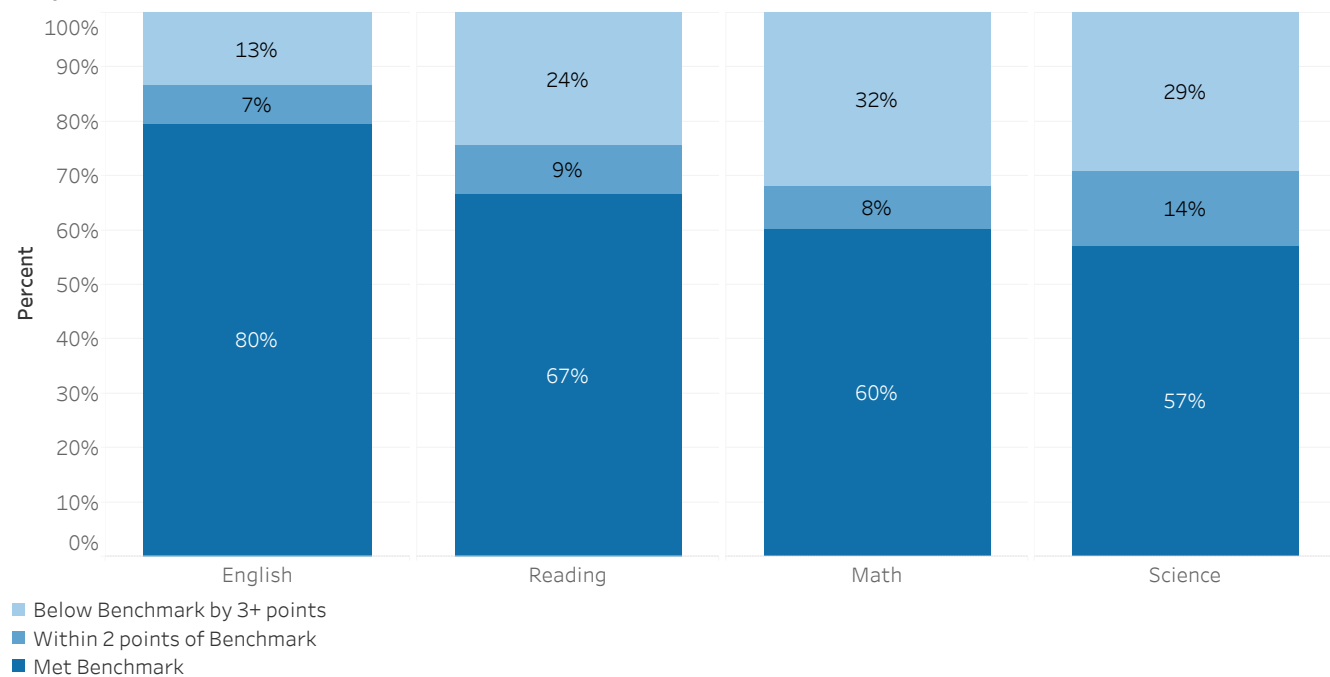
Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Asian	White
2015	20%	49%	40%	61%	73%	64%
2016	19%	50%	60%	65%	75%	66%
2017	24%	49%	46%	60%	77%	68%
2018	22%	52%	27%	60%	78%	68%
2019	23%	52%	46%	52%	80%	68%

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VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by ACT College Readiness Benchmark Attainment and Subject



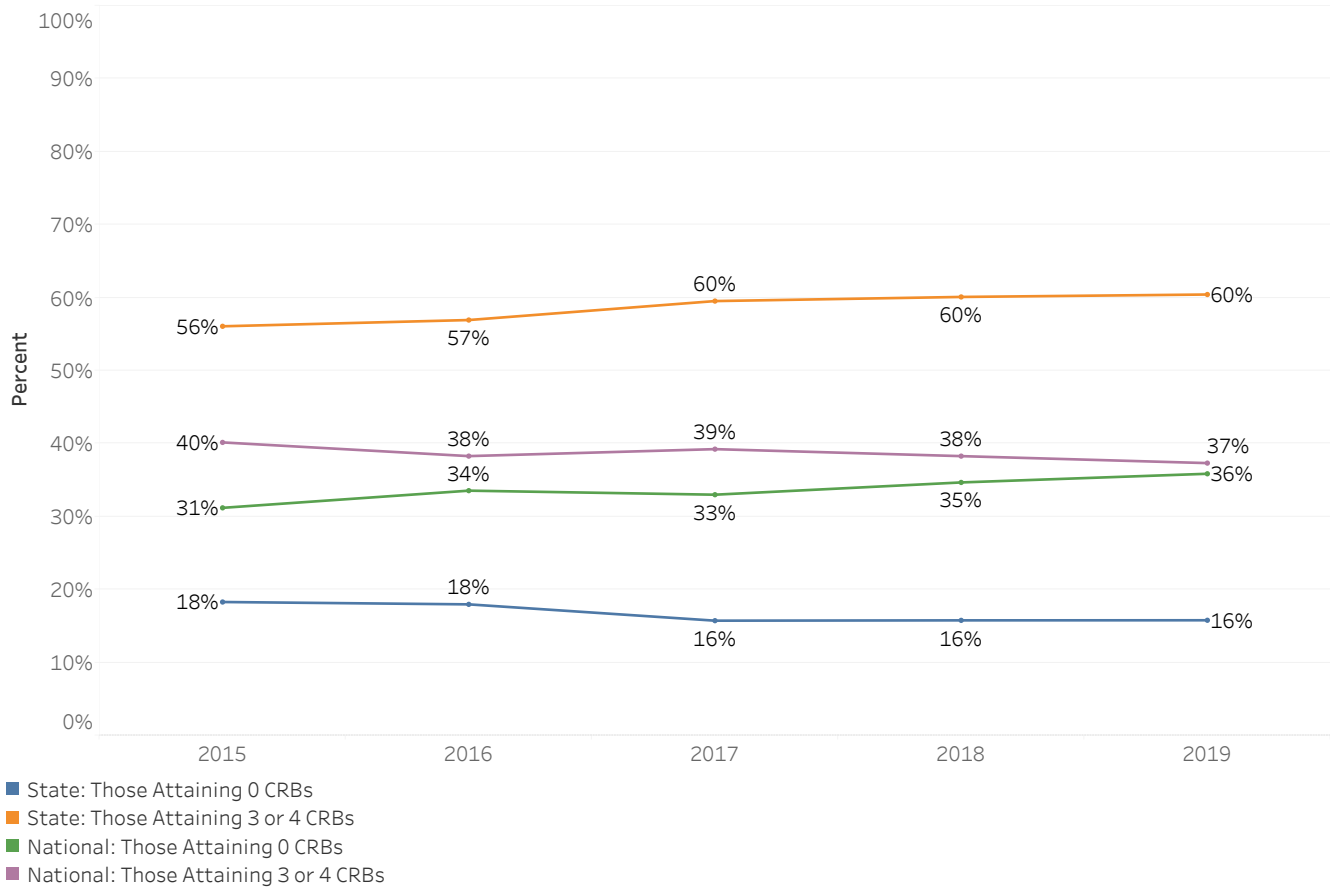
Data From Graph Above

	Below Benchmark by 3+ points	Within 2 points of Benchmark	Met Benchmark
English	13%	7%	80%
Math	32%	8%	60%
Reading	24%	9%	67%
Science	29%	14%	57%

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VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015–2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks*



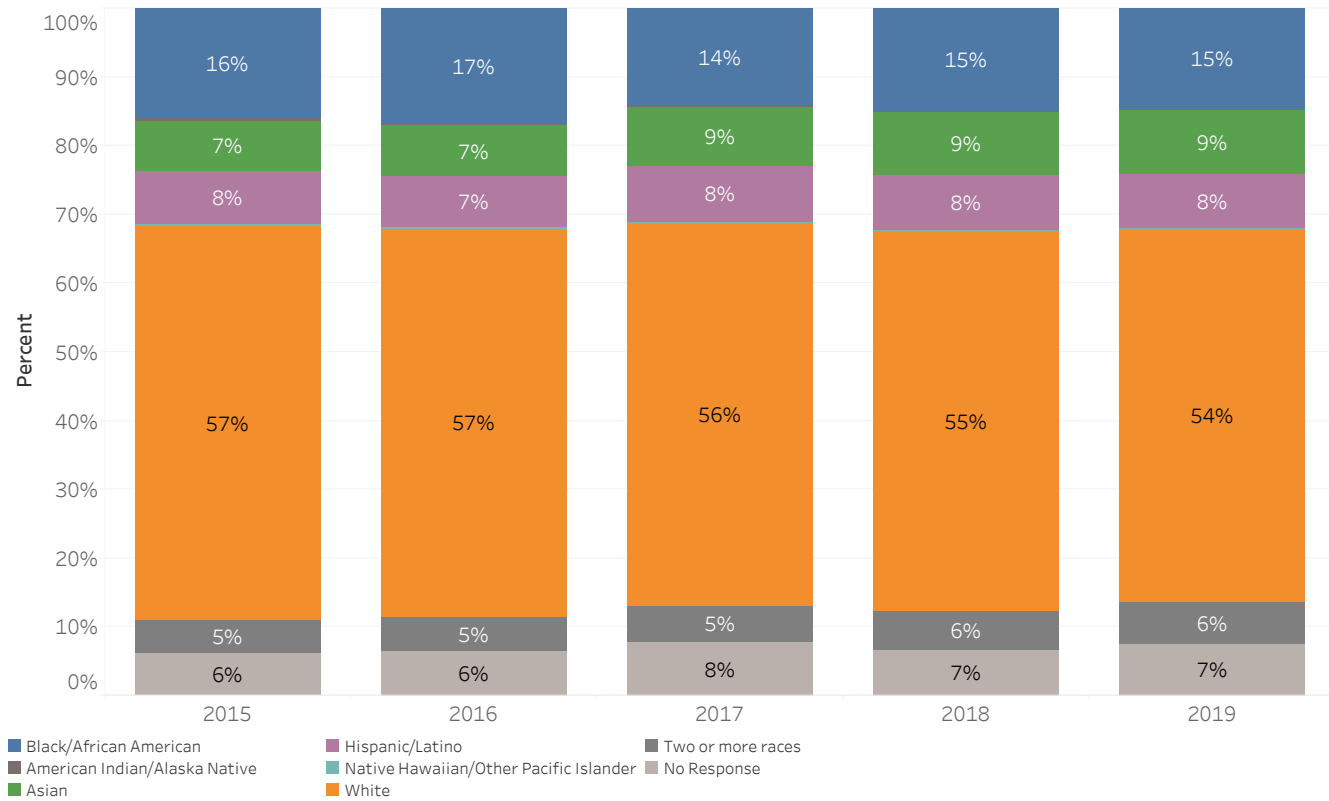
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	State: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	State: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 0 CRBs	National: Those Attaining 3 or 4 CRBs
2015	18%	56%	31%	40%
2016	18%	57%	34%	38%
2017	16%	60%	33%	39%
2018	16%	60%	35%	38%
2019	16%	60%	36%	37%

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VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2015-2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity



Data From Graph Above

	Black/African American	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or more races	No Response
2015	16%	0%	7%	8%	0%	57%	5%	6%
2016	17%	0%	7%	7%	0%	57%	5%	6%
2017	14%	0%	9%	8%	0%	56%	5%	8%
2018	15%	0%	9%	8%	0%	55%	6%	7%
2019	15%	0%	9%	8%	0%	54%	6%	7%

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VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

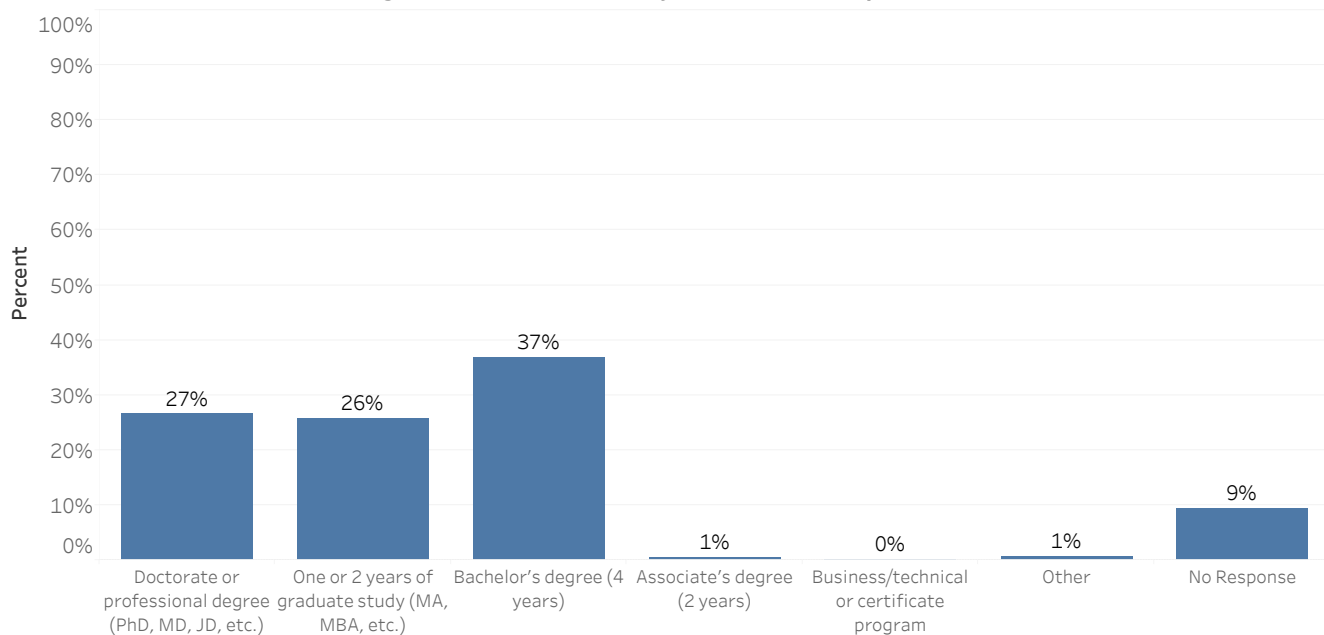
Student Data Trends: 2015-2019, State vs. Nation

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
State N-count	25,038	25,866	25,518	21,645	19,062
National N-count	1,924,436	2,090,342	2,030,038	1,914,817	1,782,820
Average ACT English Score - State	22.8	22.9	23.5	23.8	23.8
Average ACT English Score - National	20.4	20.1	20.3	20.2	20.1
Average ACT Reading Score - State	23.6	24.0	24.6	24.7	24.8
Average ACT Reading Score - National	21.4	21.3	21.4	21.3	21.2
Average ACT Math Score - State	22.8	22.9	23.3	23.3	23.3
Average ACT Math Score - National	20.8	20.6	20.7	20.5	20.4
Average ACT Science Score - State	22.8	23.1	23.5	23.5	23.6
Average ACT Science Score - National	20.9	20.8	21.0	20.7	20.6
Average ACT Composite Score - State	23.1	23.3	23.8	23.9	24.0
Average ACT Composite Score - National	21.0	20.8	21.0	20.8	20.7

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VIRGINIA College and Career Readiness Attainment, Participation, and Opportunity

Percent of 2019 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Educational Aspirations



Data From Graph Above

	% of Graduates
Doctorate or professional degree (PhD, MD, JD, etc.)	27%
One or 2 years of graduate study (MA, MBA, etc.)	26%
Bachelor's degree (4 years)	37%
Associate's degree (2 years)	1%
Business/technical or certificate program	0%
Other	1%
No Response	9%

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