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## **Texas' composite ACT score hits record high level**

AUSTIN – Texas' graduating class of 2007 set a new state record, earning an all-time high average composite score on the ACT of 20.5.

Texas also set a new state record for the number of test takers with 76,542 students taking the four-part exam. That represents 30 percent of the senior class and is about a 3,000-student increase over last year. Nationwide 1.3 million members of the 2007 senior class took the ACT.

“These test results represent a strong and positive trend. Texas' ACT composite score has increased every year since 2005. This can be attributed, at least in part, to the growing number of students that are following a college-prep program in high school. It's also attributable to the hard work of Texas students who challenge themselves by taking rigorous, advanced courses,” said Robert Scott, acting commissioner of education.

The Texas scores rose on each of the subject area tests, which cover reading, English, math and science.

Despite the strong improvement, Texas, with its large and diverse student body, earned a score that trailed the national average composite score, which was 21.2. The ACT is scored on a scale of one to 36.

However, Texas' white, Asian American and American Indian students earned a composite score that was higher than their ethnic group nationally.

White students in Texas posted an average composite score of 22.2, compared to 22.1 nationally. Asian-American students in Texas received a score of 23.2, significantly above the 22.6 earned by Asian students nationally. American Indian students earned an average score of 21.1, substantially above the national average for their ethnic group of 18.9.

Texas' Hispanic students received a score of 18.1, compared to a score of 18.7 for Hispanics nationally. While lagging behind the national performance, Texas Hispanic students have increased their score for three straight years.

African-American students in Texas and the nation earned an average composite score of 17.0, a drop from 17.1 in both the state and United States average in 2006.

ACT data shows that African American students in this state are less likely to take advanced level academic courses than are other student groups. This fact may negatively affect their scores and their ability to succeed in college.

ACT has established college readiness benchmarks for the four subject areas covered on the test. A benchmark score is a minimum score needed on an ACT subject area test to indicate

a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of earning a C or higher in a corresponding college course.

About 62 percent of the Texas students who took the ACT are likely to be successful in a college English composition class, while 47 percent met the benchmark that predicts success in social science classes, such as history. Only 24 percent of Texas' ACT test takers are ready for college biology and 41 percent are ready to succeed in a college Algebra course.

The Commission for a College-Ready Texas, composed of educators and business leaders, is now examining ways to increase the college readiness of the state's students. It will deliver its report to the State Board of Education, which is in the process of updating the curriculum standards for Texas public schools.

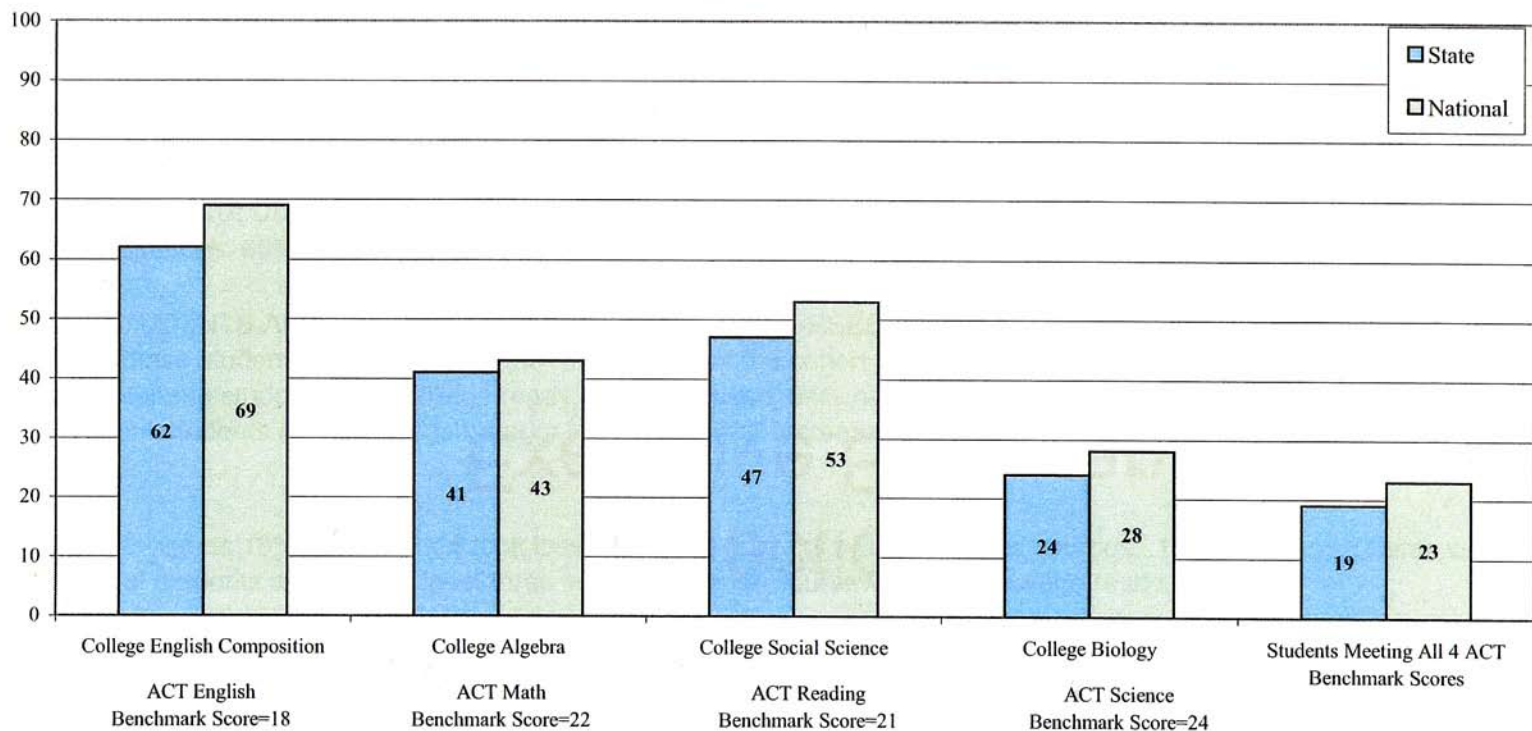
Among Texas students, the top five universities being sent scores by ACT test takers are the University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, Texas State University and Baylor University.

**Texas and National Average ACT Composite Scores by Race/Ethnicity,  
5-Year Trends**

		<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>All Students</b>	<b>State</b>	20.1	20.2	20.2	20.3	20.5
	<b>National</b>	20.8	20.9	20.9	21.1	21.2
<b>African Am./Black</b>	<b>State</b>	16.8	17.1	17.0	17.1	17.0
	<b>National</b>	16.9	17.1	17.0	17.1	17.0
<b>Am. Indian/Alaska Native</b>	<b>State</b>	20.5	20.6	20.9	21.3	21.1
	<b>National</b>	18.7	18.8	18.7	18.8	18.9
<b>Caucasian Am./White</b>	<b>State</b>	21.7	21.9	21.9	22.1	22.2
	<b>National</b>	21.7	21.8	21.9	22.0	22.1
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>State</b>	17.9	17.9	17.9	18.0	18.1
	<b>National</b>	18.5	18.5	18.6	18.6	18.7
<b>Asian Am./Pacific Islander</b>	<b>State</b>	22.1	22.3	22.5	22.9	23.2
	<b>National</b>	21.8	21.9	22.1	22.3	22.6
<b>Other/No Response</b>	<b>State</b>	20.6	20.6	20.5	20.8	21.4
	<b>National</b>	20.6	20.9	20.9	21.1	21.6

Note: A "." means an insufficient number of students in that category took the ACT.

**Figure 1.1. Percent of ACT-Tested Students Ready for College-Level Coursework**



**A benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college course.**