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ABSTRACT

Results are reported for South Carolina students for the four tests of the American College Test (ACT) (English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning) and the ACT composite. In 1998, the average composite score for the 995,039 graduating seniors in the United States was 21.0. In South Carolina, for the 5,385 students who took the ACT, the average composite score was 19.0. In South Carolina, the average composite score was higher for females (19.1) than for males (18.9). For all tests and the composite, the average scores for White students were higher than for African American students. In general, students who completed the core courseware defined by the ACT tended to have higher average scores than students who did not. Average composite scores by state are shown with the quartile values for students who did and did not complete the core curriculum. Recommendations to improve the performance of South Carolina's students center on taking college preparatory courses early in their high school years. (Contains 12 tables.) (SLD)

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DATA UPDATE

South Carolina Department of Education

August 1998

ED 433 363

1998 Results of the American College Test (ACT)

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TM030052

DATA

South Carolina Department of Education
Divisions of Development and Education Initiatives/Offices of

1998 Results of the

1286
94, 190, 280
9821
864

The American College Test (ACT) is taken by high school students seeking college admission. The ACT predicts freshman college success; students with higher scores on the ACT usually make higher grades in college. Colleges use tests such as the ACT or the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) along with other information to make admissions decisions.

The ACT includes four tests:

- ⇒ English Test -- 75 questions/45 minutes
- ⇒ Mathematics Test -- 60 questions/60 minutes
- ⇒ Reading Test -- 40 questions/ 35 minutes
- ⇒ Science Reasoning Test -- 40 questions/35 minutes

(Total testing time: 2 hours, 55 minutes)

Results are reported for the four tests and a composite score. The score scale for each ACT subject area, and the composite, is between 1-36. In 1998, the average composite score of the 995,039 graduating seniors in the nation who took the ACT was 21.0; in South Carolina, for the 5,385 students who took the ACT, the average composite score was 19.0.

ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite
South Carolina and the Nation
1997-98

| Reference Group | Number of Students | English | Math | Reading | Science Reasoning | Composite |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------|------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| South Carolina | 5,385 | 18.4 | 18.8 | 19.4 | 19.0 | 19.0 |
| Nation | 995,039 | 20.4 | 20.8 | 21.4 | 21.1 | 21.0 |

Five-year trend data for the graduating seniors who took the ACT in the Nation and in South Carolina are presented on the next page.

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite South Carolina and the Nation 1993-94 to 1997-98 | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------|------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| Year | # of Students | English | Math | Reading | Science Reasoning | Composite |
| SOUTH CAROLINA | | | | | | |
| 1993-94 | 3,826 | 18.6 | 18.8 | 19.3 | 19.1 | 19.1 |
| 1994-95 | 5,233 | 18.6 | 18.8 | 19.3 | 19.2 | 19.1 |
| 1995-96 | 4,648 | 18.5 | 18.8 | 19.4 | 19.2 | 19.1 |
| 1996-97 | 4,994 | 18.1 | 18.9 | 19.1 | 19.0 | 18.9 |
| 1997-98 | 5,385 | 18.4 | 18.8 | 19.4 | 19.0 | 19.0 |
| NATION | | | | | | |
| 1993-94 | 891,714 | 20.3 | 20.2 | 21.2 | 20.9 | 20.8 |
| 1994-95 | 945,369 | 20.2 | 20.2 | 21.3 | 21.0 | 20.8 |
| 1995-96 | 924,663 | 20.3 | 20.2 | 21.3 | 21.1 | 20.9 |
| 1996-97 | 959,301 | 20.3 | 20.6 | 21.3 | 21.1 | 21.0 |
| 1997-98 | 995,039 | 20.4 | 20.8 | 21.4 | 21.1 | 21.0 |

The next two tables show 1998 ACT data by gender and ethnicity. In South Carolina, the average composite score was higher (19.1%) for females than for males (18.9%). Female students scored higher on English and Reading, and male students scored higher on Mathematics and Science Reasoning (see the table below). For all tests and the composite, the average scores for white students were higher than for African-American students (see the table on page 3).

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Gender South Carolina and the Nation 1998 | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------|------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| Gender | # of Students | English | Math | Reading | Science Reasoning | Composite |
| SOUTH CAROLINA | | | | | | |
| Males | 1,933 | 17.6 | 19.3 | 18.9 | 19.4 | 18.9 |
| Females | 3,452 | 18.8 | 18.6 | 19.7 | 18.8 | 19.1 |
| NATION | | | | | | |
| Males | 430,724 | 19.9 | 21.5 | 21.1 | 21.8 | 21.2 |
| Females | 564,315 | 20.8 | 20.2 | 21.6 | 20.6 | 20.9 |

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Ethnicity South Carolina and the Nation 1998 | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------|------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| Ethnicity | # of Students | English | Math | Reading | Science Reasoning | Composite |
| SOUTH CAROLINA | | | | | | |
| African Am. | 1,954 | 15.3 | 16.4 | 16.4 | 16.5 | 16.3 |
| White | 2,798 | 20.4 | 20.3 | 21.3 | 20.6 | 20.8 |
| NATION | | | | | | |
| African Am. | 100,537 | 16.4 | 16.9 | 17.2 | 17.3 | 17.1 |
| White | 707,496 | 21.2 | 21.4 | 22.1 | 21.8 | 21.7 |

According to the ACT, "The academic preparation a student receives in high school correlates with success in college. ACT research indicates that students who prepare academically by taking a core high school program consistently score higher on the ACT assessment than those who do not. These same students also earn better grades in college. These facts underscore the value of a strong basic program of study in high school."*

ACT reports average scores for students taking the "core or more" and taking "less than the core." ACT defines this coursework as follows.

Core or More*

A core or more program is defined as a typical college preparatory program including:

- ⇒ **English (four years or more)**
One-year credit each for English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12
- ⇒ **Mathematics (three years or more)**
One-year credit each for Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry
One half-year credit each for Trigonometry, Calculus (not Pre-Calculus), other Math courses beyond Algebra II, Computer Math/Computer Science
- ⇒ **Social Studies (three years or more)**
One-year credit each for American History, World History, American Government
One half-year credit each for Economics, Geography, Psychology, other History (European, State, etc.)

* "ACT Assessment 1997 Results, Summary Report, South Carolina," published by The American College Testing Program.

⇒ **Natural Sciences (three years or more)**
 One-year credit each for General/Physical/Earth Science, Biology,
 Chemistry, Physics

Less Than Core

A less-than-core program refers to any high school program consisting of fewer courses than those included in "core or more."

The average ACT scores in English, Mathematics, Reading, Science Reasoning and the Composite for 1998 seniors who completed a core curriculum and for those who did not are shown in the following two tables. In general, students who completed core coursework tended to have higher average scores than students who did not.

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Coursework | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|------|------|------|------|----------------|------|------|------|------|
| - South Carolina and the Nation | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1998 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reference Group | Core or More | | | | | Less Than Core | | | | |
| | E | M | R | SR | C | E | M | R | SR | C |
| South Carolina | 19.2 | 19.6 | 20.2 | 19.7 | 19.8 | 16.0 | 16.8 | 17.2 | 17.3 | 16.9 |
| Nation | 21.5 | 22.0 | 22.4 | 22.0 | 22.1 | 18.6 | 18.9 | 19.7 | 19.6 | 19.3 |

E=English, M=Mathematics, R=Reading, SR =Science Reasoning, C=Composite

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|------|------|------|------|----------------|------|------|------|------|
| by Coursework and by Ethnicity | | | | | | | | | | |
| South Carolina | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1998 | | | | | | | | | | |
| South Carolina Reference Group | Core or More | | | | | Less Than Core | | | | |
| | E | M | R | SR | C | E | M | R | SR | C |
| African Am. | 16.2 | 17.2 | 17.3 | 17.2 | 17.1 | 13.8 | 15.1 | 14.9 | 15.5 | 14.9 |
| White | 20.9 | 20.9 | 21.8 | 21.0 | 21.3 | 18.5 | 18.4 | 19.7 | 19.1 | 19.1 |

E=English, M=Mathematics, R=Reading, SR =Science Reasoning, C=Composite

No score data are provided by The American College Testing Program for the reference group "other" (American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic graduates) since fewer than 500 took the ACT in South Carolina.

This set of tables compares average ACT scores for South Carolina, the region and the nation.

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Coursework South Carolina, SACS Region* and Nation - 1998 | | | | | |
|---|---------|------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| Reference Group | English | Math | Reading | Science Reasoning | Composite |
| South Carolina | 18.4 | 18.8 | 19.4 | 19.0 | 19.0 |
| Region | 19.6 | 19.6 | 20.4 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| Nation | 20.4 | 20.8 | 21.4 | 21.1 | 21.0 |

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Coursework South Carolina, SACS Region* and Nation - 1998 | | | | | |
|---|---------|------|---------|-------------------|-----------|
| Core or More - 4,3,3,3 and Above | | | | | |
| Reference Group | English | Math | Reading | Science Reasoning | Composite |
| South Carolina | 19.2 | 19.6 | 20.2 | 19.7 | 19.8 |
| Region | 20.7 | 20.6 | 21.4 | 20.8 | 21.0 |
| Nation | 21.5 | 22.0 | 22.4 | 22.0 | 22.1 |

4,3,3,3 = 4 years of English and 3 years each of Mathematics, Social Studies and Natural Sciences

| ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Coursework South Carolina, SACS Region* and Nation - 1998 | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|------|------|------|------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Less than Core - In Between and 4,2,2,2 and Below | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reference Group | In Between | | | | | 4,2,2,2 and below | | | | |
| | E | M | R | SR | C | E | M | R | SR | C |
| South Carolina | 16.7 | 17.2 | 17.7 | 17.6 | 17.4 | 15.1 | 16.2 | 16.3 | 16.7 | 16.2 |
| Region | 17.9 | 17.7 | 18.7 | 18.6 | 18.4 | 15.9 | 16.5 | 17.1 | 17.3 | 16.8 |
| Nation | 19.1 | 19.2 | 20.1 | 20.0 | 19.7 | 17.2 | 17.9 | 18.5 | 18.8 | 18.2 |

E=English, M=Mathematics, R=Reading, SR =Science Reasoning, C=Composite

In Between = Any pattern of courses less than "4,3,3,3 and above" and more than "4,2,2,2 and below"

4,2,2,2 = 4 years of English and 2 years each of Mathematics, Social Studies and Natural Sciences

*Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. States included in SACS: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

The American College Testing Program has published ACT average composite scores by state for the 1998 ACT-tested graduates. The listing was published with the following caution: "The accompanying list of average scores should not be interpreted as providing grounds for an explicit or implicit ranking of the various states' education systems. Students who take the ACT Assessment are self-selected and do not represent the entire student population."**

** "Cautions on the Use of State Aggregate ACT Scores," published by The American College Testing Program.

The table below presents the relationship between average ACT scores and annual family income levels.

| ACT Average Composite Scores by Annual Family Income 1998 | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Reference Group | Less than \$18,000 | | \$18,000 - \$35,999 | | \$36,000 or More | |
| | Number | Composite | Number | Composite | Number | Composite |
| South Carolina | | | | | | |
| Total Group | 716 | 16.7 | 1,324 | 17.9 | 2,316 | 20.5 |
| Core | 472 | 17.5 | 910 | 18.7 | 1,835 | 21.0 |
| Less than Core | 237 | 15.2 | 407 | 15.9 | 468 | 18.6 |
| Nation | | | | | | |
| Total Group | 92,562 | 18.5 | 217,121 | 20.0 | 530,981 | 22.0 |
| Core | 48,614 | 19.5 | 126,593 | 21.0 | 354,544 | 22.8 |
| Less than Core | 42,584 | 17.3 | 88,368 | 18.5 | 172,714 | 20.2 |

The table below compares percentages of students choosing selected academic majors in 1994, 1996, and 1998.

| Percentages Choosing Selected Majors By Graduation Year and Gender | | | | | | |
|---|------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Men | | Women | | Total | |
| | SC | Nation | SC | Nation | SC | Nation |
| Business | | | | | | |
| 1994 | 11 | 14 | 10 | 13 | 11 | 13 |
| 1996 | 13 | 14 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 13 |
| 1998 | 15 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 12 |
| Computer/Information | | | | | | |
| 1994 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 1996 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| 1998 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| Education | | | | | | |
| 1994 | 7 | 5 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 9 |
| 1996 | 6 | 5 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 9 |
| 1998 | 6 | 5 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 10 |
| Engineering | | | | | | |
| 1994 | 20 | 17 | 5 | 3 | 11 | 9 |
| 1996 | 21 | 17 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 9 |
| 1998 | 20 | 17 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 9 |
| Health Profession | | | | | | |
| 1994 | 12 | 13 | 30 | 26 | 23 | 20 |
| 1996 | 11 | 13 | 31 | 27 | 24 | 21 |
| 1998 | 9 | 11 | 28 | 26 | 22 | 20 |

ACT Average Composite Scores by State 1998 ACT-Tested Graduates

| State | Average Composite Score | Core Completers | | | | Non-Core Completers | | | | No Course Data |
|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| | | Total | | % of Total Tested* | | Total | | % of Total Tested* | | |
| | | % of Graduates Tested* | Quartile Values 25th 50th 75th | % of Total Tested* | Quartile Values 25th 50th 75th | % of Total Tested* | Quartile Values 25th 50th 75th | % of Total Tested* | Quartile Values 25th 50th 75th | |
| Alabama | 20.1 | 64 | 16.7 19.6 23.2 | 65 | 18.1 21.0 24.4 | 33 | 14.9 17.2 19.8 | 2 | | |
| Alaska | 21.3 | 37 | 17.2 21.5 25.2 | 43 | 21.0 24.1 27.3 | 25 | 17.6 20.8 23.9 | 32 | | |
| Arizona | 21.4 | 29 | 17.9 21.2 24.7 | 70 | 18.8 22.0 25.3 | 27 | 16.4 19.2 22.6 | 3 | | |
| Arkansas | 20.4 | 68 | 16.9 19.9 23.6 | 75 | 17.8 20.8 24.2 | 20 | 14.9 17.2 20.3 | 5 | | |
| California | 21.2 | 12 | 17.5 21.0 24.7 | 65 | 18.5 22.0 25.5 | 31 | 15.8 18.8 22.4 | 4 | | |
| Colorado | 21.6 | 63 | 18.2 21.4 24.7 | 58 | 19.6 22.6 25.7 | 39 | 16.7 19.5 22.8 | 3 | | |
| Connecticut | 21.8 | 3 | 18.3 21.8 25.2 | 40 | 19.2 22.3 25.5 | 41 | 17.6 21.2 24.8 | 20 | | |
| Delaware | 21.3 | 4 | 17.5 20.9 24.9 | 67 | 18.8 21.9 25.5 | 31 | 16.0 18.2 22.7 | 2 | | |
| Washington DC | 17.6 | 10 | 14.5 16.4 19.5 | 66 | 14.6 16.5 19.8 | 28 | 14.3 16.0 18.8 | 7 | | |
| Florida | 20.8 | 39 | 17.2 20.4 24.0 | 71 | 18.3 21.4 24.9 | 24 | 15.1 17.6 20.7 | 5 | | |
| Georgia | 20.2 | 16 | 16.6 19.8 23.4 | 76 | 17.4 20.5 24.1 | 19 | 14.6 16.9 20.1 | 5 | | |
| Hawaii | 21.6 | 18 | 17.7 21.4 25.2 | 68 | 18.7 22.2 25.8 | 26 | 15.8 18.9 23.3 | 6 | | |
| Idaho | 21.5 | 63 | 18.1 21.1 24.5 | 50 | 19.5 22.5 25.9 | 47 | 17.0 19.6 22.9 | 3 | | |
| Illinois | 21.4 | 69 | 17.6 21.0 24.9 | 52 | 19.5 22.8 26.2 | 46 | 16.2 19.1 22.7 | 2 | | |
| Indiana | 21.4 | 20 | 17.9 21.1 24.6 | 60 | 19.2 22.4 25.8 | 35 | 16.3 19.0 22.0 | 5 | | |
| Iowa | 22.1 | 65 | 18.9 21.9 25.2 | 68 | 20.1 23.0 26.1 | 31 | 17.0 19.5 22.5 | 2 | | |
| Kansas | 21.7 | 74 | 18.2 21.4 25.0 | 55 | 20.0 23.1 26.3 | 43 | 16.7 19.4 22.5 | 2 | | |
| Kentucky | 20.2 | 67 | 16.8 19.7 23.2 | 43 | 17.8 20.7 24.2 | 55 | 16.2 19.0 22.4 | 2 | | |
| Louisiana | 19.5 | 76 | 16.0 19.0 22.4 | 69 | 17.2 20.0 23.5 | 28 | 14.4 16.4 19.0 | 3 | | |
| Maine | 22.0 | 4 | 18.7 22.0 25.0 | 38 | 19.9 22.9 25.2 | 51 | 18.1 21.7 24.7 | 11 | | |
| Maryland | 20.9 | 10 | 17.0 20.6 24.4 | 71 | 17.6 21.1 24.8 | 24 | 15.7 18.8 23.0 | 5 | | |
| Massachusetts | 21.6 | 5 | 18.2 21.4 25.0 | 45 | 18.6 21.7 25.2 | 41 | 17.8 21.2 24.8 | 13 | | |
| Michigan | 21.3 | 68 | 17.8 21.0 24.5 | 58 | 19.2 22.4 25.8 | 40 | 16.5 19.2 22.3 | 2 | | |
| Minnesota | 22.2 | 63 | 18.9 21.9 25.3 | 71 | 19.7 22.6 25.8 | 26 | 17.2 19.9 23.2 | 3 | | |
| Mississippi | 18.7 | 81 | 15.3 17.9 21.4 | 62 | 16.3 19.2 23.0 | 36 | 14.2 16.1 18.5 | 2 | | |
| Missouri | 21.5 | 66 | 18.0 21.1 24.8 | 61 | 19.4 22.5 26.0 | 36 | 16.3 18.9 22.1 | 3 | | |

* Totals for graduating seniors were obtained from *Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity 1996-2012*, Copyright © by Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, February, 1998.

**ACT Average Composite Scores by State
1998 ACT-Tested Graduates**

| State | Average Composite Score | Core Completers | | | | | Non-Core Completers | | | | | No Course Data | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| | | Total % of Graduates Tested* | Quartile Values | | | % of Total Tested* | Quartile Values | | | Percent of Total Tested* | | | | | | | |
| | | | 25th | 50th | 75th | | 25th | 50th | 75th | | | | | | | | |
| Montana | 21.9 | 56 | 18.7 | 21.7 | 25.0 | 20.2 | 23.0 | 26.2 | 58 | 20.2 | 23.0 | 26.2 | 40 | 17.1 | 19.7 | 22.8 | 2 |
| Nebraska | 21.8 | 71 | 18.4 | 21.5 | 25.0 | 19.6 | 22.5 | 25.8 | 67 | 19.6 | 22.5 | 25.8 | 32 | 16.6 | 19.3 | 22.4 | 2 |
| Nevada | 21.4 | 43 | 18.0 | 21.1 | 24.5 | 19.1 | 22.0 | 25.2 | 64 | 19.1 | 22.0 | 25.2 | 33 | 16.4 | 19.3 | 22.5 | 3 |
| New Hampshire | 22.5 | 4 | 18.9 | 22.2 | 25.8 | 20.0 | 22.8 | 25.9 | 51 | 20.0 | 22.8 | 25.9 | 34 | 17.9 | 21.3 | 26.0 | 15 |
| New Jersey | 20.7 | 4 | 17.3 | 20.2 | 23.9 | 18.1 | 21.0 | 24.3 | 36 | 18.1 | 21.0 | 24.3 | 57 | 17.0 | 19.8 | 23.4 | 7 |
| New Mexico | 20.1 | 65 | 16.6 | 19.6 | 23.3 | 17.9 | 21.0 | 24.6 | 53 | 17.9 | 21.0 | 24.6 | 44 | 15.4 | 18.1 | 21.4 | 3 |
| New York | 22.0 | 15 | 18.5 | 22.0 | 25.4 | 20.2 | 23.3 | 26.4 | 64 | 20.2 | 23.3 | 26.4 | 29 | 16.2 | 18.9 | 22.2 | 7 |
| North Carolina | 19.4 | 12 | 15.7 | 18.6 | 22.4 | 16.7 | 19.7 | 23.5 | 65 | 16.7 | 19.7 | 23.5 | 31 | 14.4 | 16.7 | 19.7 | 4 |
| North Dakota | 21.4 | 78 | 18.1 | 21.1 | 24.3 | 19.7 | 22.4 | 25.4 | 64 | 19.7 | 22.4 | 25.4 | 34 | 16.3 | 18.7 | 21.5 | 3 |
| Ohio | 21.4 | 60 | 18.0 | 21.1 | 24.5 | 19.4 | 22.3 | 25.6 | 63 | 19.4 | 22.3 | 25.6 | 35 | 16.4 | 18.9 | 22.0 | 2 |
| Oklahoma | 20.5 | 69 | 17.1 | 20.1 | 23.6 | 18.5 | 21.6 | 25.0 | 53 | 18.5 | 21.6 | 25.0 | 44 | 15.9 | 18.5 | 21.6 | 4 |
| Oregon | 22.7 | 12 | 19.4 | 22.6 | 26.0 | 20.6 | 23.7 | 27.0 | 60 | 20.6 | 23.7 | 27.0 | 37 | 17.8 | 20.7 | 24.0 | 3 |
| Pennsylvania | 21.4 | 7 | 17.9 | 21.1 | 24.8 | 18.9 | 22.0 | 25.4 | 68 | 18.9 | 22.0 | 25.4 | 27 | 16.1 | 19.2 | 23.0 | 5 |
| Rhode Island | 22.2 | 2 | 18.9 | 22.2 | 25.2 | 19.5 | 22.4 | 25.4 | 45 | 19.5 | 22.4 | 25.4 | 47 | 18.0 | 22.1 | 25.0 | 8 |
| South Carolina | 19.0 | 14 | 15.4 | 18.3 | 22.0 | 16.3 | 19.2 | 22.8 | 70 | 16.3 | 19.2 | 22.8 | 26 | 13.9 | 16.0 | 19.0 | 5 |
| South Dakota | 21.4 | 70 | 18.2 | 21.1 | 24.3 | 19.2 | 22.0 | 25.1 | 65 | 19.2 | 22.0 | 25.1 | 33 | 16.5 | 19.4 | 22.4 | 2 |
| Tennessee | 19.8 | 77 | 16.2 | 19.2 | 22.9 | 17.4 | 20.4 | 24.0 | 63 | 17.4 | 20.4 | 24.0 | 35 | 14.7 | 17.2 | 20.4 | 2 |
| Texas | 20.3 | 32 | 16.9 | 19.9 | 23.4 | 18.0 | 20.9 | 24.3 | 69 | 18.0 | 20.9 | 24.3 | 28 | 15.1 | 17.4 | 20.4 | 3 |
| Utah | 21.6 | 68 | 18.2 | 21.3 | 24.8 | 19.4 | 22.4 | 25.7 | 45 | 19.4 | 22.4 | 25.7 | 53 | 17.5 | 20.3 | 23.8 | 2 |
| Vermont | 22.0 | 7 | 18.8 | 22.0 | 25.0 | 20.0 | 22.7 | 25.1 | 44 | 20.0 | 22.7 | 25.1 | 47 | 17.8 | 21.0 | 25.0 | 9 |
| Virginia | 20.7 | 6 | 17.2 | 20.4 | 23.9 | 18.1 | 21.2 | 24.6 | 66 | 18.1 | 21.2 | 24.6 | 26 | 15.6 | 18.4 | 22.0 | 7 |
| Washington | 22.6 | 18 | 19.2 | 22.4 | 25.8 | 20.3 | 23.3 | 26.5 | 57 | 20.3 | 23.3 | 26.5 | 41 | 18.1 | 21.1 | 24.6 | 2 |
| West Virginia | 20.1 | 60 | 16.9 | 19.6 | 22.8 | 18.3 | 20.9 | 24.0 | 45 | 18.3 | 20.9 | 24.0 | 53 | 16.1 | 18.6 | 21.7 | 2 |
| Wisconsin | 22.3 | 66 | 19.1 | 22.1 | 25.3 | 20.0 | 22.8 | 26.0 | 62 | 20.0 | 22.8 | 26.0 | 36 | 17.7 | 20.7 | 23.9 | 2 |
| Wyoming | 21.4 | 65 | 18.2 | 21.1 | 24.4 | 19.5 | 22.3 | 25.4 | 55 | 19.5 | 22.3 | 25.4 | 43 | 17.0 | 19.6 | 22.7 | 2 |
| National | 21.0 | 37 | 17.5 | 20.7 | 24.3 | 18.7 | 21.9 | 25.3 | 61 | 18.7 | 21.9 | 25.3 | 36 | 16.0 | 18.7 | 22.1 | 3 |

* Totals for graduating seniors were obtained from *Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity 1996-2012*, Copyright © by Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, February, 1998.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Students planning to attend four-year higher education institutions must take rigorous courses in the recommended subject areas (core) and earn at least 24 units of credit before graduating from high school. Students need to take the PLAN (pre-ACT) in 10th grade to help prepare for taking the ACT in 11th and 12th grades.
2. Students need to work with teachers in analyzing their PLAN test results to identify strong and weak areas, and focus on improving skills in those identified weaker areas to be better prepared in taking the ACT.
3. Local school districts and schools need to review, analyze and study their PLAN test results. Efforts need to focus on curriculum alignment and improving instruction in the identified weaker areas to better prepare students for taking the ACT.
4. Statewide, schools need to pay particular attention to aligning curriculum and improving instruction in critical reading, including comprehension, vocabulary, reasoning in literature, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. Attention needs to focus on punctuation, sentence structure, grammar and usage, organization, style and strategy as they relate to reading and writing skills.
5. In addition, schools need to focus attention on content standards and skills in algebra I and II; geometry; trigonometry, calculus, physical science, biology, chemistry, physics and the Tech-Prep applied academic courses. The Math/Science “HUBS” can provide technical assistance to schools to strengthen mathematics and science teaching. Local schools and “HUBS” need to partner in maximizing the staff and resources of the “HUBS.”
6. The South Carolina Department of Education has begun identifying curriculum alignment teams and developing a self-study curriculum checklist for middle and high schools to use in preparing for curriculum alignment team visits. These teams will determine the extent to which courses are rigorous, the implementation of the grade-by-grade and end-of-course standards, the use of the curriculum frameworks, the integration of technology into the curriculum and the knowledge and skills tested on the ACT. These teams will work with faculties to ensure the curriculum is aligned to the new standards and assessment.
7. Students need to begin taking college-preparation courses early in their high school years. For some students those courses could begin in middle school. By beginning early, students can be better prepared for college admissions tests (ACT) and college-level curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. Parents and educators must develop high student expectations and standards relative to student learning. Parents/educators should insist that students take the most challenging and rigorous courses in high school to prepare for higher education institutions. Parents must insist that their children have access to rigorous courses in high school, and schools must offer a curriculum that reflects rigor and high standards.
9. Schools need to ensure that all curriculum areas including the Tech-Prep applied academic courses are rigorous and emphasize application of knowledge and technology.
10. For several years, the South Carolina Department of Education has published comparisons between course-taking patterns of students and their ACT scores. Students need to be enrolled in those core courses identified by ACT (4 years of English; 3 or more years of mathematics, including algebra I and II; geometry, trigonometry, and calculus; 3 or more years of social sciences, including world/American/European history, government/economics, geography; 3 or more years of natural sciences, including physical/earth science, biology, chemistry and physics).
11. Four-year higher education institutions in South Carolina need to continue reviewing and raising admissions standards, admitting those students who have earned at least 24 or more units in high school and who have at least a "C" average.
12. Students need to know there are financial rewards for those achieving academic excellence. Students planning to attend a four-year higher education institution in South Carolina can earn a \$2,000 LIFE Scholarship by graduating from high school with a "B" average and scoring 1000 or better on the SAT or 21 or more on the ACT. Students attending a two-year higher education institution can earn a \$1,000 LIFE Scholarship.



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