



AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Information Services

2024 ACT Test Summary

November 2024

*Presented by: Corey Haugen
Director of Information Services*



AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INSPIRE • EMPOWER • ACCELERATE

AUSTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR MISSION

(Our Core Purpose)

Inspire. Empower. Accelerate.

OUR VISION

(What We Intend to Create)

Preparing all learners to make a difference in the world.

Our Core Values

(Drivers of Our Words and Actions)

- Responsible: Demonstrates accountability to self and others
- Resilient: Develops perseverance and self-confidence
- Learner: Challenges self to think critically
- Communicator: Listens actively and shares learning and experiences
- Contributor: Engages as a productive member of the community and global society

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

(Drivers of Our Continuous Improvement)

1. Support and resources to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment
2. Packer Profile for all learners
3. District-wide multi-tiered systems of support for all learners
4. Excellence in resource management



STUDENTS

I am supported and challenged in my learning and believe I will be successful

- Teachers and all staff are approachable, listen and respond to my needs
- My teachers have time to talk through and help answer questions or help solve problems I have
- I am trusted to make good choices, be engaged in my learning, and held accountable but not overwhelmed

I feel that school is safe and that school is challenging and fun

- I am heard and respected for who I am by school staff and students
- The school and my interactions with students and staff are safe, positive and inclusive
- I enjoy coming to school every day and have time to be with friends during school
- I understand what is expected from me at school
- I am supported in my mental health needs

I am an engaged learner at school and in our community

- I have a voice and choice in how and what I learn
- My learning is hands-on, meaningful, challenging and helps me prepare for my future
- My teachers like me and believe in me
- I have teachers and staff that work with me in a way that benefits all students
- I am physically comfortable in the school setting
- This school should be about me not the teachers



FAMILIES

I am part of my child's education and feel welcomed, valued, and respected as a family

- My child is physically and emotionally safe at school
- My child feels a sense of belonging at school, is cared for, and valued
- My student can voice their thoughts and ideas without being discriminated against so they continue to learn

My child enjoys coming to school and is safe, included and respected so they are learning every day

- My child is challenged (not overwhelmed) in learning and development, listened to, and provided choice and voice in learning options
- Teachers know my child well and creates a fun, interactive approach to learning which is responsive to my child's and family needs

I am engaged in a partnership with my child's school so I know what to do to help my child continue to grow and learn

- I will feel welcome, informed and encouraged to collaborate with the teachers and staff at the school to help my child grow
- My child's teachers, my child and myself have open communication about their academic progress, social development and well-being
- District and school information is easy to understand and easily accessible
- My child is taught the life skills necessary to be successful in whatever path they choose after high school



STAFF

I am seen, valued, and respected for who I am and the work I do

- I work in a collaborative not competitive environment that honors the unique strengths of each individual
- I am seen as a professional and given the flexibility and support to provide students what they need to be successful
- I am listened to, heard and know that I matter
- I have a level of freedom and innovation within reasonable parameters

I receive the support and resources to do my job well so I am able to create a healthy and safe learning environment

- I am a valued member of a caring, engaged, and collaborative team
- I receive constructive feedback in regards to my position so I can be the best version of myself
- I am treated with respect and fairness with reasonable expectations for work, performance, time, and employment
- I enjoy my job and have flexibility, satisfaction, and recognition

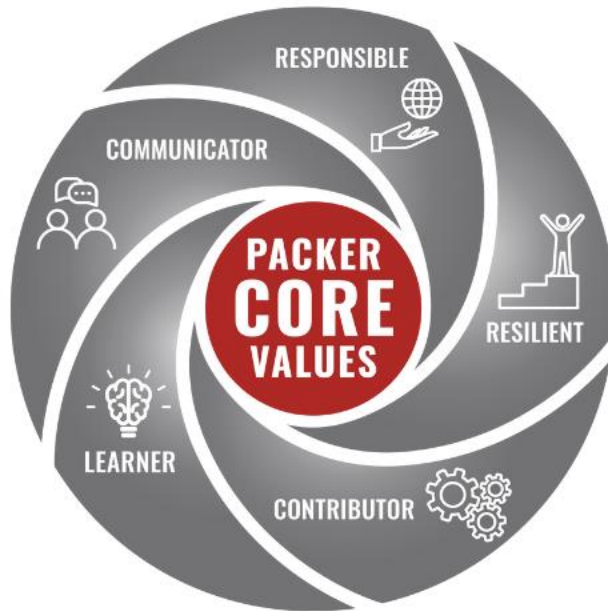
I work in a district that is willing to adapt and change when necessary to best meet the needs of all students

- Diversity, equality, inclusion and equity for everyone
- I have the resources and materials I need in my classroom and for families so they know what they can do to support learning at home
- There is effective communication across the district and community so staff and families have the information they need
- I have adequate training for various aspects of my job



WHAT OUGHT TO BE

The **Desired Daily Experience** sets the foundation of descriptions of the student, family, and staff experiences *if* the strategic plan is successfully implemented in APS.



OUR CORE VALUES

(Drivers of Our Words and Actions)

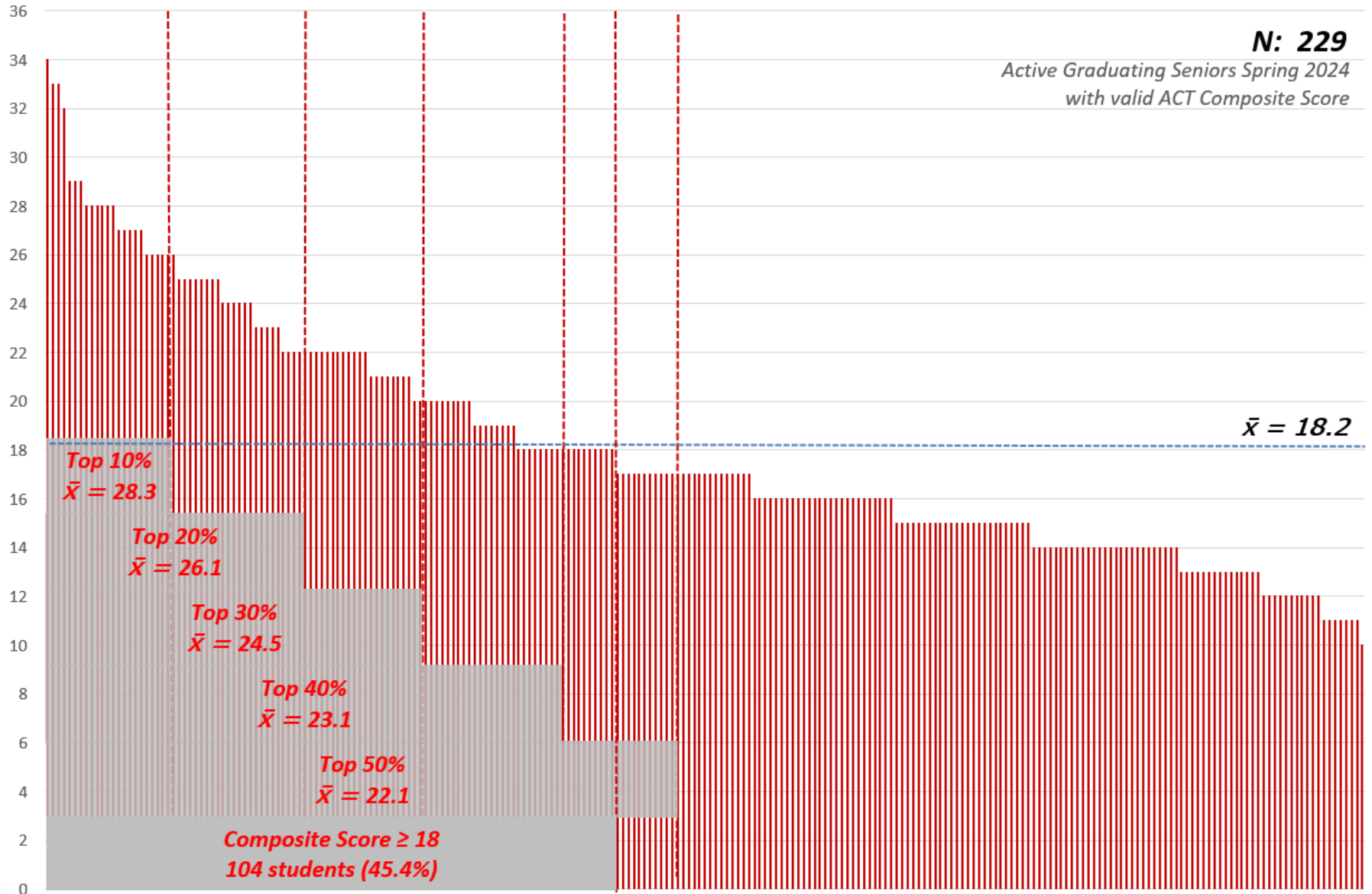
- **Responsible:** Demonstrates accountability to self and others
- **Resilient:** Develops perseverance and self-confidence
- **Learner:** Challenges self to think critically
- **Communicator:** Listens actively and shares learning and experiences
- **Contributor:** Engages as a productive member of the community and global society



ACT Test

- The **ACT**[®] college readiness assessment is a curriculum- and standards-based educational and career planning tool that assesses students' academic readiness for college.
- The **ACT** is the capstone of our College and Career Readiness System. The test uses the same score scale as **EXPLORE/PLAN** and **ACT Aspire**, making the system an effective tool to monitor academic progress and student growth.

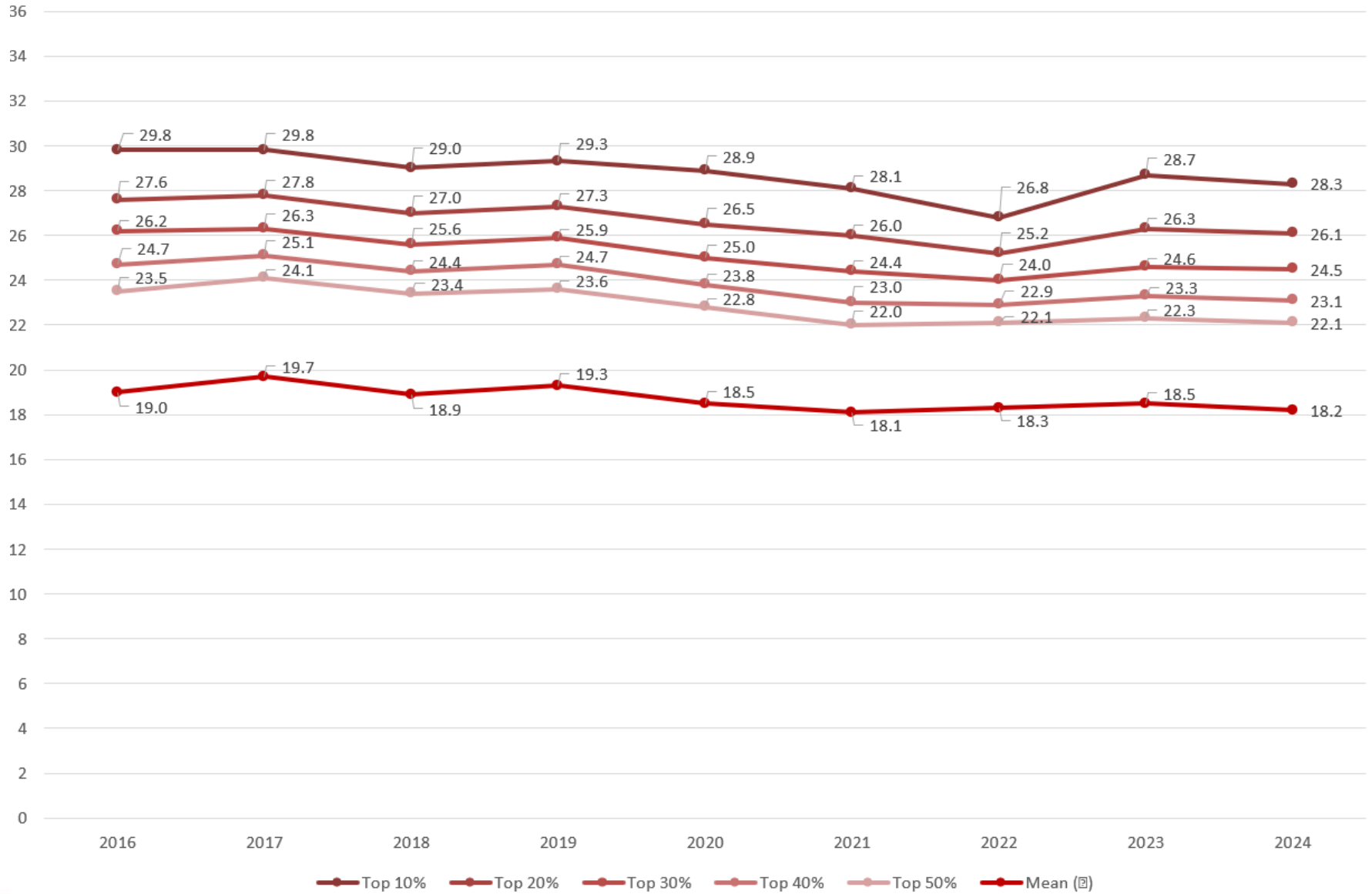
Source: www.act.org



ACT Summary by Year*

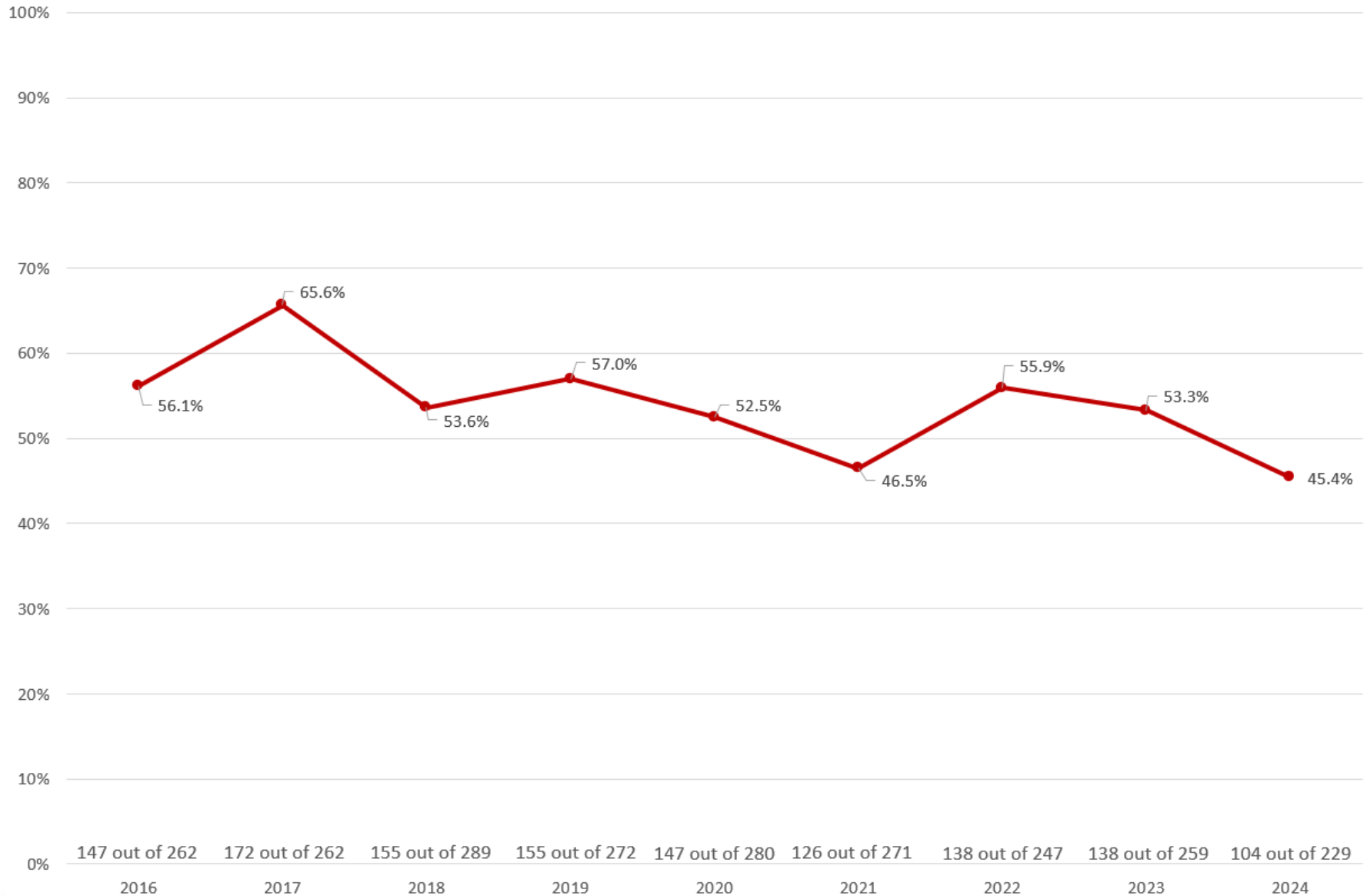
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Top 10%	29.8	29.0	29.3	28.9	28.1	26.8	28.7	28.3
Top 20%	27.8	27.0	27.3	26.5	26.0	25.2	26.3	26.1
Top 30%	26.3	25.6	25.9	25.0	24.4	24.0	24.6	24.5
Top 40%	25.1	24.4	24.7	23.8	23.0	22.9	23.3	23.1
Top 50%	24.1	23.4	23.6	22.8	22.0	22.1	22.3	22.1
Mean ($\bar{X}$)	19.7	18.9	19.3	18.5	18.1	18.3	18.5	18.2
Composite Score ≥ 18	65.6% (172 Students)	53.6% (155 Students)	57.0% (155 Students)	52.5% (147 Students)	46.5% (126 Students)	55.9% (138 Students)	53.3% (138 Students)	45.4% (104 Students)
N	262	289	272	280	271	247	259	229

*Active Graduating Seniors each spring with valid ACT Composite Score

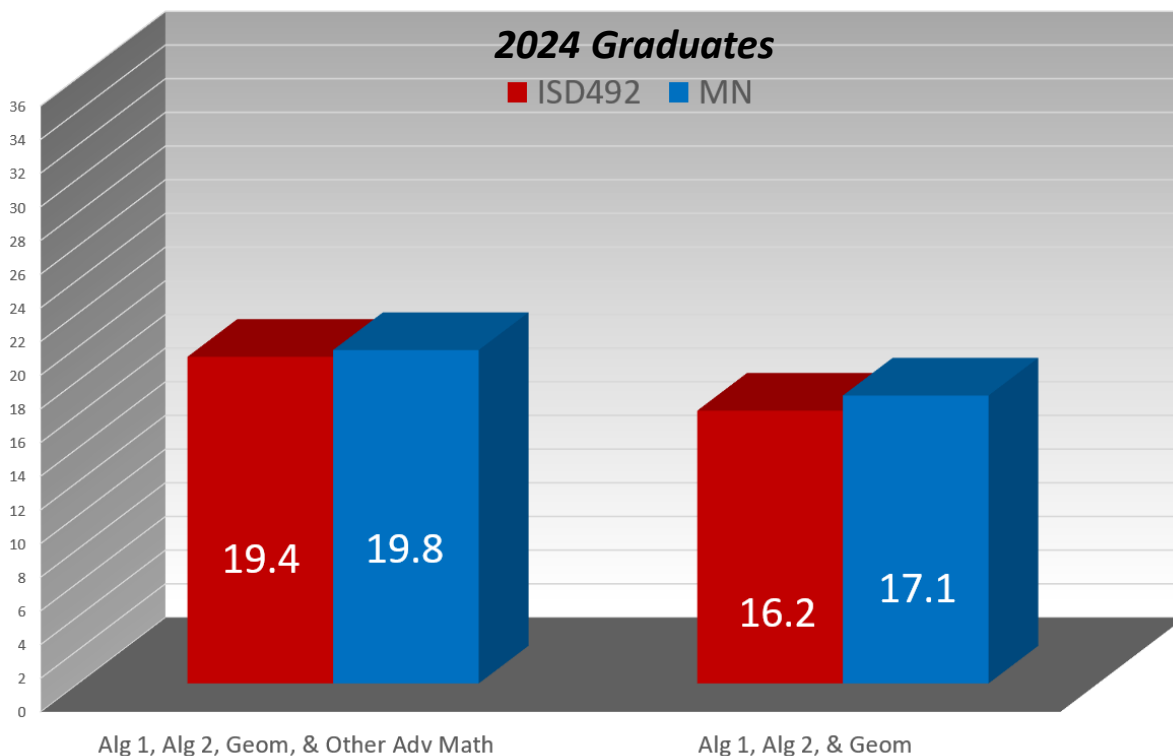


ACT Composite Score Summary

Percentage of Student with Composite Score ≥ 18



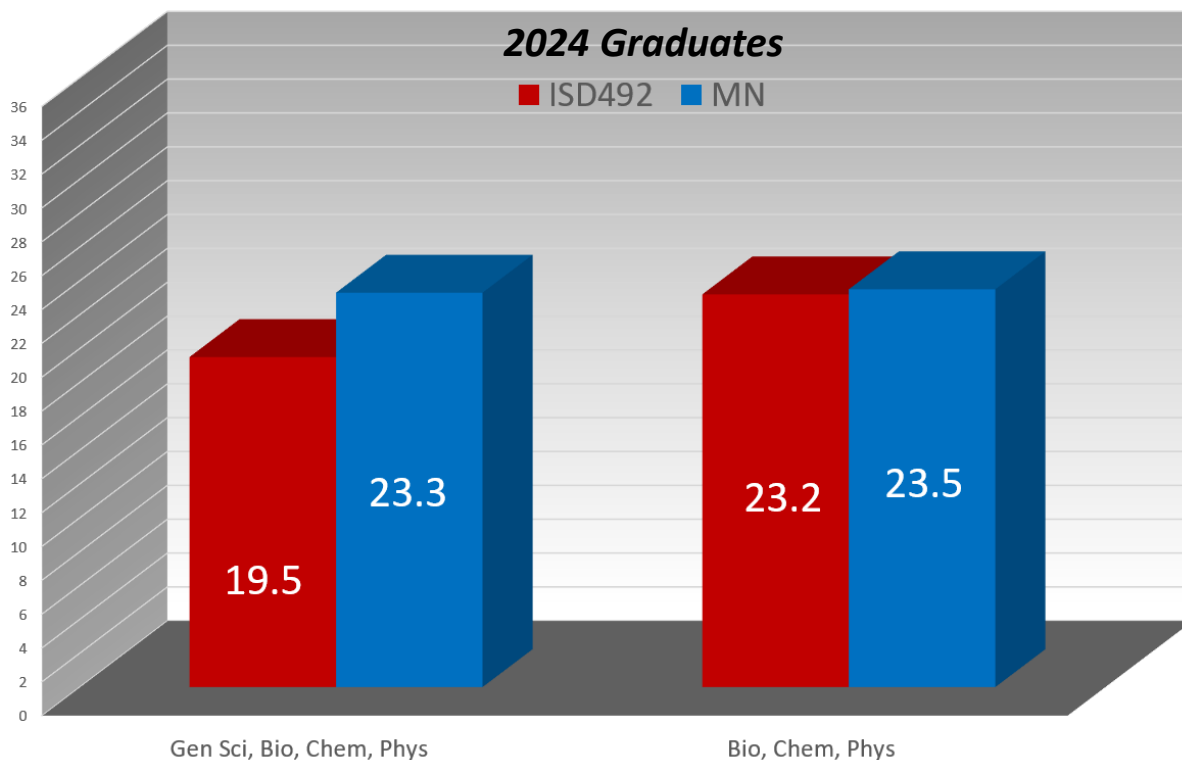
Value Added by Mathematics Courses



Students who take Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry typically achieve higher ACT Mathematics scores than students who take less than three years of mathematics.

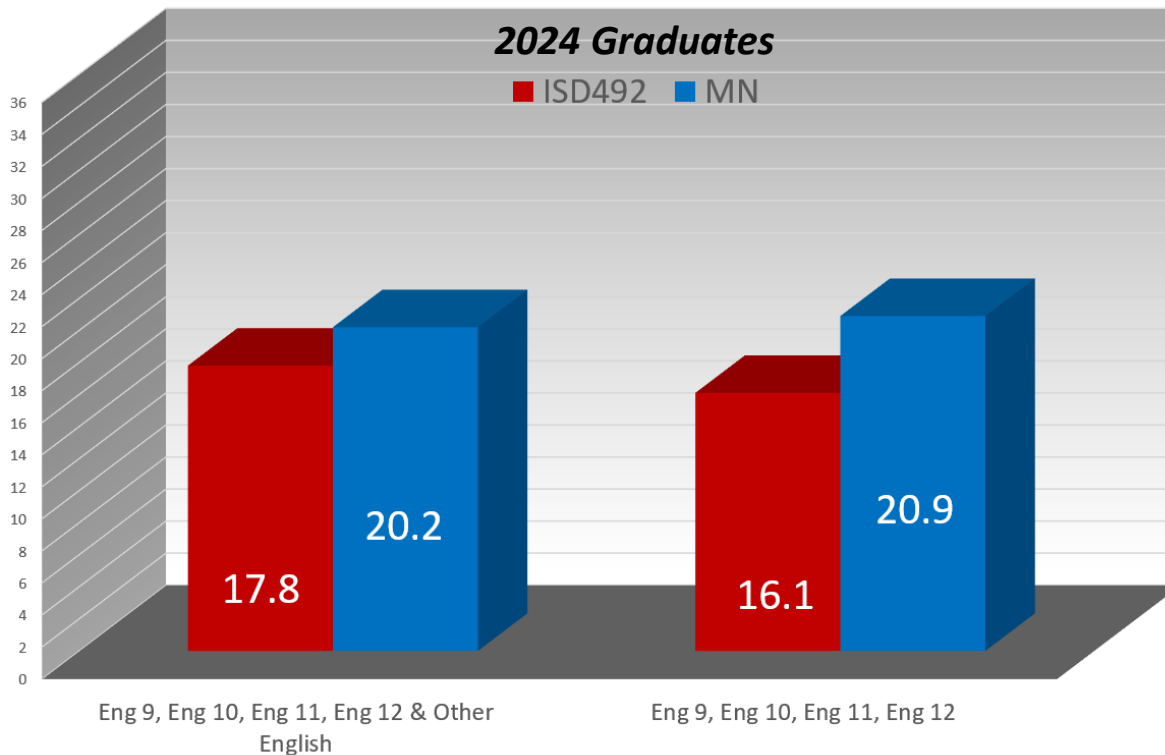
In addition, students who take more advanced mathematics courses substantially increase their ACT Mathematics score.

Value Added by Science Courses



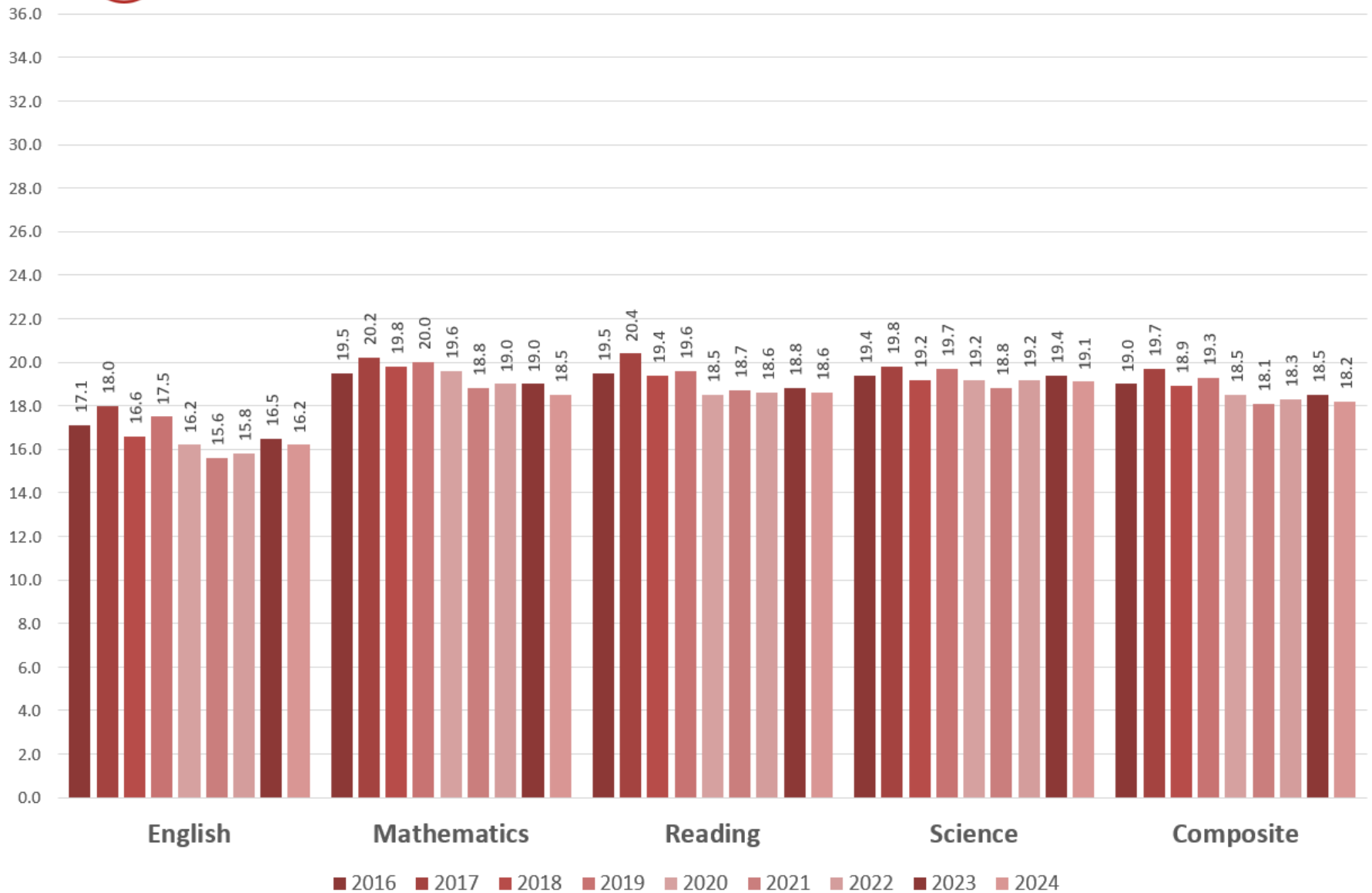
Students taking Biology and Chemistry in combination with Physics typically achieve higher ACT Science scores than students taking less than three years of science courses.

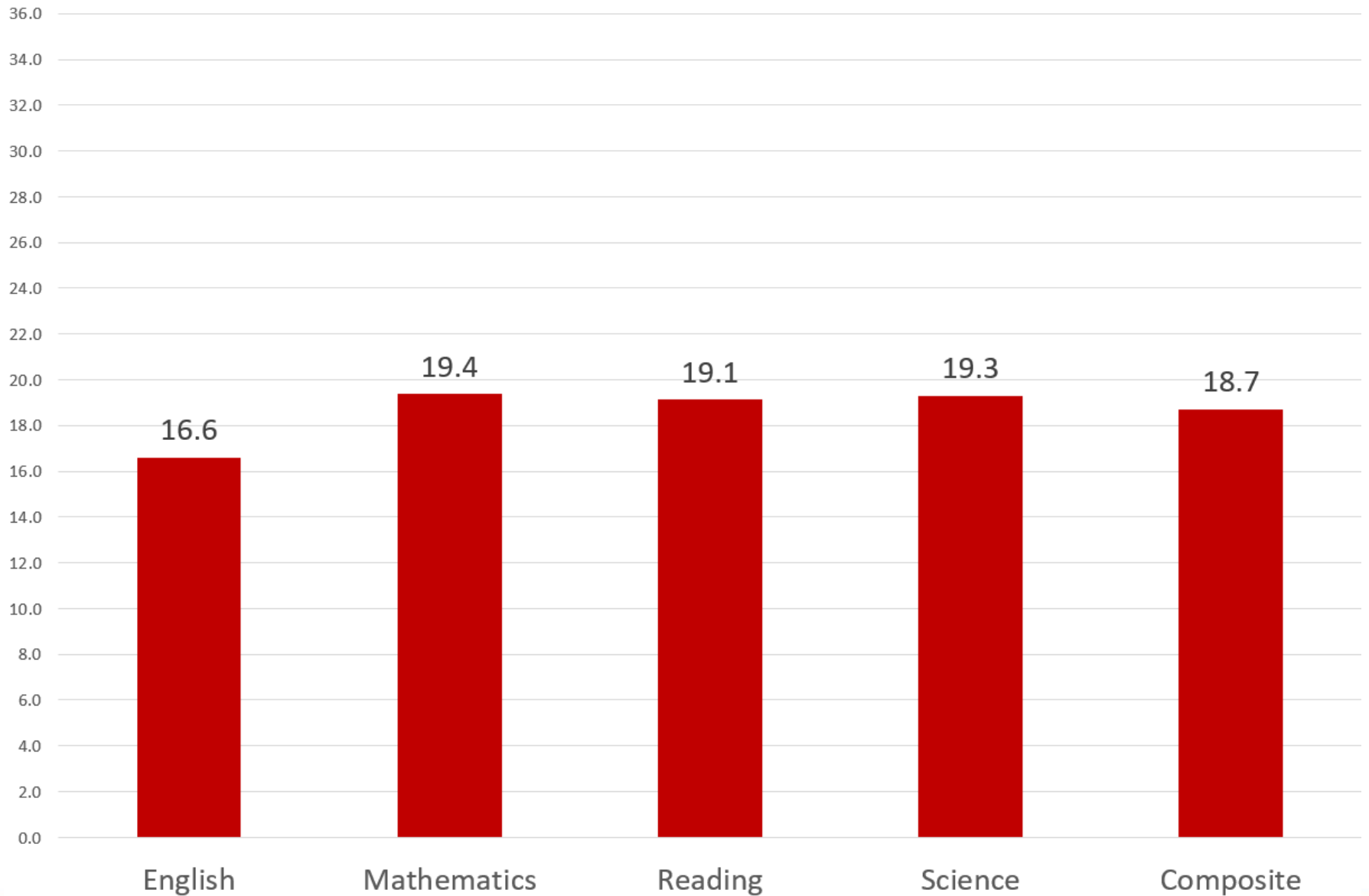
Value Added by English Courses

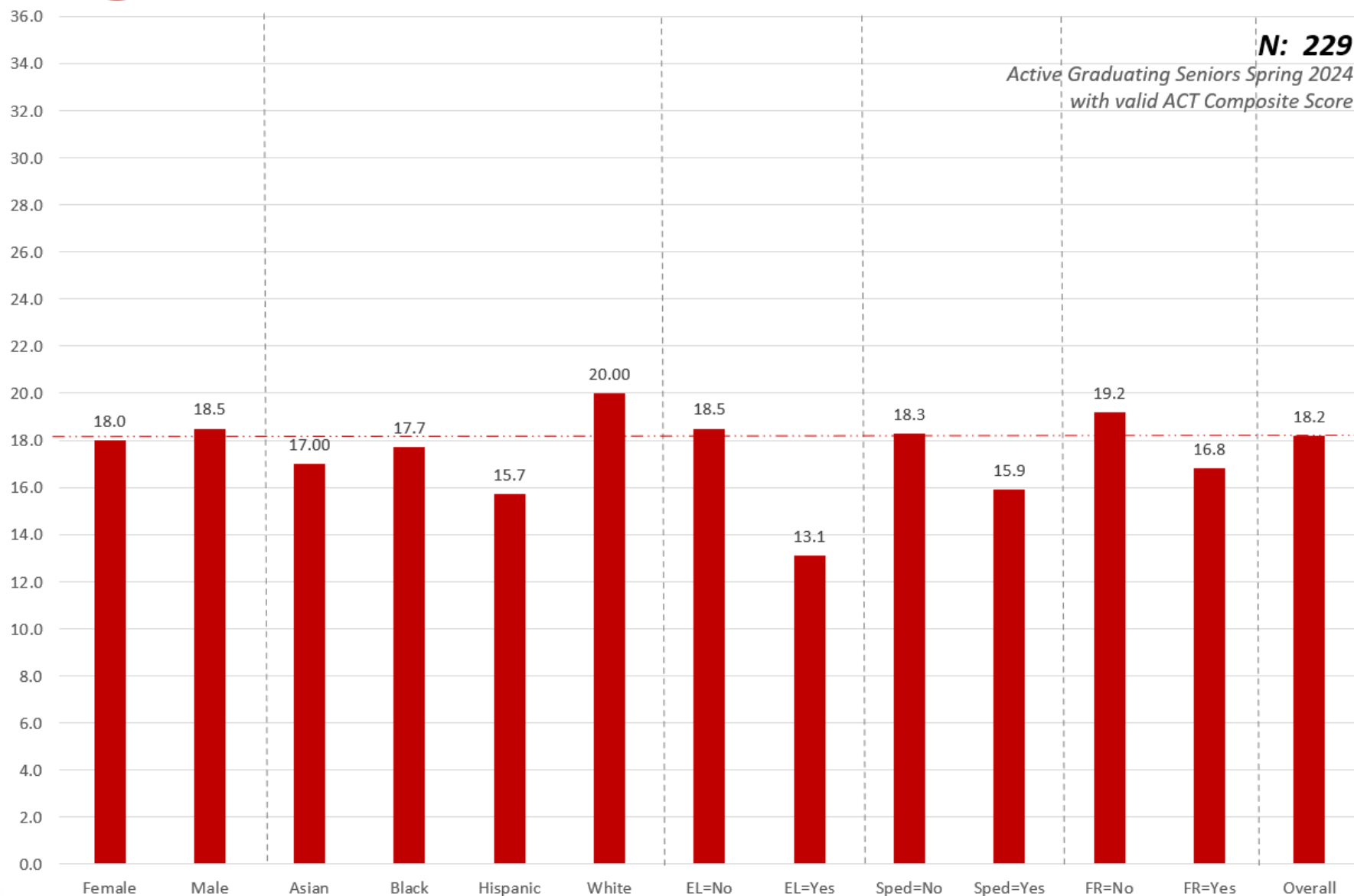


Students who take English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12 & Other English typically achieve higher ACT English Scores than students who take only the required 4 years of English.

In addition, students who take more advanced English courses substantially increase their ACT English score.







Efforts should be focused on improving readiness levels for students from lower income families.

Krista Mattern is a director in Statistical and Applied Research at ACT specializing in the validity and fairness of assessment scores as well as more general issues in higher education such as enrollment, persistence, and graduation.

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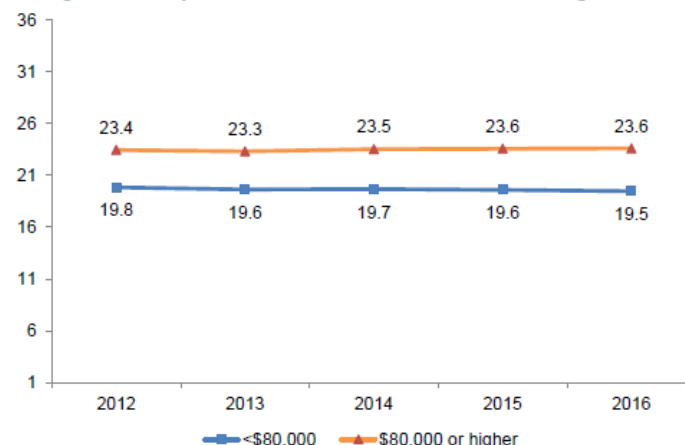


ACT Composite Score by Family Income

KRISTA MATTERN, PHD, JUSTINE RADUNZEL, PHD, AND MATT HARMSTON, MA

ACT recently released *The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2016* report. The *Condition* report provides insights into college readiness levels of ACT-tested high school graduates from 2012 through 2016. The following data byte highlights additional information by providing five-year trend data on average ACT Composite score by family income. In 2012, students who reported a family income of \$80,000 or higher had an ACT Composite score of 23.4 as compared to 19.8 for students who reported an income of less than \$80,000. In 2016, the average ACT Composite score was 23.6 for higher income students and 19.5 from lower income students.

Average ACT Composite Score of 2012–2016 ACT-Tested High School Graduates by Family Income



Key Takeaways:

- The achievement gap between higher and lower income students has increased slightly over the last five years.
- Since 2013, average ACT Composite scores for students with a family income of \$80,000 or higher have increased slightly, while average scores for students reporting a family income of less than \$80,000 have decreased slightly. Here, our focus is on trends beginning in 2013 because graduating

classes from 2013 and later differ slightly from those prior due to inclusion of students who took the ACT under extended-time conditions.

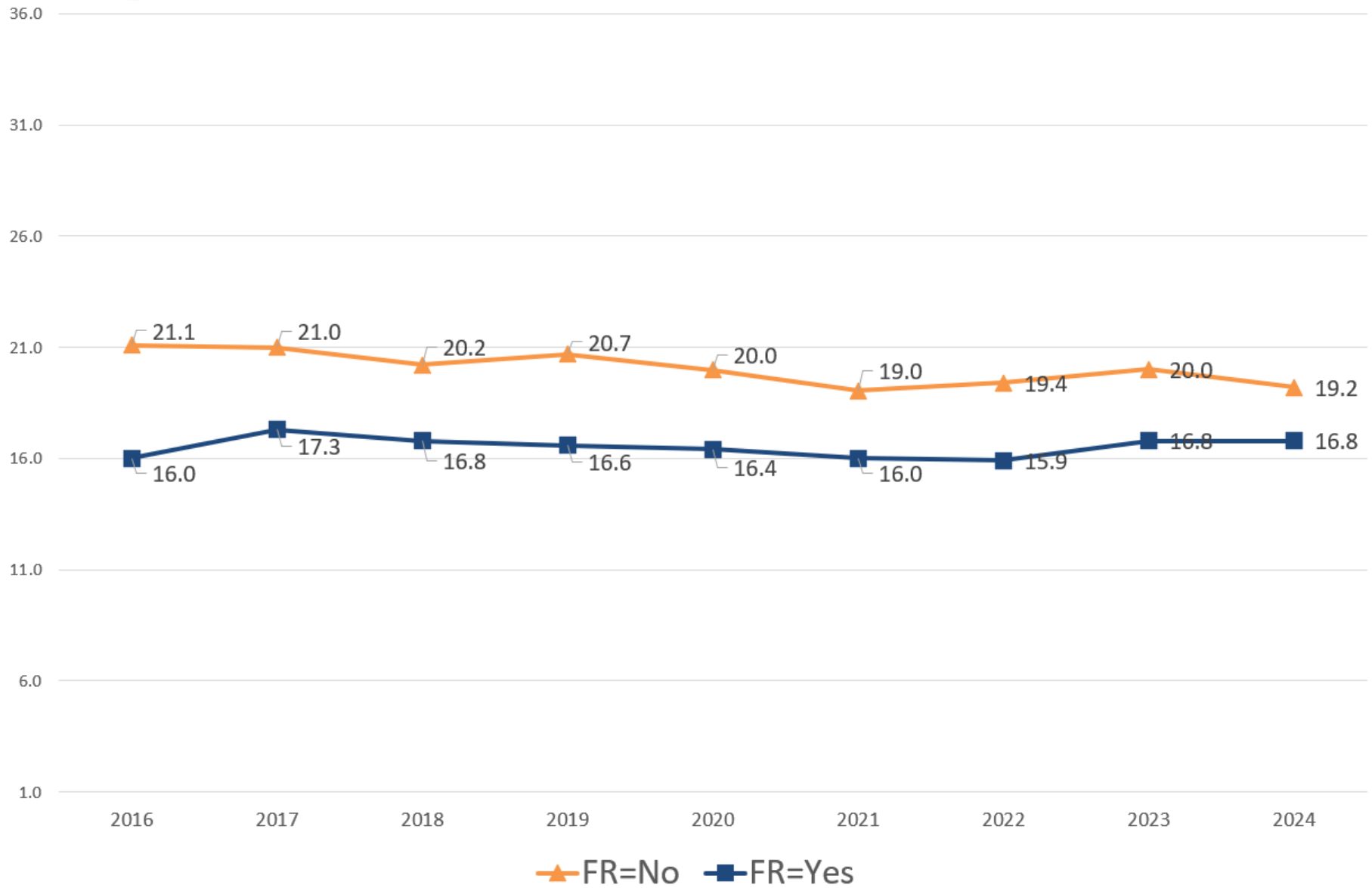
- Efforts should be focused on improving readiness levels for students from lower income families.

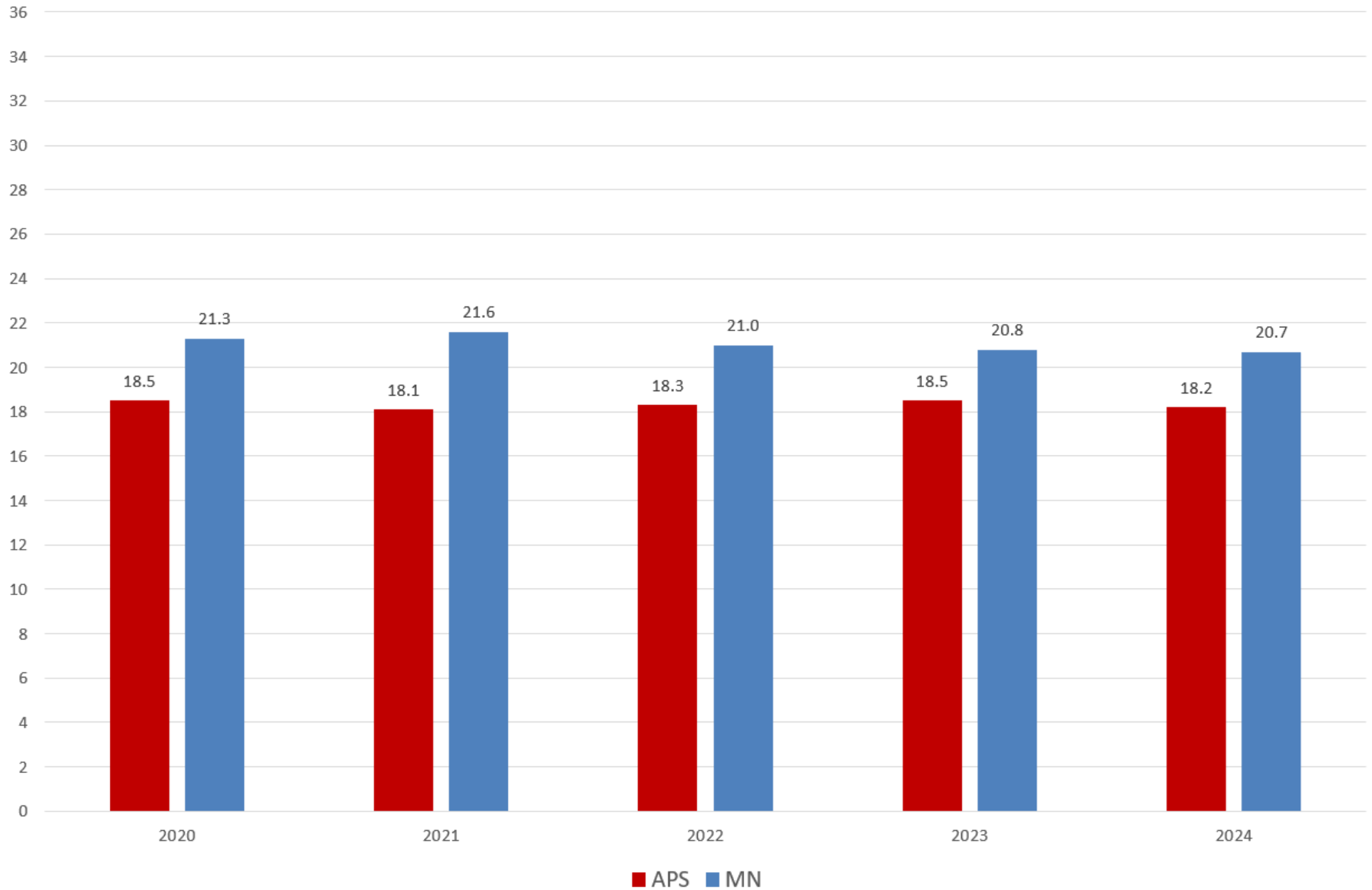
Note that the ACT-tested population has increased by 25% over the last five years; therefore, the makeup of the graduating class over this time period may differ in meaningful ways that are related to family income. ■

www.act.org/research-policy databytes@act.org for more information or to suggest ideas for future ACT Data Bytes.

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How to Improve Scores and Increase College Readiness

15% of your students met all four ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores (Table 1.1). To improve students' scores and increase the percentage of students identified as college ready, ACT suggests:

Table 1.1. Five Year Trends—Percent of Students Who Met College Readiness Benchmarks

Year	Number of Students Tested		English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Met All Four	
	District	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District	State
2020	283	56,706	35	59	34	46	28	48	25	42	16	30
2021	271	41,924	29	61	24	48	31	52	24	45	14	32
2022	247	47,304	35	59	29	41	31	48	22	42	14	28
2023	259	47,158	36	56	31	39	29	47	25	41	16	27
2024	229	46,367	34	56	27	39	31	46	21	40	15	26

PROVIDING ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS TO TAKE THE ACT: 229 APS students are included in this report (the 'cohort'). Increasing access insures that more students have the opportunity to consider college and allows the reader to use this report to evaluate how well courses and instructional programs are preparing students for college and work.

MAKING CORE CURRICULUM A PRIORITY: Emphasize the need for all students to develop college and work ready skills, regardless of postsecondary aspirations. 70% of the students in the cohort reported taking courses that would be considered 'Core or More' (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. Five Year Trends—Average ACT Scores by Level of Preparation

Year	Number of Students Tested		Percent ²		Average ACT Scores									
	Core or More ¹	Less than Core	Core or More	Less than Core	English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Composite	
2020	224	32	79	11	17.0	13.8	20.1	18.6	19.3	16.3	19.7	17.8	19.2	16.8
2021	211	40	78	15	16.2	13.9	19.5	16.7	19.3	15.8	19.6	16.2	18.8	15.7
2022	133	41	54	17	16.8	15.5	20.0	17.8	19.5	18.2	19.8	19.1	19.2	17.8
2023	184	48	71	19	17.5	14.4	19.9	17.4	19.8	16.9	20.4	17.5	19.5	16.7
2024	161	46	70	20	17.0	14.8	19.4	17.0	19.6	17.0	20.0	17.4	19.1	16.7

¹Core or More¹ results correspond to students taking four or more years of English AND three or more years each of math, social studies, and natural science.

²Percent of all students tested. Numbers will not add up to 100% due to student non-response.

How to Improve Scores and Increase College Readiness

MAKING SURE STUDENTS ARE TAKING THE RIGHT KINDS OF COURSES: Table 3.7 reports 2% of the cohort took less than three years of math courses. Of these students, 20% were college ready. 33% of the cohort reported taking a course sequence of Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. 9% of these students were college ready. In comparison, 38% of the students who took 3 or more years of math beyond Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry were college ready. Getting more students ready for Algebra prior to 9th grade will increase the chances that students will be prepared for and take advanced-level math courses.

Table 3.7. College Readiness Benchmark (CRB) Percent and Average ACT Scores by Common Course Patterns

Course Pattern		District			State			
	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT English	Percent Who Met Benchmark	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT English	Percent Who Met Benchmark
ENGLISH COURSE PATTERN								
Eng 9, Eng 10, Eng 11, Eng 12, & Other English	48	21	17.8	46	9,286	20	20.2	63
Eng 9, Eng 10, Eng 11, Eng 12	152	66	16.1	33	19,286	42	20.9	66
Less than 4 years of English	15	7	16.0	33	1,390	3	18.4	52
Zero years / no English courses reported	14	6	11.7	0	16,405	35	16.8	40
MATHEMATICS COURSE PATTERN								
	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT Math	Percent Who Met Benchmark	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT Math	Percent Who Met Benchmark
Alg 1, Alg 2, Geom, Trig, & Calc	4	2	19.3	25	1,020	2	23.5	64
Alg 1, Alg 2, Geom, Trig, & Other Adv Math	1	0	12.0	0	2,827	6	21.1	47
Alg 1, Alg 2, Geom, & Trig	1	0	12.0	0	1,138	2	18.7	23
Alg 1, Alg 2, Geom, & Other Adv Math	57	25	19.4	33	6,475	14	19.8	34
Other comb of 4 or more years of Math	49	21	22.0	49	11,253	24	24.6	71
Alg 1, Alg 2, & Geom	75	33	16.2	9	3,742	8	17.1	12
Other comb of 3 or 3.5 years of Math	21	9	19.5	33	1,443	3	21.0	44
Less than 3 years of Math	5	2	17.2	20	698	2	18.0	22
Zero years / no Math courses reported	16	7	15.3	13	17,771	38	18.5	25
SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSE PATTERN								
	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT Reading	Percent Who Met Benchmark	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT Reading	Percent Who Met Benchmark
US Hist, World Hist, Am Gov, & Other Hist	0	0	-	-	254	1	23.9	60
Other comb of 4 or more years Social Science	116	51	20.4	41	19,183	41	23.0	56
US Hist, World Hist, & Am Gov	1	0	15.0	0	364	1	21.0	43
Other comb of 3 or 3.5 years of Social Science	54	24	17.9	24	6,269	14	22.7	53
Less than 3 years of Social Science	37	16	16.4	19	1,921	4	21.5	45
Zero years / no Social Science courses reported	21	9	15.0	14	18,376	40	19.4	34
NATURAL SCIENCE COURSE PATTERN								
	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT Science	Percent Who Met Benchmark	N	Percent Taking Pattern	Avg ACT Science	Percent Who Met Benchmark
Gen Sci, Bio, Chem, & Phys	68	30	19.5	25	13,578	29	23.3	56
Bio, Chem, Phys	34	15	23.2	53	2,227	5	23.5	57
Gen Sci, Bio, Chem	104	45	18.2	13	10,275	22	21.0	39
Other comb of 3 years of Natural Science	1	0	16.0	0	1,241	3	21.3	44
Less than 3 years of Natural Science	5	2	15.4	0	934	2	19.6	29
Zero years / no Natural Science courses reported	17	7	15.6	6	18,112	39	19.2	26

¹Includes General, Physical and Earth Sciences.

Similarly, Table 3.7 reports 2% of the cohort took less than three years of natural science courses. 0% of these students were college ready. In comparison, 23% of students who took at least three years of science coursework were college ready.

How to Improve Scores and Increase College Readiness

EVALUATING RIGOR OF COURSES: Table 3.1 reports the percentage of students falling in each of the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards score ranges. For example, approximately 69% of the cohort fall into the lowest three Mathematics score ranges. To increase these students' achievement, identify the standards they should focus on next by accessing ACT's College and Career Readiness Standards at www.act.org/content/act/en/education-and-career-planning/college-and-career-readiness-standards.html.

Table 3.1. Percent of Students in College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) Score Ranges

Student Group	CCRS Range	English		Mathematics		Reading		Science	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
District	33 to 36	3	1	6	3	3	1	3	1
	28 to 32	5	2	9	4	16	7	7	3
	24 to 27	20	9	31	14	30	13	30	13
	20 to 23	28	12	25	11	37	16	58	25
	16 to 19	43	19	83	36	58	25	72	31
	13 to 15	60	26	60	26	57	25	42	18
	01 to 12	70	31	15	7	28	12	17	7
State	33 to 36	2,550	5	1,437	3	3,929	8	1,987	4
	28 to 32	2,961	6	3,769	8	5,575	12	3,691	8
	24 to 27	5,571	12	8,693	19	6,094	13	8,460	18
	20 to 23	10,353	22	7,843	17	11,466	25	13,563	29
	16 to 19	8,956	19	15,599	34	8,976	19	11,406	25
	13 to 15	8,487	18	7,997	17	6,289	14	4,773	10
	01 to 12	7,489	16	1,029	2	4,038	9	2,487	5