Internal Executive Analysis: 2025 ACT

Building Successful Futures: Fulton County Schools Leads ACT Participation and Performance

1. Introduction

For the ninth consecutive year, students in **Fulton County Schools (FCS)** exceeded both the state and national averages on the ACT. With nearly 4,000 students participating, FCS had **the highest number of ACT test takers in Georgia**, representing more than **17 percent of the state's total**. From composite scores to college readiness benchmarks, these results highlight Fulton County Schools' continued investment in preparing each student for success in college, career, and life beyond high school.

2. Fulton Students Score Higher Than State and National Averages on ACT

Fulton County students once again surpassed both state and national averages on the ACT. The district's **average composite score was 21.6**, slightly higher than Georgia's **21.4** and well above the national average of **19.4**.

The stronger story behind those numbers is **college readiness**. The **ACT College Readiness Benchmarks** identify the scores that signal a student is prepared for entry-level college courses: **18 in English, 22 in math and reading, and 23 in science**. Meeting all four benchmarks means a student is ready to begin college without the need for remedial coursework.

In Fulton County, **34 percent of graduates met all four benchmarks**, compared with **29 percent statewide**. This means more Fulton students are leaving high school with the skills to succeed in core subjects such as English, math, reading, and science.

Preparation plays a major role in these outcomes. Students who completed a full **"Core or More"** curriculum—four years of English and at least three years each of math, science, and social studies—earned an **average ACT score of 24.1**. Those who took fewer courses averaged **20.2**. The same pattern appears statewide, but Fulton's "Core" students outperformed Georgia's average by more than a point.

Fulton students also demonstrated notable strength in **STEM** (science, technology, engineering, and math). The **ACT STEM Benchmark**, which represents readiness for college-level STEM majors, is a combined math and science score of **26**. **Twenty-eight percent of Fulton students met this benchmark**, five points higher than the state average. Their **average STEM score was 21.7**, compared to **21.4 statewide**.

Performance in reading and writing reinforces this strong showing. Nearly **29 percent of Fulton students** were rated *Above Proficient* in understanding complex texts, compared with **16 percent nationally**. On the optional ACT Writing test, Fulton students averaged **7.2**, exceeding the **state average of 6.8**.

These results show that Fulton students are not only taking the ACT in large numbers but are achieving scores that reflect real college readiness. The district's emphasis on rigorous coursework, strong instruction, and equitable access to advanced learning opportunities continues to prepare students to thrive after high school.

The subject-level results tell a similar story of broad academic strength.

3. Fulton Students Lead Georgia and the Nation Across ACT Subjects

Fulton County students outperformed both state and national averages in English, mathematics, and science, and closely matched the state in reading. As shown in Exhibit 1, the district's **composite score of 21.6** exceeded the **Georgia average of 21.4** and the **national average of 19.4**.

The strongest areas for Fulton students were **Reading (22.3)** and **Science (21.7)**, which indicate solid comprehension, reasoning, and analytical skills. Mathematics and English were also above the national results, showing balanced strength across the full range of tested subjects.

Compared with the national profile, Fulton students scored about **two points higher in every subject**, suggesting broader college readiness and stronger preparation for entry-level coursework. Even when measured against Georgia's already competitive performance, FCS students matched or slightly surpassed the state in nearly all tested areas.

In short: Fulton's ACT profile shows not just one area of advantage but a consistent pattern of high performance across all academic domains, proof that the district's focus on rigorous, well-rounded instruction is paying off in measurable college readiness outcomes.

Exhibit 1. FCS and State Scores

Subject-by-subject results alongside district, state, and national composites.

	Fulton County	National	Georgia
English	**20.7**	18.4	20.6
Mathematics	**21.1**	18.9	20.7
Reading	**22.3**	20.0	22.4
Science	**21.7**	19.6	21.4
Composite	**21.6**	19.4	21.4

4. Six-Year Trend in ACT Composite Scores

Over the past six years, **Fulton County Schools (FCS)** has maintained performance above the state average while broadening access to the ACT. In 2025, the district's **average composite score was 21.6**, compared with **21.4 for Georgia**. That small but steady gap has persisted since 2020, demonstrating consistent quality even as participation expanded to nearly 4,000 students, the largest number of test takers in the state.

At the school level, the data reveal three clear stories:

1. **Stable excellence among top performers**
   Schools such as **Innovation Academy (27.2)**, **Northview (26.9)**, and **Johns Creek (25.6)** continue to set the district's high watermark. Their scores have remained in the mid- to upper-20s for several consecutive years, showing that Fulton's most rigorous programs continue to deliver exceptional outcomes.

2. **Noticeable gains in several schools**
   - **Banneker High (+1.7)** showed the largest single-year improvement, rising from 15.2 to 16.9.
   - **Alpharetta** and **Cambridge** each increased by 0.6 points, strengthening their already strong profiles.
   - **Westlake (+0.7)** and **Northview (+0.7)** also made modest but meaningful progress.
     These improvements point to effective instructional strategies and a renewed emphasis on ACT readiness across a range of school contexts.

3. **Opportunities for renewed focus**
   A few schools experienced small declines or plateaus, including **North Springs (-0.8), Chattahoochee (-0.7), Creekside (-0.5)**, and **Tri-Cities (-0.5)**. These dips, while modest, highlight where targeted supports can help students regain momentum.

Overall, Exhibit 2 shows that Fulton's performance pattern is **one of consistency and balance**. The district's top schools remain nationally competitive, several campuses are trending upward, and overall results continue to exceed state averages despite a larger and more diverse testing population. The long-term story is clear: **Fulton is sustaining high achievement while giving more students the opportunity to demonstrate college readiness.**

Exhibit 2: FCS Composite Scores Past 6 Years

School	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024 vs. 2025
Alpharetta High School	25.9	26.8	25.0	25.4	24	24.6	**0.6**
Banneker High School	17.6	TFS	16.0	16.1	15.2	16.9	**1.7**
Cambridge High School	26.1	25.6	24.3	23.9	24.0	24.6	**0.6**
Centennial High School	24.1	24.6	22.6	22.5	21.0	21.0	**0**
Chattahoochee High School	26.6	26.6	24.8	25.1	24.8	24.1	**-0.7**
Creekside High School	17.1	18.7	17.5	17.2	15.1	14.6	**-0.5**
FAVE	-	-	-	16.5	19.5	17.2	**-2.3**
Global Impact Academy	-	-	-	-	17.3	17.4	**0.1**
Hapeville Charter Career	15.7	15.4	15.2	15.2	17.6	17.5	**-0.1**
Independence High School	TFS	20.0	25.0	TFS	27.0	19.0	**-8.0**

School	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024 vs. 2025
Innovation Academy	-	-	-	-	27.1	27.2	**0.1**
Johns Creek High School	26.2	27.0	25.3	25.0	25.5	25.6	**0.1**
Langston Hughes High School	17.7	17.4	15.7	16.6	16.7	14.8	**-1.9**
Milton High School	25.8	26.1	24.6	24.5	24.5	24.4	**-0.1**
North Springs High School	22.8	23.4	21.3	21.2	19.0	18.2	**-0.8**
Northview High School	28.1	28.5	26.5	26.7	26.2	26.9	**0.7**
Riverwood High School	24.1	25.4	23.3	22.6	22.7	22.4	**-0.3**
Roswell High School	25.2	25.2	24.2	23.1	23.3	22.9	**-0.4**
Skyview High School	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS
Tri-Cities High School	16.7	15.9	15.8	16.2	14.6	14.1	**-0.5**
Westlake High School	19.2	19.0	18.5	16.9	17.2	17.9	**0.7**
District	**24.4**	**25.3**	**23.0**	**22.8**	**21.9**	**21.6**	**-0.3**
State	**21.7**	**22.6**	**21.6**	**21.3**	**21.2**	**21.4**	**0.2**

5. Expanding Access Through Participation

Fulton County Schools continues to lead the state in ACT participation, with **FCS students accounting for more than 17 percent of all Georgia test takers in 2025**, the highest total of any district in the state. While **statewide participation declined 8.7 percent**, Fulton saw a **1.8 percent increase**, continuing a steady upward trend. As shown in Exhibit 3, since 2021 the number of students taking the ACT has grown **by 90 percent**, from 2,089 to 3,962. Nationally, ACT participation rose only 0.6 percent during the same period, underscoring Fulton's intentional commitment to expanding access to college-readiness assessments.

At the school level, this growth is visible across every region of the district.

- **Langston Hughes High School** recorded the **largest single-year increase**, rising from 78 to 228 test takers (+150).
- **Global Impact Academy** expanded from 40 to 163 (+123) as the school's programs matured.
- **Innovation Academy** increased from 237 to 305 (+68), reflecting strong student engagement in its STEM pathways.
- **Tri-Cities High School** added 37 students, and **Chattahoochee High School** added 19, showing expanding participation among schools with more diverse student populations.

Districtwide, ACT participation rose from **3,891 in 2024 to 3,962 in 2025**, even as statewide numbers fell. Established schools such as **Alpharetta**, **Cambridge**, **Chattahoochee**, and **Milton** maintained consistent participation, while emerging schools saw the fastest growth.

This pattern represents more than numerical expansion; it reflects a districtwide culture shift toward **readiness and opportunity**. Fulton County Schools is ensuring that students from every community have the chance to demonstrate college readiness and plan for postsecondary success. This growth in participation lays the foundation for the performance outcomes that follow, showing that as more students take the ACT, achievement across the district remains strong.

Exhibit 3. FCS Test Takers Past 6 Years

School	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 vs. 2024
Alpharetta High School	333	269	342	336	325	318	**-7**
Banneker High School	38	TFS	89	86	106	59	**-47**
Cambridge High School	337	244	340	340	357	228	**-129**
Centennial High School	174	111	177	233	239	235	**-4**
Chattahoochee High School	239	204	282	246	307	326	**19**
Creekside High School	64	30	95	TFS	234	250	**16**
FAVE	-	-	-	TFS	TFS	5	**N/A**
Global Impact Academy	-	-	-	-	40	163	**123**
Hapeville Charter Career	49	19	18	24	29	11	**-18**
Independence High School	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS
Innovation Academy	-	-	-	-	237	305	**68**
Johns Creek High School	308	249	302	325	287	246	**-41**
Langston Hughes High School	74	47	154	58	78	228	**150**
Milton High School	356	274	378	313	281	271	**-10**
North Springs High School	171	79	142	168	254	254	**0**
Northview High School	233	141	245	199	203	177	**-26**
Riverwood High	199	132	195	229	244	255	**11**

School	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025 vs. 2024
Roswell High School	268	173	288	300	214	230	**16**
Skyview High School	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS	TFS
Tri-Cities High School	120	23	92	95	162	199	**37**
Westlake High School	175	79	201	238	282	201	**-81**
District	**3141**	**2089**	**3344**	**3282**	**3891**	**3962**	**71**

6. ACT Section Performance by School

Exhibit 4 provides a detailed look at ACT performance by subject area and by school. The data represent 2025 graduates who took the ACT during their high school years and allow for comparison across Fulton County Schools, the state of Georgia, and the nation.

At the subject level, Fulton students **outperformed the state in English, mathematics, and science**, **matched** the state closely in **reading**, and exceeded the national results in every subject. This pattern reflects balanced academic preparation across all core content areas and continued strength in critical thinking and problem solving.

High-performing schools such as **Innovation Academy (27.2), Northview (26.9), and Johns Creek (25.6)** continue to anchor the district's top tier, scoring well above the state average across all sections.

Several schools show **emerging progress**. **Banneker (16.9), Westlake (17.9), and Global Impact Academy (17.4)** improved from previous years, reflecting ongoing gains in schools that serve larger proportions of historically underrepresented students.

Schools such as **Creekside (14.6), Langston Hughes (14.8), and Tri-Cities (14.1)** identify **opportunities** for targeted instructional support, particularly in reading and science, to build on recent participation gains and strengthen readiness outcomes.

Overall, the data illustrate a system that maintains **high performance** while **expanding access**. Even with the largest number of ACT test takers in Georgia, Fulton County Schools continues to outperform both the state and nation in most subjects, showing that quality and access can grow together.

Exhibit 4. ACT Section Performance by School

(Data represent 2025 graduates who took the ACT during high school years. "*" indicates suppressed data due to low participation.)

School / Comparison Group	Test Takers	English	Mathematics	Reading	Science	Composite
Alpharetta High School	318	24.3	24.0	25.4	24.3	24.6
Banneker High School	59	15.9	16.1	17.9	17.0	16.9
Cambridge High School	228	24.2	23.8	25.5	24.6	24.6
Centennial High School	235	19.9	20.4	22.2	21.2	21.0
Chattahoochee High School	326	23.0	24.5	24.5	24.0	24.1
Creekside High School	250	12.5	14.5	15.2	15.9	14.6
FAVE	*	*	*	*	*	*
Global Impact Academy	163	16.3	16.5	18.5	18.0	17.4
Hapeville Charter Career	18	15.2	15.2	17.6	17.5	17.5
Independence High School	*	*	*	*	*	*
Innovation Academy	305	26.9	26.9	27.4	27.2	27.2
Johns Creek High School	246	25.1	25.3	26.0	25.5	25.6
Langston Hughes High School	228	12.9	14.9	15.5	15.6	14.8
Milton High School	271	24.4	23.4	25.3	24.2	24.4
North Springs High School	254	19.0	18.2	21.2	21.3	18.2
Northview High School	177	26.9	27.0	27.3	25.9	26.9
Riverwood High School	255	21.9	21.5	23.5	22.4	22.4
Roswell High School	230	22.5	22.3	23.8	22.7	22.9
Tri-Cities High School	199	12.1	14.1	14.7	15.1	14.1
Westlake High School	201	16.7	17.5	19.2	17.9	17.9
District Average (Fulton County Schools)	3,962	20.7	21.1	22.3	21.7	21.6
Georgia (Statewide)	22,794	20.6	20.7	22.4	21.4	21.4
National	—	18.4	18.9	20.0	19.6	19.4

7. Metro Atlanta ACT Participation and Performance, 2025

As shown in Exhibit 5, Fulton County Schools (FCS) continues to **stand out** both for the **size** of its **student body participating** in the ACT and for maintaining **competitive performance** despite broader access.

With 3,962 test takers, **FCS tested 4.6 percent of its enrollment**, tying with Atlanta Public Schools (APS) for the highest participation rate in the metro region and more than **50 percent higher than the statewide average** of 3 percent.

By contrast, **most neighboring districts** tested **fewer than 3 percent** of their students, and some large systems such as Gwinnett (0.7 percent) and Clayton (0.6 percent) **tested less than one percent**.

Although Fulton's average ACT score of 21.6 trails high-performing, smaller districts such as Forsyth (24.9), Buford (24.6), and Decatur (24.6), it remains above the statewide average of 21.4 while serving a much larger and more diverse student population. FCS also tested more than twice as many students as all of those districts combined, highlighting the district's **dual commitment to both academic achievement and expanded access**.

In contrast, several neighboring systems with lower participation rates also show lower average scores, including APS (17.4), Clayton (17.6), and Henry (18.1), suggesting that Fulton's results represent a balance between scale and quality rarely achieved in large urban districts.

Taken together, the data show that Fulton County Schools **occupies a unique position** among Georgia's metro districts, combining the **highest participation rate with above-average performance**. This balance between scale and quality reflects a district that expands opportunity while sustaining excellence.

Exhibit 5. Metro Atlanta ACT Participation and Performance, 2025

District	Enrollment (2024–25)	Test Takers	% of Students Tested	Avg ACT Score
Atlanta Public Schools (APS)	49740	2296	4.6	17.4
Buford City Schools	5994	132	2.2	24.6
Cherokee County	41861	794	1.9	22.8
City Schools of Decatur	5356	148	2.8	24.6
Clayton County	50926	290	0.6	17.6
Cobb County	105213	2005	1.9	23.7
DeKalb County	91638	916	1	22.3
Fayette County	19806	481	2.4	23.5
Forsyth County	55056	1611	2.9	24.9
Fulton County (FCS)	86839	3962	4.6	21.6
Gwinnett County	182518	1340	0.7	23.1
Henry County	42917	612	1.4	18.1
Marietta City Schools	8692	112	1.3	22.2
Rockdale County	15276	161	1.1	18.2
Statewide	761832	22794	3	21.4

8. Conclusion

The 2025 ACT results affirm that **Fulton County Schools is leading the state in both access and achievement**. With record participation, consistent performance above the state and national averages, and a growing share of students meeting college readiness benchmarks, Fulton continues to prove that expanding opportunity and maintaining excellence can go hand in hand.

These outcomes reflect more than student effort alone. They demonstrate the impact of rigorous instruction, dedicated teachers, and a systemwide culture that values preparation for life beyond graduation. From innovation academies and STEM pathways to literacy and core curriculum alignment, Fulton County Schools is preparing graduates who are ready to thrive in college, career, and the global economy.

Looking ahead, the district's focus remains clear: **to ensure that every student who aspires to college has both the access and the preparation to succeed once they get there**.