

REPORT ON 2003 ACT SCORES

Information and Discussion

ACT results for the high school graduating class of 2003 are now available. After several years of steady or declining scores, Kentucky's average ACT score rose from 20.0 in 2002 to 20.2 in 2003. The average national score was 20.8 in both 2002 and 2003.

The ACT assessment consists of tests in four areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. Many Kentucky colleges and universities require entering freshmen to take the ACT. Postsecondary institutions use ACT scores to inform admissions decisions and to place students in appropriate college courses.

ACT also reports the number of test-takers who indicate they are taking ACT's recommended core curriculum. The number of Kentucky students who report taking the core courses, which has increased markedly since 1990, rose to 59 percent in 2003. Nationally, 57 percent of test-takers report completing the core curriculum.

ACT's recommended courses are four or more years of English, three or more years of mathematics (Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry or higher), and three or more years each of specific social studies and natural sciences courses ([see attachment B-3](#)). National studies indicate students who complete a rigorous high school curriculum like the ACT core are more successful in college.

Since 1990 Kentucky has seen a 20 percent increase in the number of high school graduates taking the ACT, and the number of students taking the ACT core curriculum has more than doubled. The number of students taking the ACT in Kentucky was 29,877 in 2003, compared to 24,942 in 1990. The number of students who reported taking the core curriculum increased to 17,557 in 2003, compared to 7,088 in 1990.

Presentation

ACT representatives will make a presentation on the 2003 ACT scores for Kentucky, including trend data on ACT results since 1998. ACT staff will also provide an overview of the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS).

Follow-up Questions and Discussion

1. Should a study be completed to review the alignment between the Kentucky Core Content for Assessment, Program of Studies, and ACT Standards?
2. Should study of the ACT Educational Planning and Assessment System and its value in making instructional decisions be initiated?
3. Should a review of the current placement criteria, methods, and practices of Kentucky public colleges and universities be conducted to ensure they are transparent and consistent?
4. How can Kentucky raise its ACT achievement levels and reduce its achievement gap?

High School Curriculum Comparison

	KY High School Graduation Requirements		CPE Pre-College Curriculum		ACT Core Courses	
	Credits	Courses	Credits	Courses	Credits	Courses
Language Arts	4	English I, II, III, IV	4	English I, II, III, IV	4	English I, II, III, IV
Social Studies	3	Choose from US History, Economics, Government, World Geography, World Civilization	3	Choose from US History, Economics, Government, World Geography, World Civilization	3	US History, World History, Government (1 credit each). Economics, Geography, Psychology, other History (1/2 credit each).
Mathematics	3	Algebra I, Geometry, elective	3	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II	3	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II (1 credit each). Trigonometry, Calculus, Computer Math/Science, other math beyond Algebra II (1/2 credit each).
Science	3	Must include life science, physical science, and earth/space science	3	Must include life science, physical science, and earth/space science. Must include at least one lab course.	3	General/Physical/Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry (1 credit each).
Health	0.5		0.5			
Physical Education	0.5		0.5			
History and Appreciation of Visual Arts	1	History and appreciation of visual and performing arts or another arts course which incorporates such content	1	History and appreciation of visual and performing arts or another arts course which incorporates such content		
Foreign Language*			2	2 credits required or demonstrated competency		
Total Required Credits	15		17			
Electives	7		5	3 must be rigorous electives		
Total	22		22			

*Effective Fall 2004