



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Johnny Key, Commissioner*

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## **Arkansas' 11th-Grade ACT Scores Hold Steady**

**LITTLE ROCK** — Arkansas' 11th-grade average ACT scores remained steady during the 2015-16 school year, with some areas showing slight increases from the previous year.

Eleventh-graders' average scores in English (18.1) and reading (19.0) remained the same. The average score in math increased slightly from 18.5 to 18.6, the average score in science increased from 18.7 to 19.1, and the total composite score increased from 18.7 to 18.8.

A total of 31,081 Arkansas 11th graders took the ACT during the 2015-16 state administration. The Arkansas Department of Education offered the exam to all 11th graders at no charge to the student as a way of providing all Arkansas students with a college reportable ACT score before graduating. The number of students who participated reflected a 72 percent increase (22,348 students) over the participation in the statewide administration in 2014-15.

The percentage of students who met college readiness benchmarks held steady this year as well. An ACT benchmark score is the minimum score needed for each subject area to indicate a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in a corresponding college-credit course. ACT's benchmark scores are as follows:

- English – 18
- Mathematics – 22
- Reading – 22
- Science – 23

A total of 49 percent of Arkansas juniors met the benchmark in English, the same as in 2014-15; 25 percent met the math benchmark, a slight decrease from 26 percent; 31 percent met the reading benchmark, an increase from 29; and 24 percent met the benchmark in science, an increase from 23. A total of 14 percent met all four benchmarks, the same as in 2014-15.

“I encourage students and parents to use the ACT college readiness benchmark scores to select coursework that will ensure continued academic growth,” said Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key. “Guidance counselors are great resources and can provide more detailed information about a student’s scores, as well as proper course placement.”

The ACT results also show that students who take four or more years of English and three or more years, each, of math, social studies and natural science tend to score an average of two-to-three points higher than students who take fewer courses in these subjects.

To see the statewide ACT score report, as well as district and school results, go to <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/learning-services/student-assessment/test-scores/year?y=2016>. Statewide ACT Aspire results and district and school results for grades three through eight will be available July 8 at the same link.

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