



NEWS RELEASE

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Nebraska ACT[®] Scores Up, but ACT Says Most Students Not Ready for College

2008 study shows only 27 percent of Nebraska high school graduates ready to withstand the rigors of postsecondary education

LINCOLN, Neb. – In a new study released today, ACT[®] announced that the average 2008 ACT composite score for Nebraska high school students has increased slightly since 2004 – 21.7 in 2004 to 22.1 in 2008 – and continues to be above the national average.

Still, data for the class of 2008 reveals that only 27 percent of Nebraska's ACT-tested high school graduates are sufficiently prepared to succeed (highly likely to earn a "C" or higher) in all four common areas of entry-level college coursework: algebra, biology, English, and social science. Furthermore, compared to their white non-Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander classmates, even lower percentages of the state's Hispanic, Native American and black non-Hispanic high school graduates are adequately prepared for entry-level college coursework.

On the national front, ACT reported that college readiness levels remained steady – at 22 percent in 2008 – among U.S. high school graduates even as more students took the college admission and placement exam in 2008 than in each of the previous four years.

"While we are encouraged that Nebraska students continue to score above the national average in the ACT assessments, we are concerned about this issue of readiness," said Marshall Hill, executive director of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. "Our emphasis has been to encourage students to take challenging courses while in high school and ACT data indicates all students benefit from this approach."

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For more information regarding Nebraska students' 2008 ACT scores, please go to www.act.org/news/data/08/pdf/states/Nebraska.pdf.

About Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) is a state constitutional agency that serves as an independent voice within Nebraska's higher education system to promote sound policies that apply to the best interests of taxpayers, students and Nebraska's postsecondary institutions. The CCPE recommends policy to the legislative and executive branches to improve and support postsecondary education. The CCPE also reviews and recommends operating budgets, administers the Nebraska State Grant program, approves academic degree programs, and reviews for approval new tax-funded building projects proposed by Nebraska's public institutions. The CCPE is governed by 11 commissioners appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Nebraska State Legislature. For more information about the CCPE, please visit www.ccpe.state.ne.us.

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