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Press Release

SREB News



Contact

[Beth Day](#), SREB Director
of Communications
(404) 879-5544 office
(770) 315-2041 mobile

[Joan Lord](#), SREB Vice
President, Education
Policies
(404) 879-5534 office

The Southern Regional Education Board works with states to improve public education at every level, from pre-K through Ph.D. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization based in Atlanta, SREB was created in 1948 by Southern governors and legislatures to advance education and improve the social and economic life of the region. SREB member states are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma,

Average ACT Scores Rise Overall in SREB Region

More students continue to test

Atlanta — August 20, 2014 — Average ACT composite scores increased overall from 2013 to 2014 in the Southern Regional Education Board region, with 10 of 16 SREB states seeing an increase in scores. The number of all graduating seniors who took the test while in high school rose 3 percent. The data were released today by ACT Inc.

The average score for the class of 2014 in the SREB region was 20.1, up from 20.0 in 2013 — echoing a rise in the U.S. average score from 20.9 to 21.0. One-tenth of one point is statistically significant for average ACT scores.

SREB states with average score gains, ranging from 0.1 to 0.3 points, include Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. Two states, Louisiana and Oklahoma, had declines. Average scores in Florida, South Carolina, Texas and West Virginia remained the same. ACT results, a significant indicator of college readiness for most seniors, are particularly important for the 12 SREB states in which

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South Carolina,
Tennessee, Texas,
Virginia and West
Virginia.



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more than 50 percent of graduating seniors take the test while in high school. These include all SREB states except Delaware, Maryland, Texas and Virginia.

The current year's test participation increase of 3 percent in the region follows a surge in test participation the previous year. From 2012 to 2013, the number of seniors taking the ACT grew dramatically in SREB states — up 15 percent. As is typical, when participation increases, the average score across all 16 SREB states fell during this period. This year's improvement in the composite score reverses the decline in performance.

"We are always pleased to see scores rising as more students in SREB states are taking the ACT," SREB Vice President Joan Lord said. "Increasing participation holds promise for greater access to higher education for more students."

Nationally, 26 percent of the class of 2014 who took the ACT met ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks, which link ACT results to student performance in college freshman courses, and 19 percent did so in the 12 SREB states in which a majority of seniors take the test. The percentages remain unchanged from 2013.

For white and black students, the 2014 average scores for the SREB region rose 0.1 point, respectively and showed no change for Hispanic students.

For an analysis of ACT and SAT results from 2008 to 2013, read SREB's policy brief, [The ACT and SAT: No Longer Just College Admission Tests](#), also published today. The brief focuses on the increase in test participation rates and points to policies that SREB states initiated that affected these rates. Five SREB states currently require 100 percent student

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participation on the ACT. Others include ACT results as part of their school accountability system.

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