



ACT & Aspire Scores Report 2016-17

Key Findings

1. Overall participation rates either maintained or increased on all three assessments. In 2016-17, participation rates were over 85% on each assessment.
2. There were large 3 year increases in ACT II participation, including a 21% increase among African-American students and a 25% increase among students receiving special education services.
3. The percent of students meeting benchmark scores remained relatively stable on all three assessments across the last several years.
4. The English subject test continued to have the highest percentage of students meeting the benchmark across all assessments, with over 60% of students meeting benchmark scores for all three assessments.
5. The Science subject test had the lowest percentage of students meeting the benchmark on each assessment.
6. Performance and participation gaps exist across student demographic groups, with African-American students having the lowest percent of students meeting benchmark scores students identifying as White having the highest rates.

The 2016-17 academic year was the third year that the Aspire, the ACT, and the ACT WorkKeys tests were mandated and paid for by the state of Wisconsin for all students in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade. The ACT and ACT Aspire tests assess a student's academic readiness for college and the WorkKeys test is a job skills assessment. The state of Wisconsin mandated these tests for students in eleventh grade.

Data Notes

Many students will take the ACT multiple times during their secondary education, which may bias overall test averages and the overall percent of students meeting benchmark. To ensure each student that takes the ACT is only counted once in overall district numbers, this report focuses on students' highest listed ACT Composite score result and uses the subject scores associated with the same test. Furthermore, this report does not exclude students with missing data for assessment subtests. There are some students that do not have data available for every benchmark, but are still included in this report. The state and other reporting agencies may use a different approach to measuring district ACT performance and participation, which may result in different numbers and averages. Student-level WorkKeys data is used by schools but unavailable at the district level, so it does not appear in this report.

The participation rates used in this report are based on the Second Friday of January enrollment lists for the respective year. Because some students have missing data for some subtests, we use the number of unique student ID's as the identifier for a student participating in an exam. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) uses the Third Friday of September count when calculating student participation in mandated assessments. We use the Second Friday count because this count is much closer to the date when the Aspire and ACT tests are administered in MMSD; Aspire is administered in March, and April and the ACT and WorkKeys tests in May.

To provide a more complete description of trends in student achievement, this report uses data from 2012-13 through 2016-17. When reflecting on the percent of students meeting college readiness benchmarks in past reports, it is important to note that we retroactively apply the most current benchmark standards to student data, per ACT's recommendation. These standards reflect what is currently considered achievement levels appropriate for college and university classrooms and are not necessarily the standards applied in past years. In addition, numbers in this report will not align exactly to those presented in the Annual Report and used in the district's accountability calculations, as the Annual Report uses an accountability population that excludes students enrolled in MMSD for only a short time, but this report is inclusive of all tested students. The Appendix contains more information on the ACT and Aspire assessments.

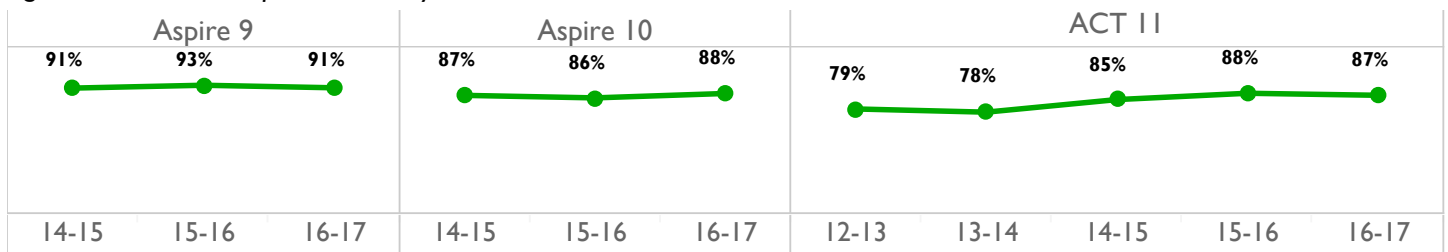


The report includes sections on participation, Aspire 9 results, Aspire 10 results, and ACT II results. Across all sections, English scores are colored teal, Math scores are colored light orange, Reading scores are colored dark blue, and Science scores are colored dark orange. Participation rates are colored green.

Overall Participation

Participation rates on all three exams either stayed the same or increased over the Aspire and ACT time spans. There was an 8% increase in the percent of 11th grade students taking the ACT. All assessments had rates that were around 90% in 2016-17.

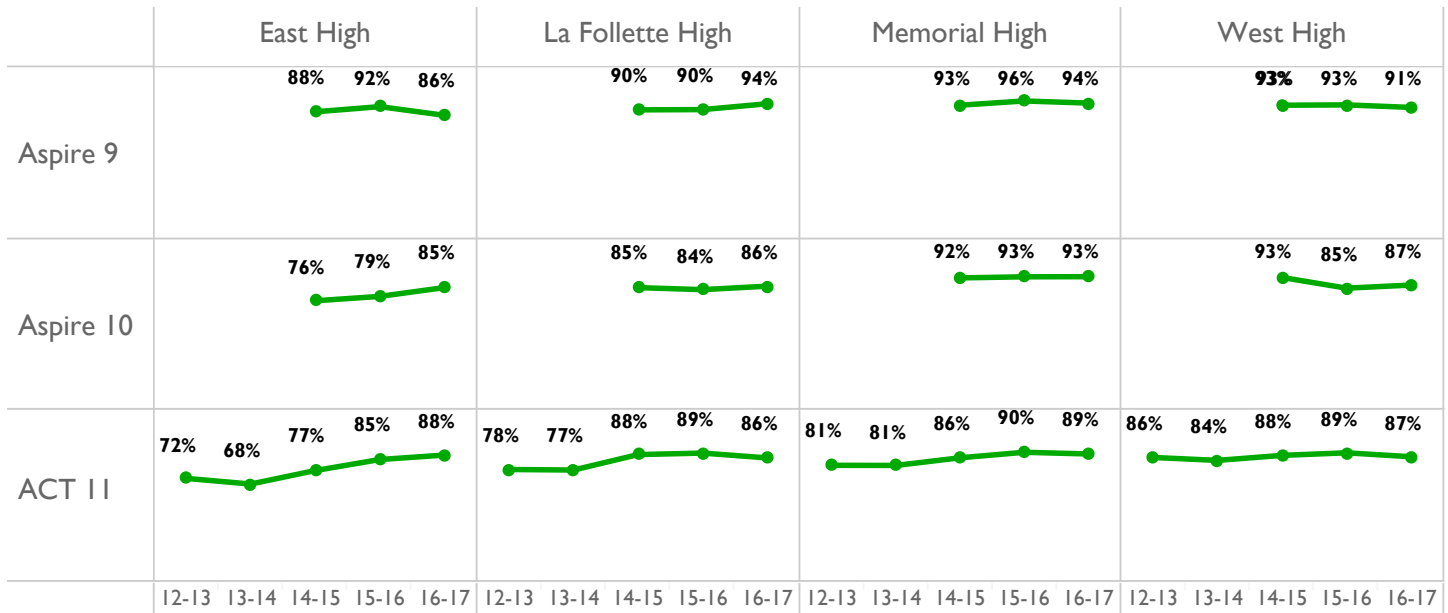
Figure 1: Overall Participation Rates by Assessment



Participation by School

ACT II participation rates increased across all schools. Memorial high school had increases in participation rates on all assessments. East high school had the largest increases in participation rates on the Aspire 10 (a 9% increase) and ACT II (a 8% increase), but had decreased participation rates on the Aspire 9 (a 2% decrease).

Figure 2: Overall Participation rates by Assessment and School





Participation by Student Demographic Groups

Participation rates were over 80% for all demographics, across all tests in 2016-17. Participation rates for the ACT increased across all student demographics, particularly among Black or African-American, special education, English language learner, and low-income students. Black or African American students and students receiving special education services had the largest increases, with a 21% and a 25% increase, respectively, in ACT II participation rates. These two demographic groups still had the lowest participation rate out of all racial/ethnic and student demographic groups.

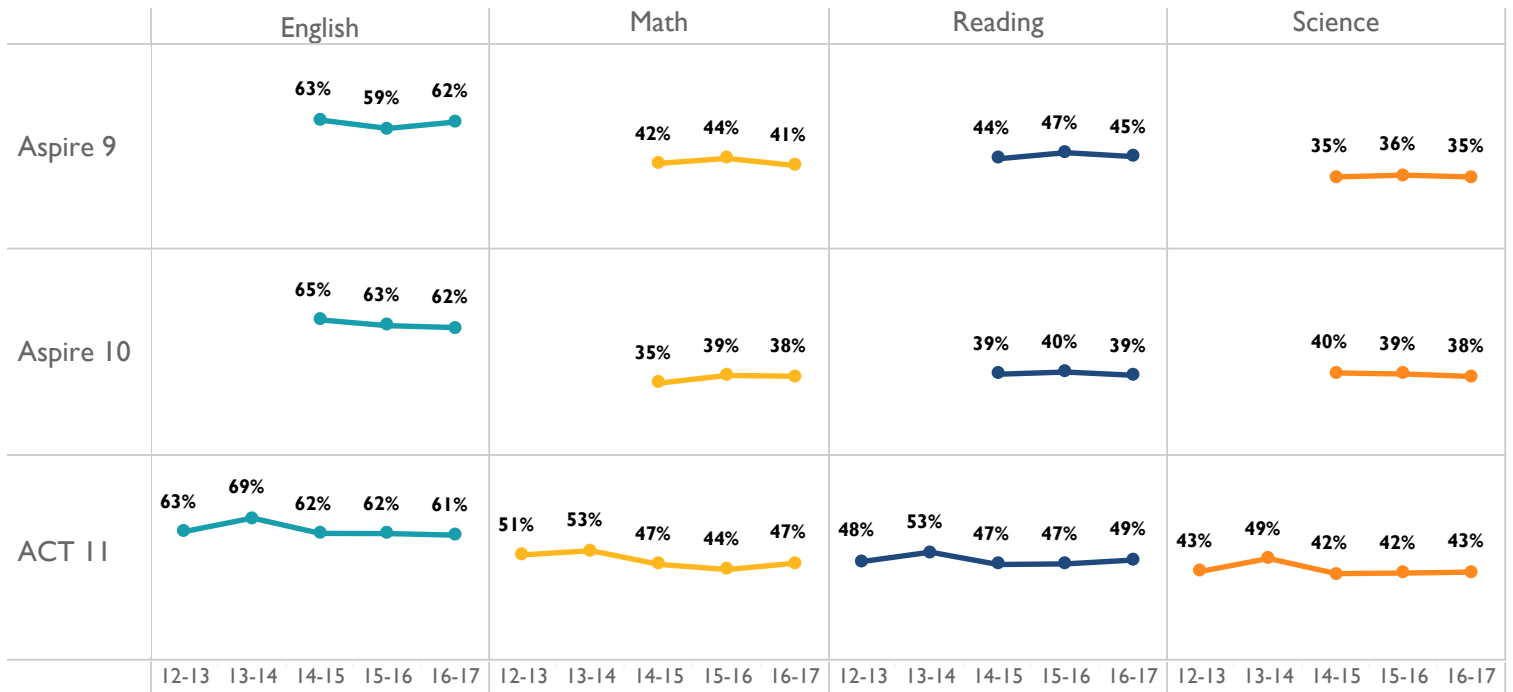
Demographic	Aspire 9		Aspire 10		ACT II	
	16-17 Participation	3 Year Change	16-17 Participation	3 Year Change	16-17 Participation	5 Year Change
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>						
Asian	97%	3%	93%	-2%	93%	12%
Black or African-American	82%	-2%	81%	0%	73%	21%
Hispanic/Latino	93%	-2%	89%	2%	82%	11%
Multiracial	92%	4%	83%	2%	86%	6%
White	94%	1%	91%	1%	93%	4%
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	92%	0%	90%	2%	88%	13%
Female	91%	0%	87%	0%	87%	6%
<i>Special Education</i>						
Students with Disabilities	76%	-4%	75%	-3%	67%	25%
Students without Disabilities	94%	1%	91%	1%	91%	5%
<i>English Language Learner</i>						
ELL	94%	-1%	91%	0%	89%	18%
Not ELL	91%	1%	87%	1%	87%	7%
<i>Low-income</i>						
Low-income	86%	-3%	83%	1%	81%	19%
Not Low-income	96%	3%	92%	1%	92%	1%

The participation rates on the Aspire and ACT assessments are associated with student attendance during the school year. Student racial/ethnic and demographic groups with historically lower attendance rates also had lower assessment participation rates, while groups with historically higher attendance rates had higher participation rates.



Overall Performance

Figure 3: Percent of Students Meeting Benchmark Scores by Assessment and Subject

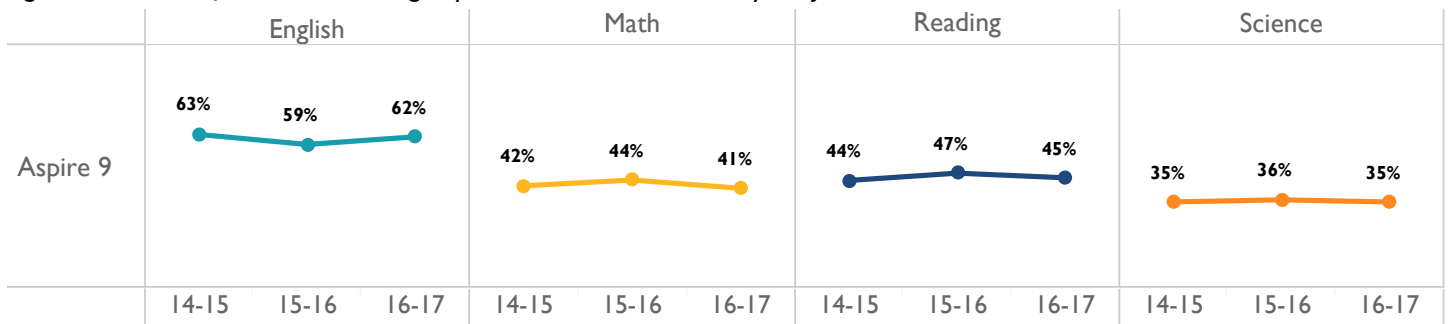


The percent of students meeting college readiness benchmark scores on ACT and Aspire subject tests remained relatively stable across multiple years. Reading was the only subject where there was an increase in students meeting the benchmark score across all assessments. English was the only subject where there was a decrease in the percent of students meeting the benchmark score across all assessments, but was still the subject with the highest rates of meeting benchmark scores, with students on each test having rates over 60%.



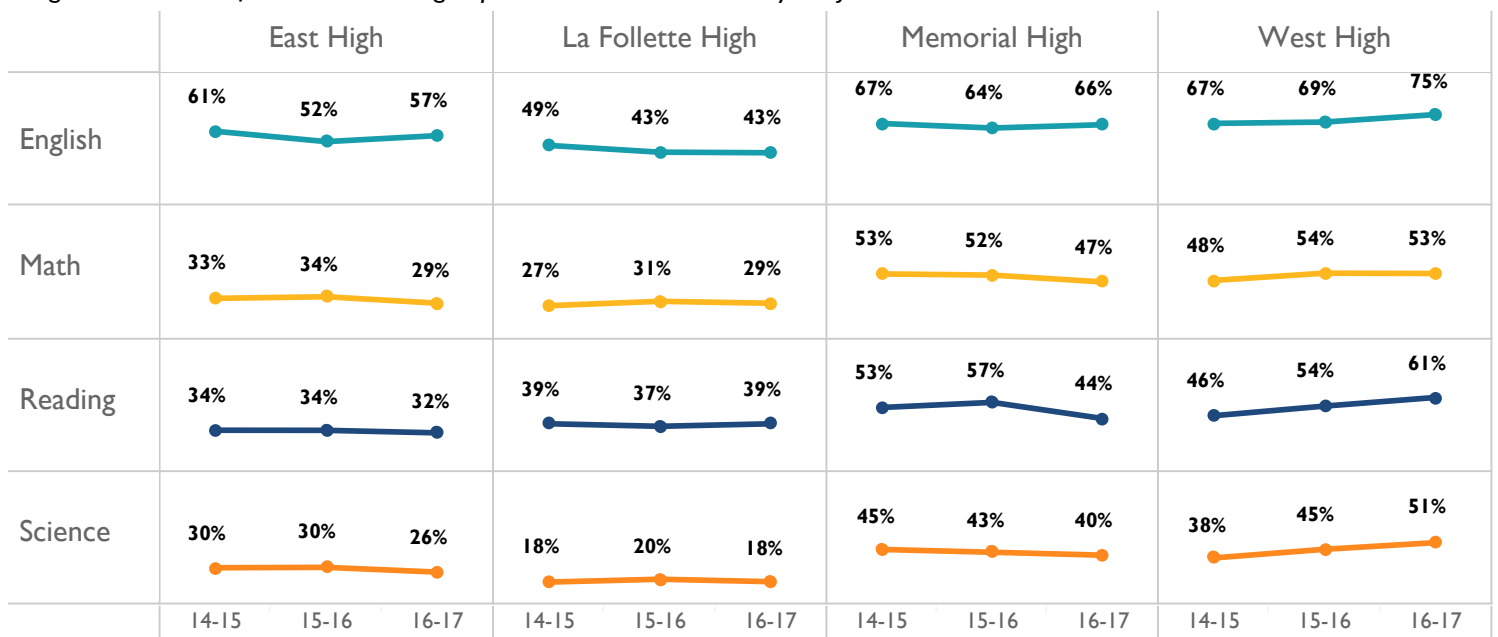
Aspire 9 Results

Figure 4: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 9 Benchmark Scores by Subject



Ninth grade students taking the Aspire assessment had stable rates of achieving benchmark scores. All subjects had three year changes less than or equal to 1%. Across all schools, racial/ethnic groups, and student demographics, students met the English benchmark score at the highest rate and met the Science benchmark score at the lowest rate.

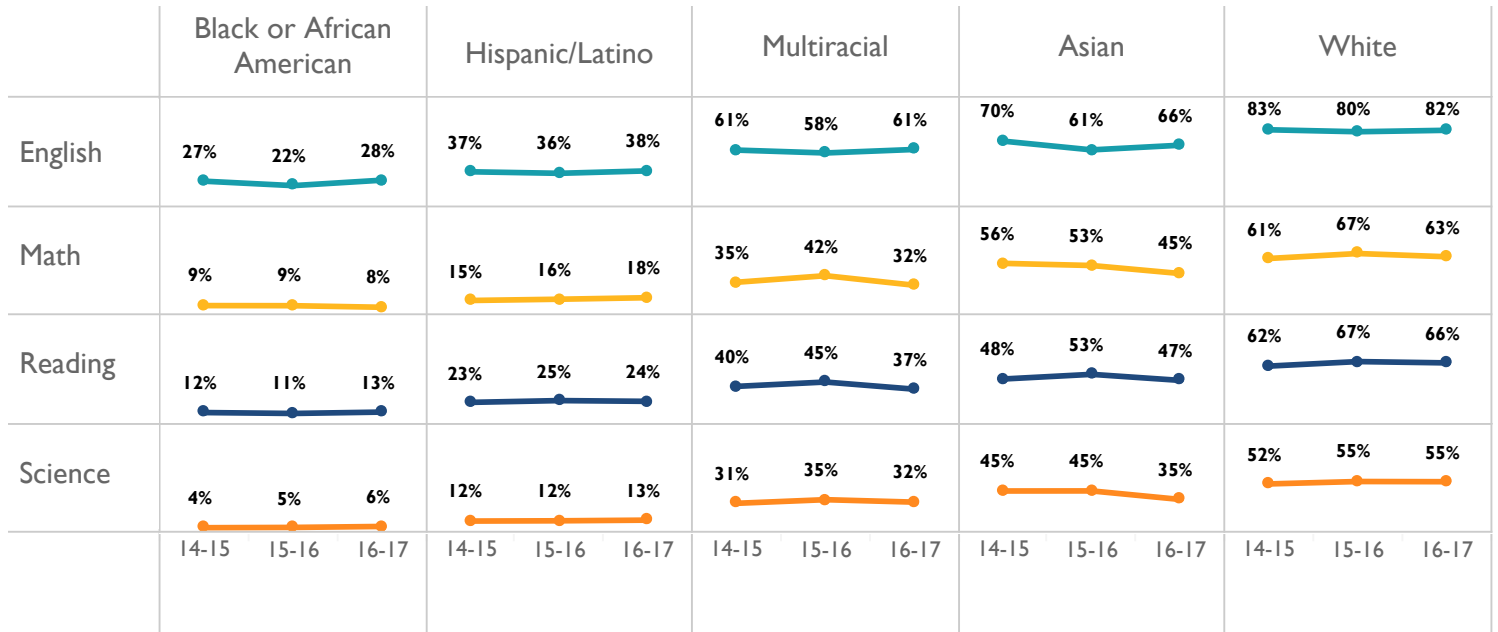
Figure 5: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 9 Benchmark Scores by Subject and School



The percent of students meeting benchmark scores on all subjects remained relatively stable across all four traditional high schools. West High school had an increase in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores on all four subjects. East and Memorial High school had decreases in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores on all four subjects.



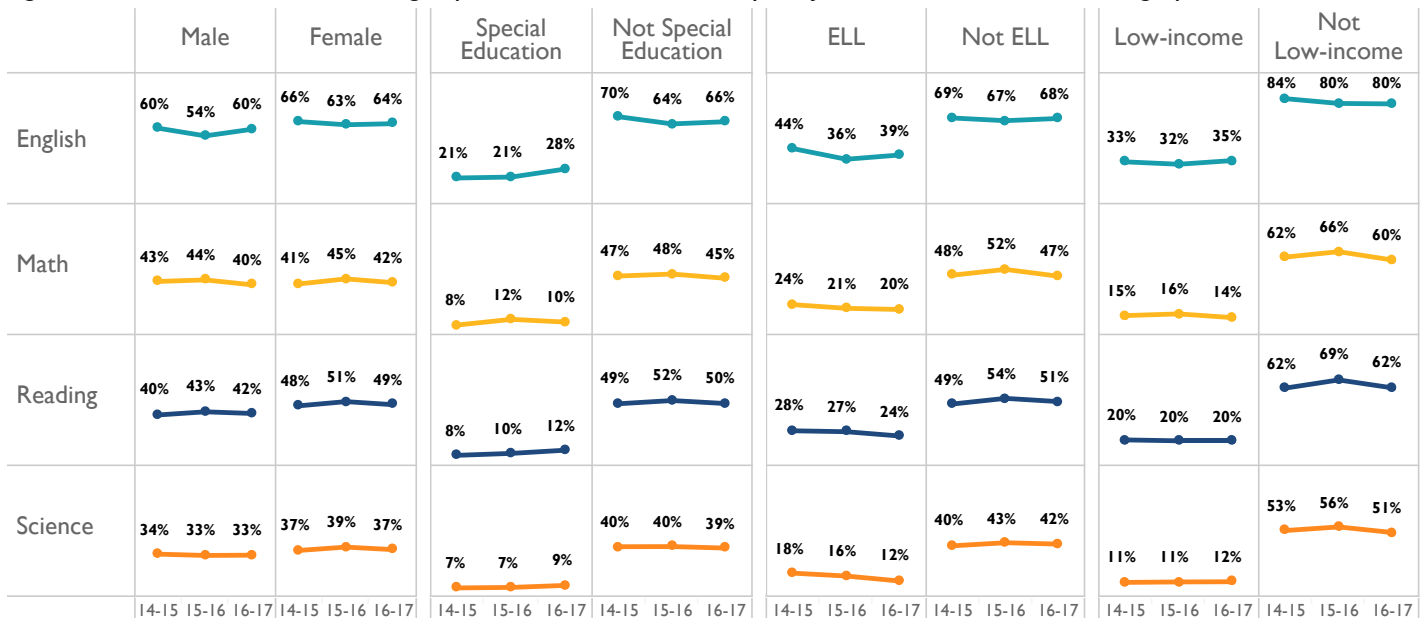
Figure 6: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 9 Benchmark Scores by Subject and Race/Ethnicity



*The table is organized left to right by Composite score, where the racial/ethnic group with the lowest average composite score is on the left.

Students identifying as white had the highest rate of students meeting benchmark scores, while students identifying as African American had the lowest rates. The gap between white and Black or African-American students in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores remained constant across all subjects, at around 50%.

Figure 7: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 9 Benchmark Scores by Subject and Other Student Demographics

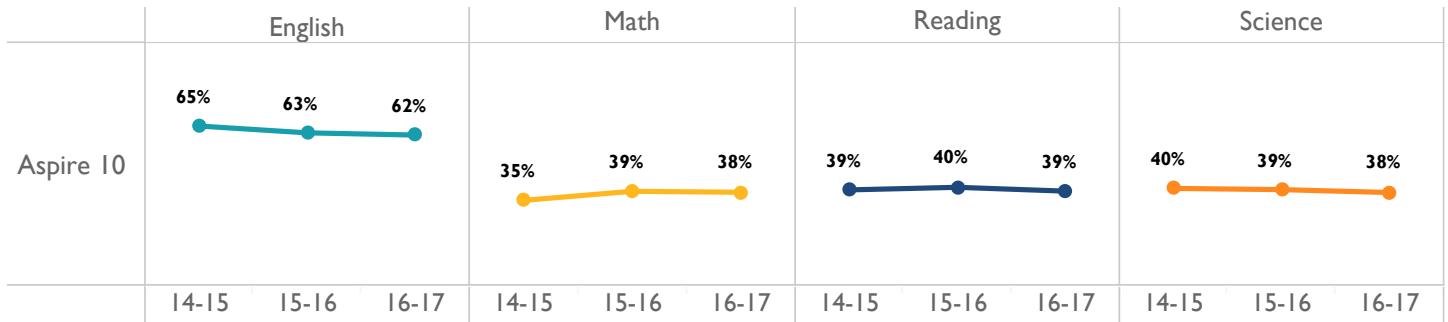


Gaps in the rates of students meeting benchmark scores among student demographic groups persist across all subjects. The gaps were smallest between English language learner and non-English language learner students, compared to the two other demographic groups. Students receiving special education services were the only student demographic to have an increase in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores on all subjects.



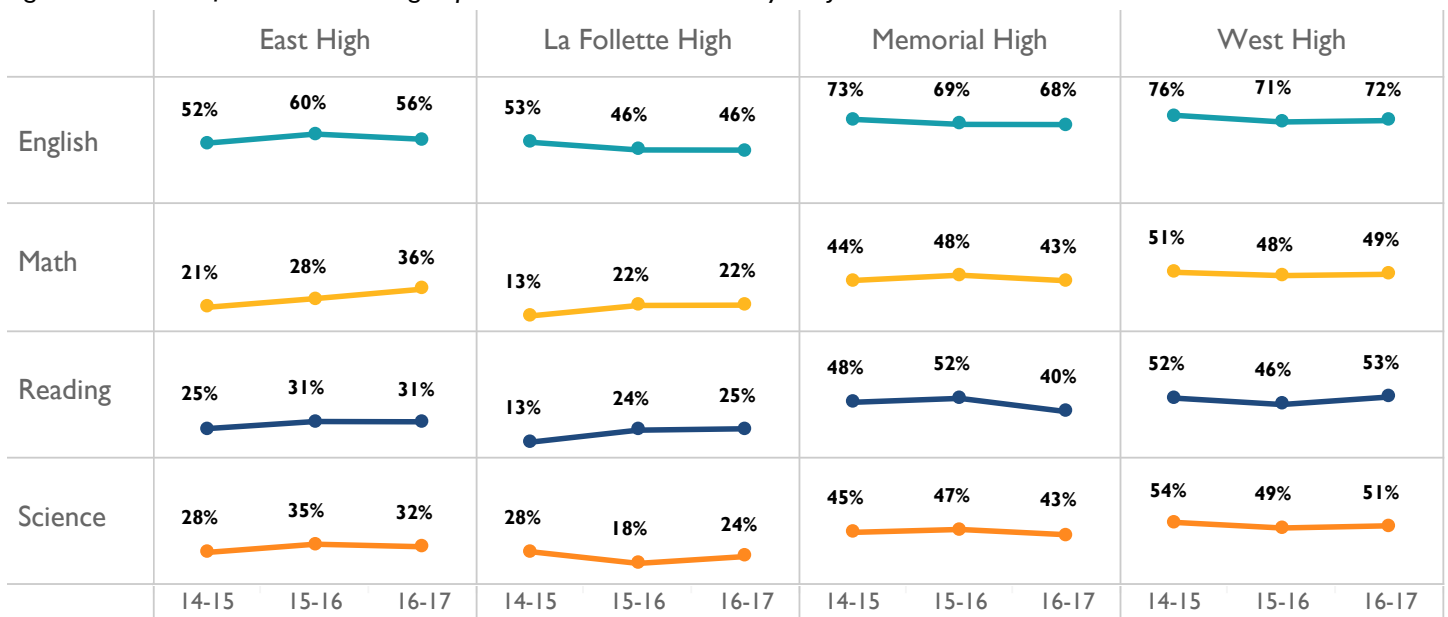
Aspire 10 Results

Figure 8: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 10 Benchmark Scores by Subject



Tenth grade students taking the Aspire assessment had stable rates of achieving college readiness benchmark scores. Rates decreased on the English and Science subtests, while rates increased on the Math subtest. Across all schools, racial/ethnic groups, and student demographics, students met the English benchmark score at the highest rate. The three other subject groups had relatively similar rates.

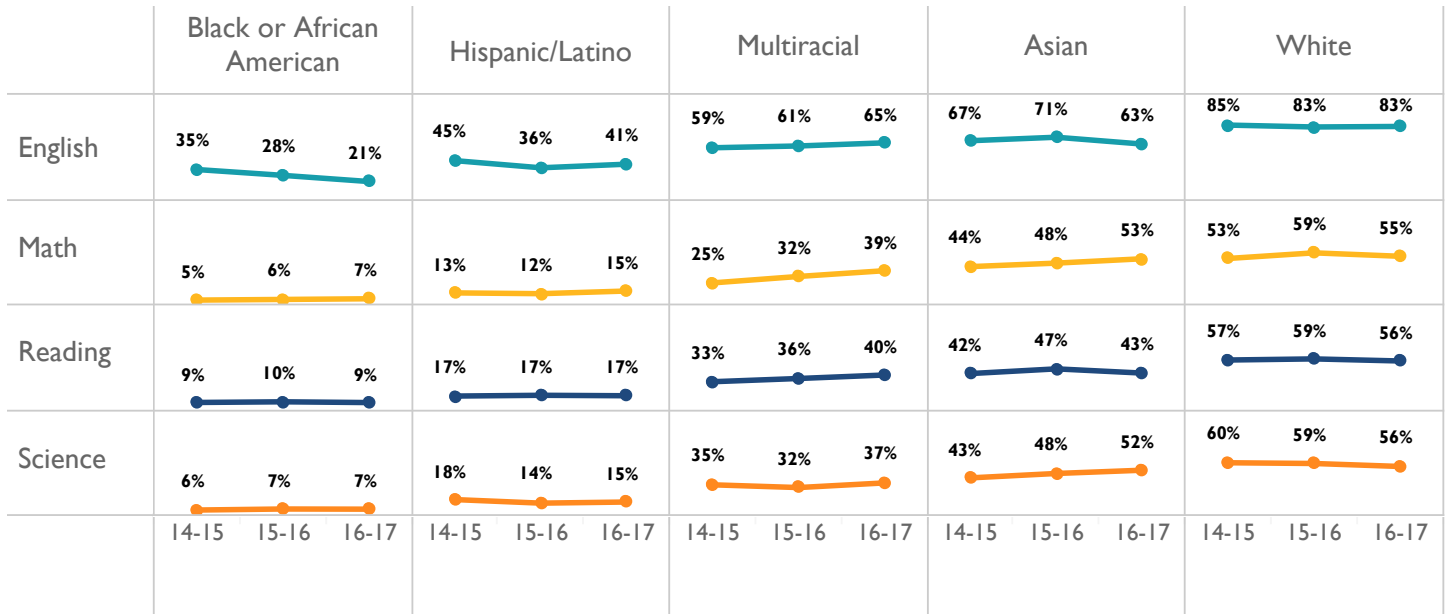
Figure 9: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 10 Benchmark Scores by Subject and School



The percent of students meeting college readiness benchmark scores on all subjects remained relatively stable across all four traditional high schools. East High school had increases in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores on all subjects, including a 15% increase on the Math subject test. Memorial and West High school had slight decreases in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores on all subjects.



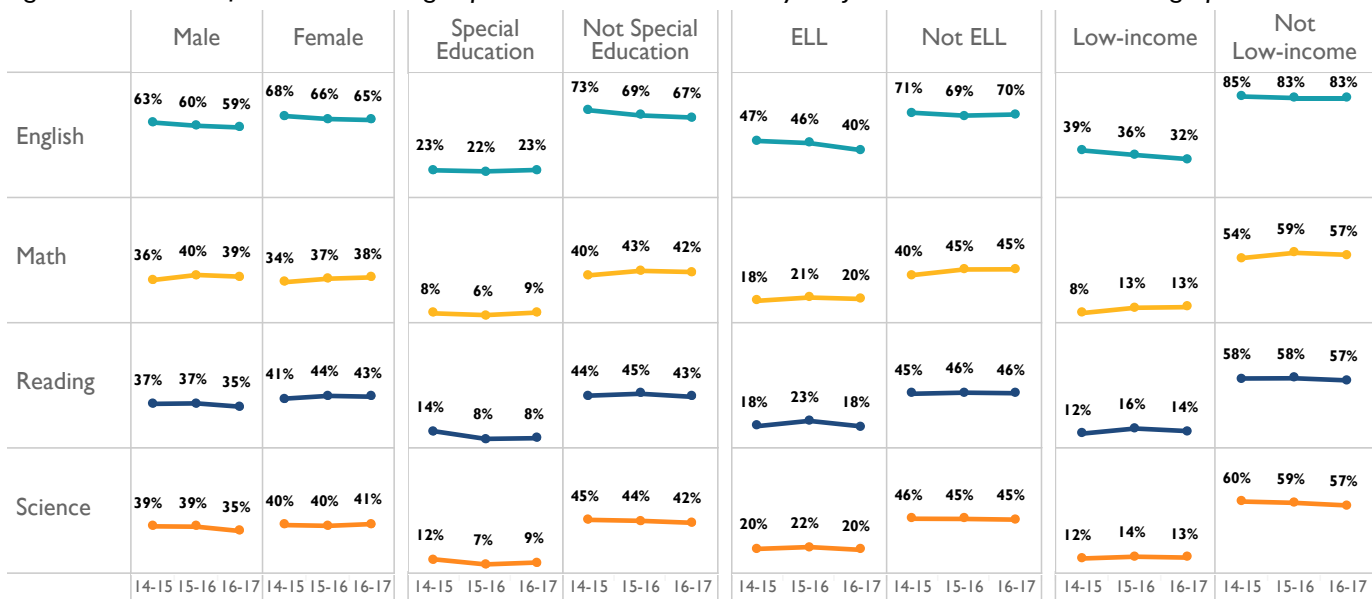
Figure 10: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 10 Benchmark Scores by Subject and Race/Ethnicity



*The table is organized left to right by Composite score, where the racial/ethnic group with the lowest composite score is on the left.

Students identifying as white had the highest rate of students meeting college readiness benchmark scores, while students identifying as Black or African-American had the lowest rates. The gap in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores between white and Black or African-American students remained constant across the Math, Reading, and Science subjects, at around 50%. There was a large increase in the gap on the English test, due to a 14% decrease in the percent of African-American students meeting the English benchmark score.

Figure 11: Percent of Students Meeting Aspire 10 Benchmark Scores by Subject and Other Student Demographics

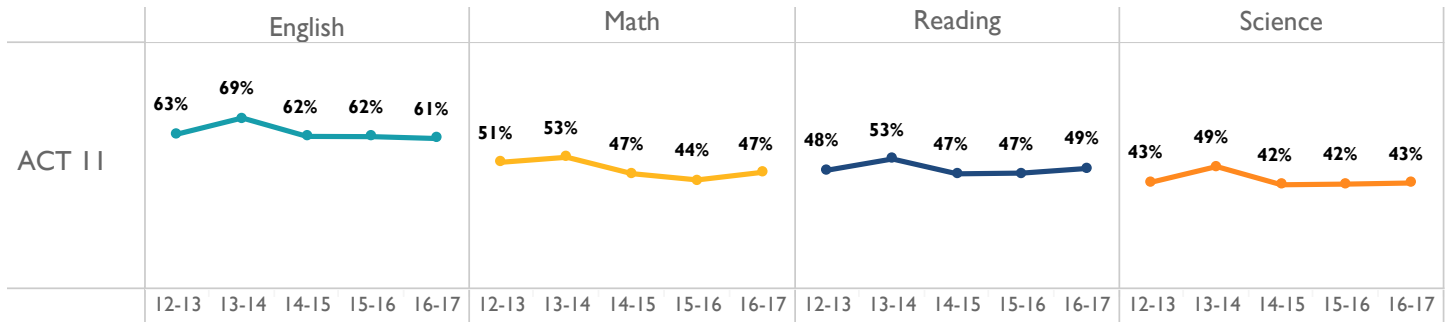


Gaps in rates of students meeting college readiness benchmark scores among student demographic groups persist across all subjects. The gaps in rates of students meeting benchmark scores are smallest between English Language Learner and non-English Language Learner students, compared to the two other demographic groups.



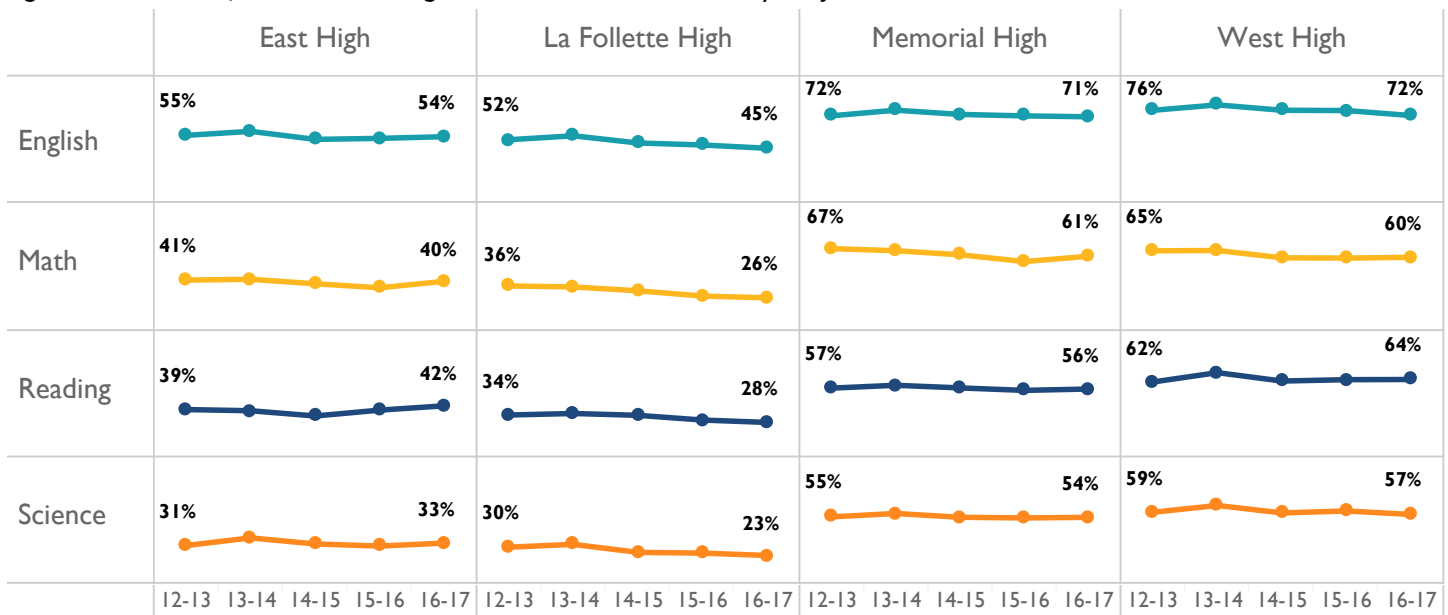
ACT II Results

Figure 12: Percent of Students Meeting ACT II Benchmark Scores by Subject



Eleventh grade students taking the ACT assessment had stable rates of achieving college readiness benchmark scores on the English, Reading, and Science subject tests across the five year timespan. There was a 4% decrease in the percent of students meeting the Math benchmark score. Across all schools, racial/ethnic groups, and student demographics, students met the English benchmark score at the highest rate, while they met the Science test benchmarks at the lowest rate.

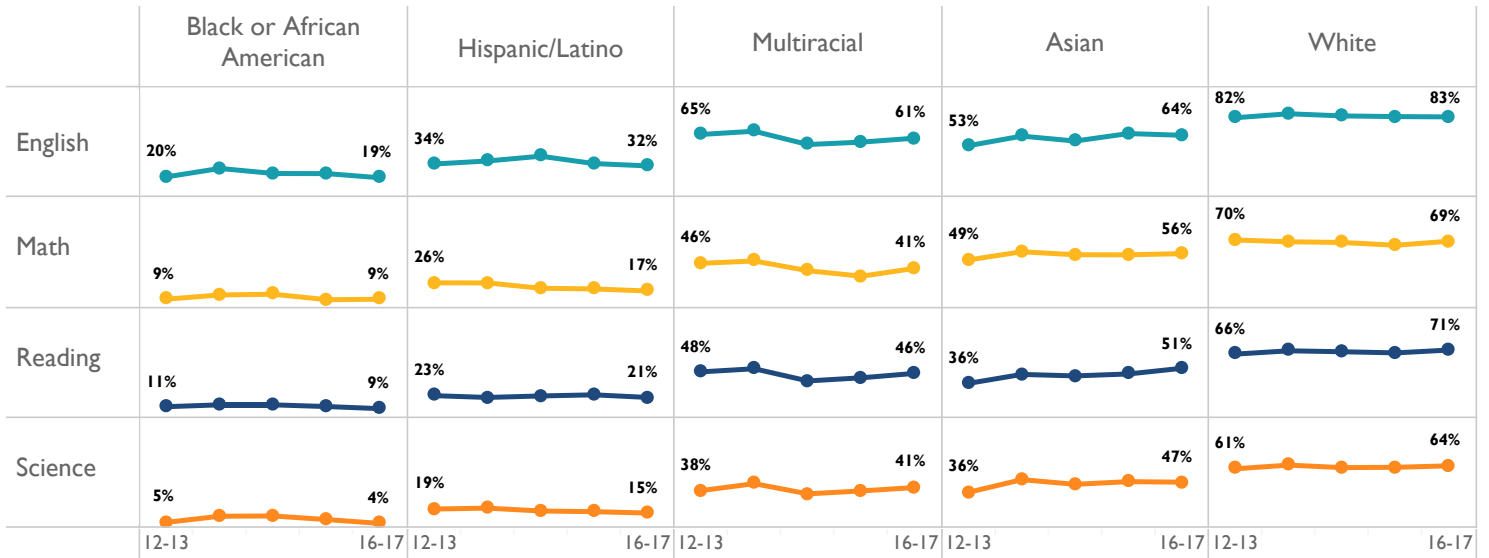
Figure 13: Percent of Students Meeting ACT II Benchmark Scores by Subject and School



Similar to trends at the district level, students had the highest rate of meeting the college readiness benchmark score on the English test across all schools, and the lowest rate on the Science test. Memorial and West High school had higher rates of students meeting benchmark scores on all subjects than East and La Follette High schools. La Follette was the only high school to have noticeable changes in rates on all subjects – all were large decreases in the rate of students meeting ACT benchmark scores.



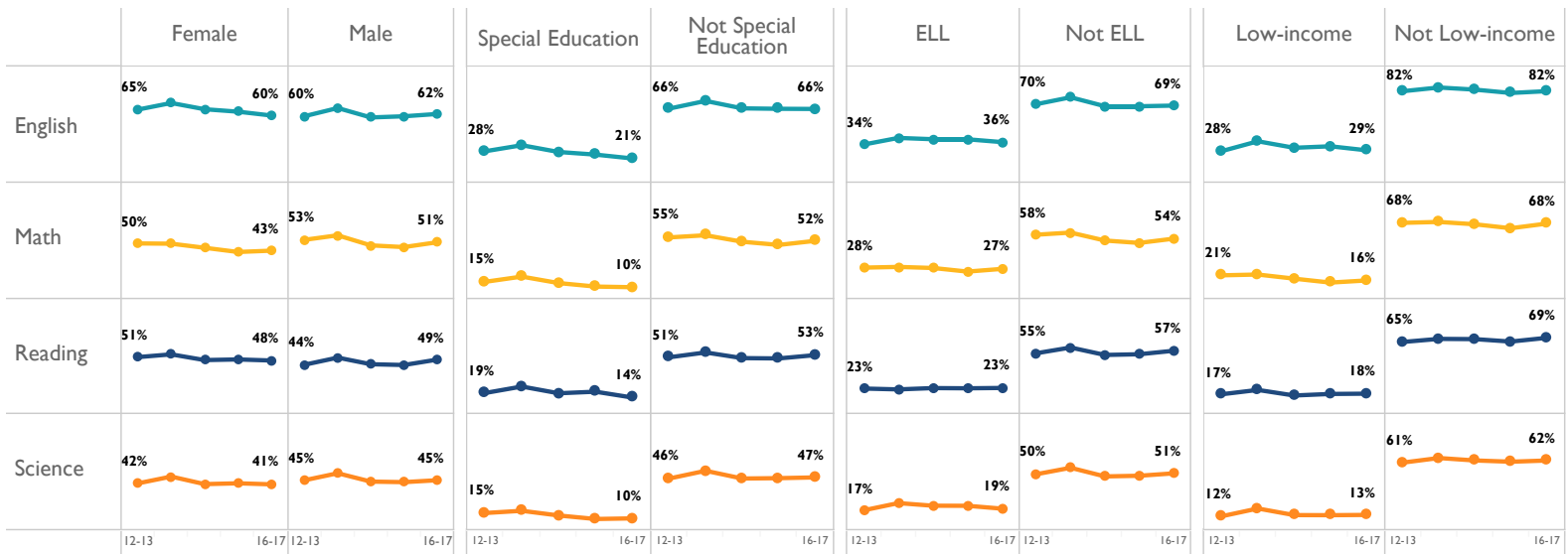
Figure 14: Percent of Students Meeting ACT II Benchmark Scores by Subject and Race/Ethnicity



*The table is organized left to right by Composite score, where the racial/ethnic group with the lowest composite score is on the left.

Students identifying as white had the highest rate of students meeting college readiness benchmark scores, while students identifying as African-American had the lowest rates. The gap between white and Black or African-American students in the percent of students meeting benchmark scores on the ACT was the largest of all three assessments.

Figure 15: Percent of Students Meeting ACT II Benchmark Scores by Subject and Other Student Demographics



Gaps in rates of 11th grade students meeting college readiness benchmark scores among student demographic groups persist across all subjects and are the largest of all three assessments. The gaps between the percent of low-income and not low-income students meeting benchmark scores is the largest of all student demographic groups, with gaps over 50% on all subjects.



Appendix: ACT Testing Information

Description

ACT Inc.'s tests collectively provide a longitudinal, systematic approach to educational and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation. The system focuses on the integrated, higher-order thinking skills students develop in grades K-12 that are important for success during and after high school. The Aspire tests are an integrated, standards based set of summative tests linked to ACT College Readiness Benchmarks and other state standards.

Each test consists of four multiple-choice tests (English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science), and a Writing test. These assessments are based on the four major areas of high school and postsecondary instructional programs and measures the skills and knowledge needed for college success. Additionally, the assessments include a section on career exploration designed to stimulate students' thinking about future plans. These tests have been implemented by many districts as a component of the push towards a system that promotes college and career readiness for all students.

ACT College Readiness Benchmarks

ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are scores on the ACT subject-area tests that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses. For more information on how ACT sets these benchmarks, see <http://www.act.org/solutions/college-career-readiness/college-readiness-benchmarks/>. The College Readiness Benchmarks by test are listed below.

College Course	ACT Subject-Area Test	Aspire 9 Benchmark	Aspire 10 Benchmark	ACT Benchmark
<i>English Composition</i>	English	426	428	18
<i>College Algebra</i>	Mathematics	428	432	22
<i>Introductory Social Sciences</i>	Reading	425	428	22
<i>Biology</i>	Science	430	432	23
—	Writing	428	428	—

ACT, Inc. does not set a College Readiness Benchmark for composite scores on the EPAS tests or writing scores on the ACT.

Administration

During the 2012-13 school year, MMSD voluntarily implemented universal administration of the EPAS system, which meant that all students in grades 8-11 were required to take the appropriate EPAS assessment. The 2014-15 school year marked the first year the Aspire tests, ACT test, and the WorkKeys test was mandated by the state.

The ACT was offered free to students by the state on February, 28, 2017, while the WorkKeys test offered free to students on March 28, 2017. Only students in eleventh grade were required to attend MMSD schools on March 1 (the ACT testing day). The Aspire tests were administered on April 26, 2017 and April 27, 2017 for 9th and 10th grade students.

**Uses of Results**

MMSD uses ACT testing results for a variety of purposes, including:

- Planning and assessment for students – helping students understand their academic progress, identify career and educational goals, and take the necessary steps to achieve them
- Instructional support for staff – enables teachers and other educational staff see the direct link between what is being taught in the classroom and the content and skills necessary for college and career readiness
- Progress tracking of achievement for district – shows teachers and administrators how students are growing between EPAS levels and illustrates trends over time in student achievement
- Milestones tracked and monitored for School Improvement Plans (SIPs)