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South Dakota’s ACT score steady, above the nation

PIERRE, S.D. – According to data released earlier today, South Dakota’s average composite ACT score is above the national average. The statewide composite score for the graduating class of 2015 – which includes scores for English, math, reading and science – was 21.9, versus the national average which was 21.0. Seventy-six percent of the state’s 2015 graduates took the ACT, an impressive percentage in a state that does not require ACT.

“The high ACT participation rate is an indicator that many of our students are considering pursuing some sort of postsecondary education,” said Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp. “ACT’s report also shows that many of these students are considering schools right here in South Dakota, which is great news for building the state’s workforce.”

When students take the ACT, they can indicate which institutions of higher education they would like their scores sent to. Of the top 12 institutions mentioned, 10 of them are in South Dakota and include both public and private universities, as well as technical institutes.

Schopp speculates that the state’s low-cost dual credit program, along with efforts such as the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship, help to keep more students looking in-state when considering their options for postsecondary education. “These programs connect young people to our in-state institutions, giving students more reasons to stay home and study in South Dakota,” she said.

For many years, ACT has been an important indicator when considering students’ readiness to take college-level courses. Moving forward, South Dakota’s public universities will also be looking at performance on the state assessment at grade 11 as another indicator of a student’s readiness.

For more information, visit ACT’s website at www.act.org.

Average Composite ACT Scores – South Dakota vs. National

Year	South Dakota	National
2011	21.8	21.1
2012	21.8	21.1
2013	21.9	20.9
2014	21.9	21.0
2015	21.9	21.0