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South Dakota ACT scores remain steady, above national average

PIERRE, S.D. – South Dakota’s average ACT composite score is up slightly from 2017 and remains above the national average. South Dakota’s average ACT score for 2018 was 21.9, compared to the national average of 20.8 and last year’s statewide average of 21.8. The composite score reflects sub-scores for English, math, reading and science. ACT is a commonly recognized college entrance exam.

In South Dakota, 77 percent of 2018 graduates took the ACT, compared to 55 percent nationally.

According to ACT, 92 percent of South Dakota’s 2018 graduates who took the ACT indicated that they aspire to pursue postsecondary education. “The fact that so many students are interested in a postsecondary experience is great,” said Interim Secretary of Education Mary Stadick Smith. “That said, it’s critical that we help these students find pathways that make sense for them based on their skills and interests, and that have alignment to workforce need.”

All six South Dakota public universities and four technical institutes recognize ACT scores, as well as scores on the 11th grade state test, for admission and placement into courses. This month, public school seniors who have achieved qualifying scores on either of these tests will receive guaranteed general acceptance into those institutions, through the state’s proactive admissions initiative. In addition, students who don’t meet the benchmark will receive information about specialized coursework they can do throughout their senior year to get them ready for college entrance.

For more information, visit ACT’s website at act.org. More information about the [proactive admissions](#) and [college readiness coursework](#) programs is also available online.

Average Composite ACT Scores – South Dakota vs. National

Year	South Dakota	National
2014	21.9	21.0
2015	21.9	21.0
2016	21.9	20.8
2017	21.8	21.0
2018	21.9	20.8