The Truth About:
Ohio's College Readiness

Aspirations Indicate Increased Performance

Unsurprisingly, for the Ohio graduating class of 2019, students who indicated aspirations of higher postsecondary education score significantly higher than the state average. Potential first-generation college students are even further behind college-readiness indicators and should be a focus of policy.

Recent State Policy Changes Affect Ohio's Scores

Over the last five years, Ohio's ACT college readiness benchmarks have been decreasing. Recent changes in state policy, going into effect in 2018, have made one ACT test free for each high school junior. This policy change increased the ACT test participation rate from 75 to 100 percent. Increased participation, typically among students who are less academically prepared, has significantly reduced average scores. In Ohio's 2019 graduating class, 126,983 students took the ACT test with a composite score average of 20.0, which is below the national average composite score of 20.7.

Impact of Score Improvements is Tangible

According to ACT research estimates, a minor increase of 0.1 in Ohio's average ACT composite score for the 2019 graduating class would have resulted in tangible benefits to the state. The change would have meant 314 more students enrolling in college, 399 fewer students needing remedial math, and an increase of 389 students earning a postsecondary degree.