

# ACT Updates: TACRAO Meeting

July 15, 2025



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Here to support the needs of our higher ed partners:

- Navigating ACT
- Partnership opportunities
- Presentations
- Resources

## Today's Agenda:

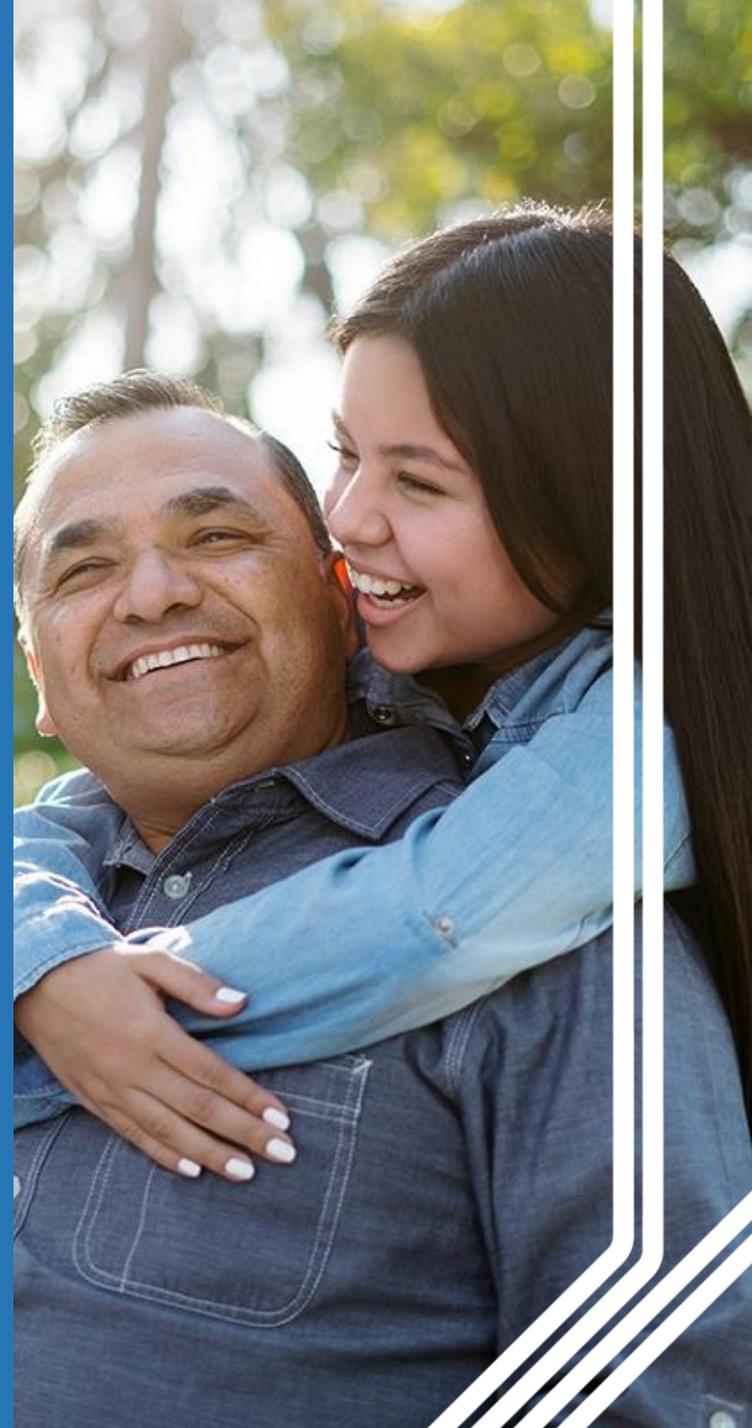
- Meet Colin
- ACT and Encoura
- The Enhanced ACT
  - Validity
  - New Composite Score
  - Superscore
- Updates
- Resources
- Discussion

*We will share  
the slides out  
within the  
week.*

# ACT & Encoura: Distinct Roles, Shared Mission

- ACT acquired Encoura (formerly known as NRCCUA) in 2018
  - Encoura acquired Eduventures® in 2016
- ACT announced partnership with Nexus Capital Management LP in 2024
- ACT administers the ACT and other assessments along with other learning/workforce solutions and research
- Encoura helps higher education institutions with data analysis and market research which incorporates ACT national and state test-takers through the Encoura Data Lab and other combined data sets from ACT

# ACT Enhancements



# Key Enhancements to the ACT



## Shorter Test, More Time per Item

- 44 items shorter across sections
- Composite score in ~2 hours
- ~10 seconds + per item
- Eliminate 5<sup>th</sup> test



## More Flexibility

- Science is optional – like writing
- Composite Score based on English, Math & Reading



## Expand Online Testing

- Now available to National testers
- Online test is linear, not adaptive
- Committed to paper testing



## Content Update

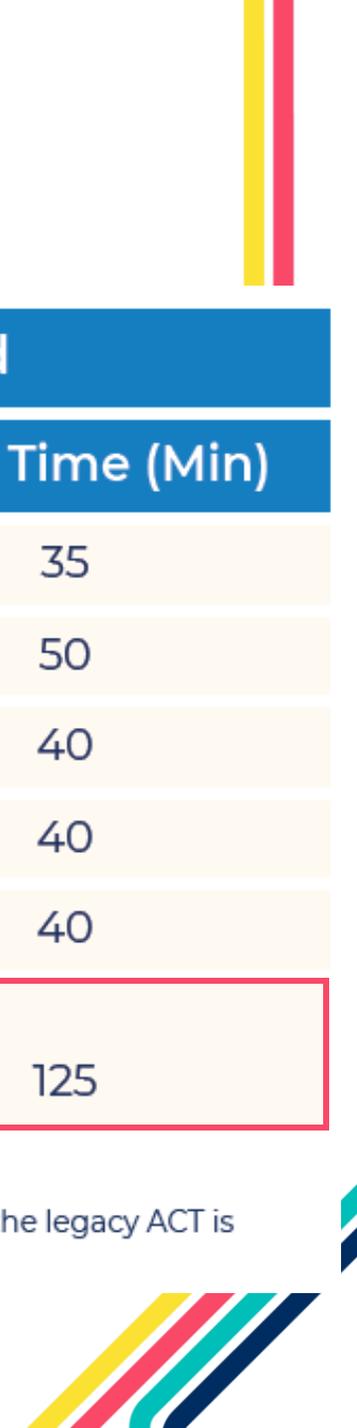
- Rebalance reporting categories
- Math – 4 answer choices
- Science – engineering & design

# Key Enhancements: Test Blueprint

	ACT - Legacy		ACT - Enhanced	
	Items	Total Time (Min)	Items	Total Time (Min)
English	75	45	50*	35
Math	60	60	45*	50
Reading	40	35	36*	40
Science	40	35	40*	40
Writing	1	40	1	40
<b>Core ACT Administration**</b>	215	175	131*	125

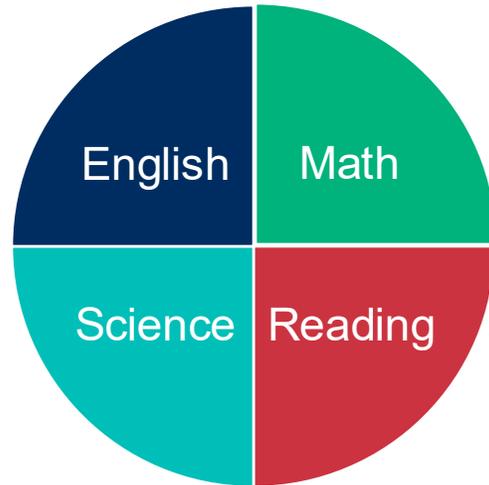
\*Number includes embedded field-test items that do not contribute to score points.

\*\*The core administration is the shortest administration of the test and results in a college-reportable Composite Score. The core administration for the legacy ACT is English, Math, Reading, and Science. The core administration for the enhanced ACT is English, Math, and Reading.



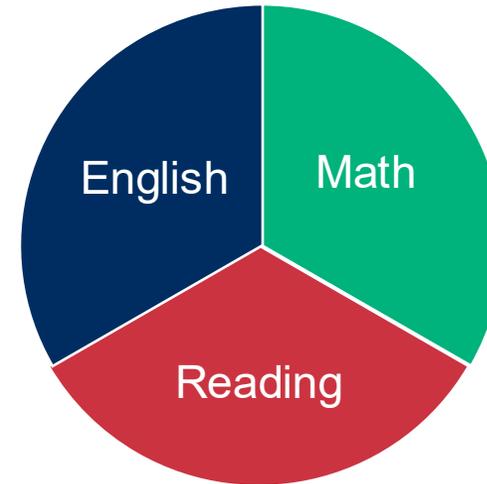
# The New Composite Score: English, Math, Reading

## Legacy Composite



**All Students** receive a STEM Score  
+ **Writing** for an ELA Score

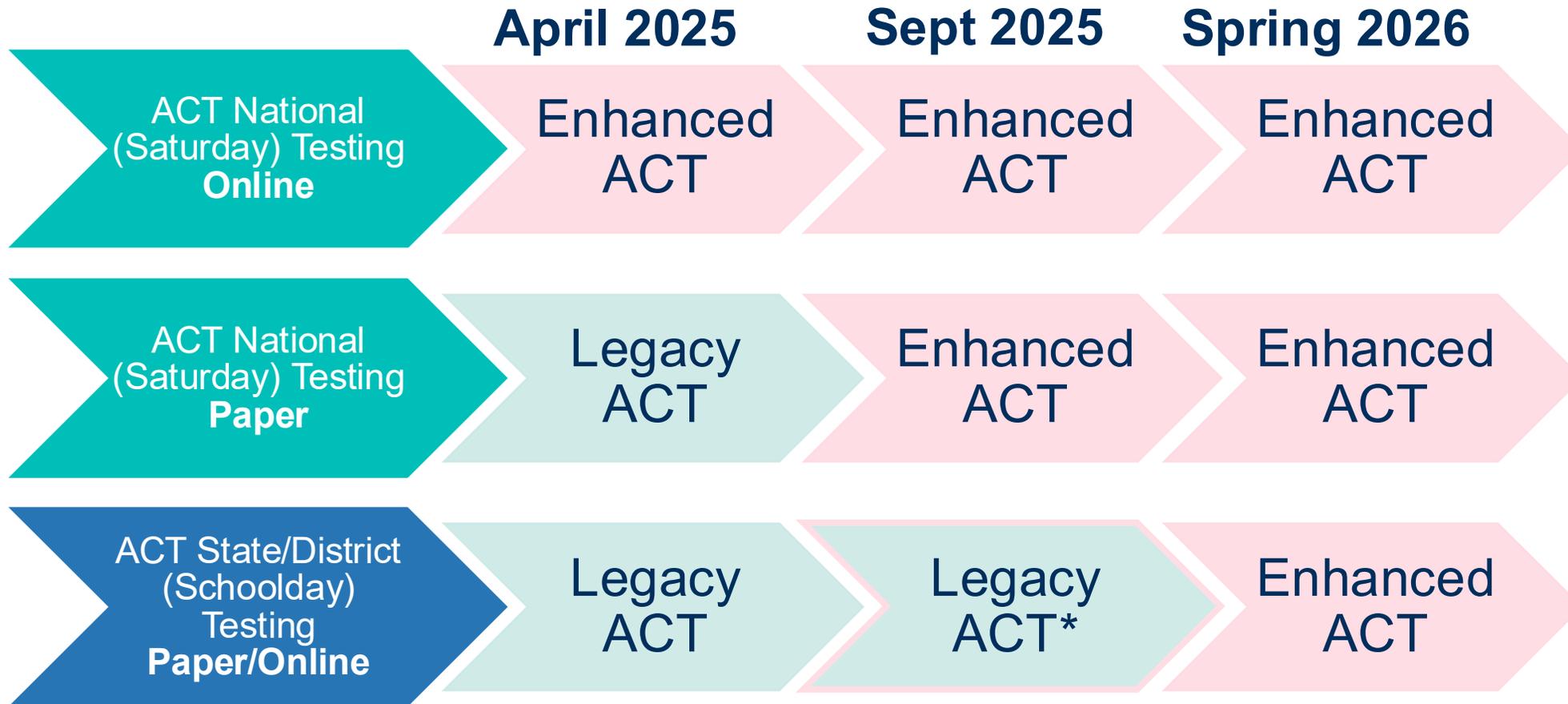
## New Composite



+ **Science** for a STEM Score  
+ **Writing** for an ELA Score

**Note:** Score reports will only report one ACT Composite score. The score will be referred to only as the “Composite score” (“Legacy” or “New” will not be indicated).

# Phased Rollout of the Enhanced ACT & New Composite Score



\*Fall 2025 S/D testers will take the legacy ACT test but will receive the new ACT composite score (EMR)

# Validating the Enhanced ACT Scores

Research Studies

# Major Research Activities

## Assessment Design

### **Timeline:**

- Jan – Sep 2023

### **High Level Scope:**

- Market insights
- Assessment landscape
- Historical research

### **Goals:**

- Maintain 1-36 scale
- Maintain or improve alignment to state standards
- Dual mode delivery
- Include EFT and IRT for future enhancements
- Consistency across market segments

## Design Validation

### **Timeline:**

- Sep 2023- May 2024

### **High Level Scope:**

- Cognitive labs
- Expert panels

### **Goals:**

- Validate alignment to college and career readiness
- Validate examinees can access new content, structures

## Linking Study

### **Timeline:**

- Jun – Oct 2024

### **High Level Scope:**

- Blueprint validation
- Construct equivalence
- Validity

### **Goals:**

- Validate items and forms work as anticipated
- Validate timing
- Establish base form for future equating

## Mode Study

### **Timeline:**

- Oct – Dec 2024

### **High Level Scope:**

- Mode comparability study

### **Goals:**

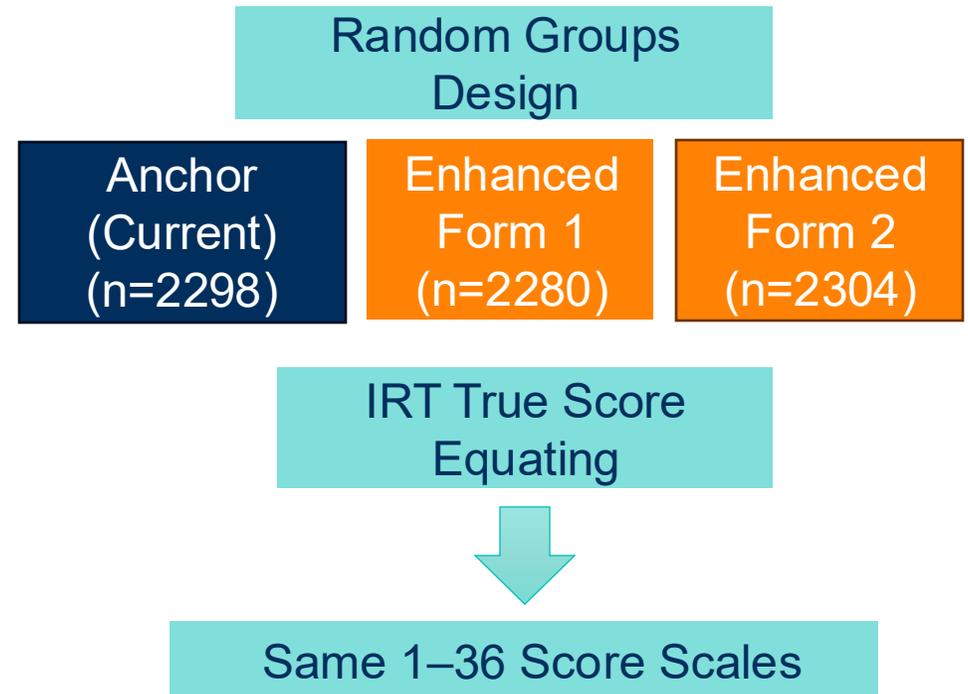
- Evaluate score equivalency for different modes
- Evaluate construct equivalency for different modes
- Establish interchange scores for both modes

# Implications of Linking Study for Students and Educators

- Scores of the enhanced ACT are reported on the same 1–36 scales as the current ACT.
- Slight reduction in measurement precision due to the smaller number of items has little impact on the interpretation of ACT test scores for individual students or group means, especially for the ACT Composite scores.
- The scores from current test and the enhanced ACT test can be used interchangeably.
- Cut scores/performance levels set on section tests are not impacted

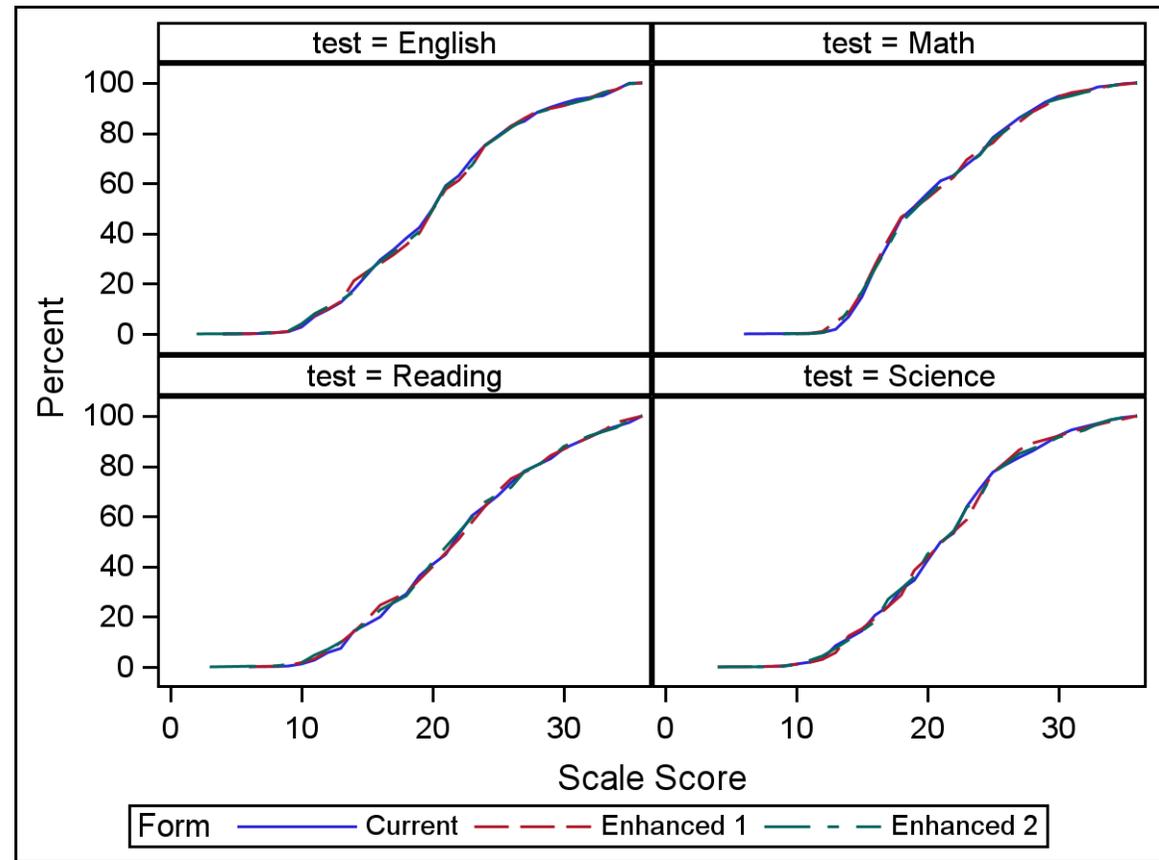
# Linking Design and Statistical Method

- Random groups design
- Item Response Theory (IRT) True Score equating
  - Item parameters were put on the scale of the current ACT item pool.
  - Scores are reported on the same 1–36 scales as the current ACT.



# Nearly Identical Scale Score Distributions After Linking Ensures Score Comparability

	Scale Score Mean ( <i>Standard Deviation</i> )		
	Current Form	Enhanced Form 1	Enhanced Form 2
English	20.7 (6.3)	20.8 (6.4)	20.8 (6.4)
Math	20.9 (5.4)	20.8 (5.6)	20.9 (5.6)
Reading	22.4 (6.6)	22.4 (6.7)	22.4 (6.7)
Science	21.8 (5.7)	21.8 (5.7)	21.8 (5.8)



# The New ACT Composite Score

# The new ACT Composite score

Current Composite Score = EMRS	New Composite Score = EMR
English, math, reading, and science tests	English, math, and reading tests
$\text{EMRS} = \frac{(E+M+R+S)}{4}$	$\text{EMR} = \frac{(E+M+R)}{3}$

- Both EMR and EMRS are measures of general academic achievement
- EMR and EMRS have a lot of overlap in the constructs being measured
- EMR does not incorporate science content, EMRS does
- EMR will give more weight to English, math, and reading than EMRS

# EMR and EMRS will be in the market simultaneously

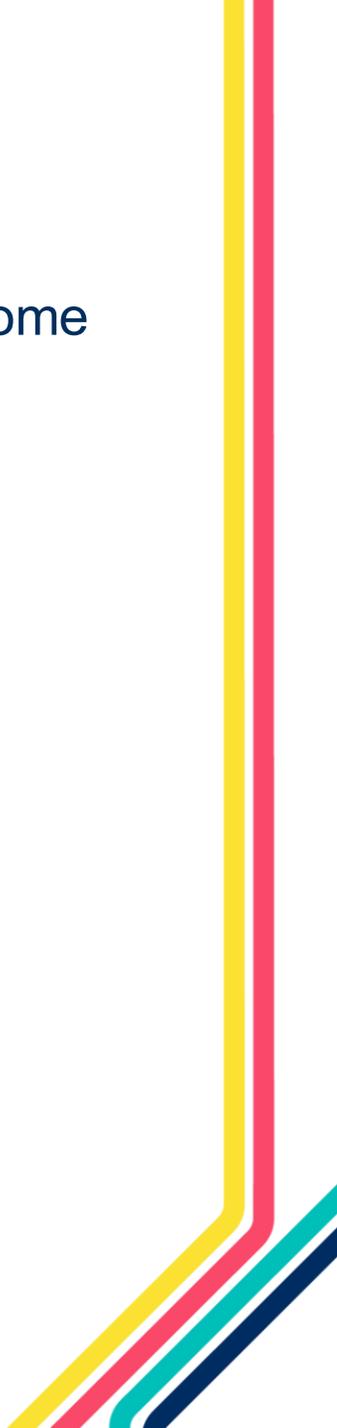
EMR and EMRS can be used interchangeably with the understanding that there are some practical differences between the two scores.

## **EMR and EMRS can be used interchangeably:**

- This means that either score can be used:
  - as a measure of general academic readiness for college
  - as a predictor of general academic performance in college
  - as a criterion for decisions that are based on general academic readiness

## **EMR and EMRS have practical differences:**

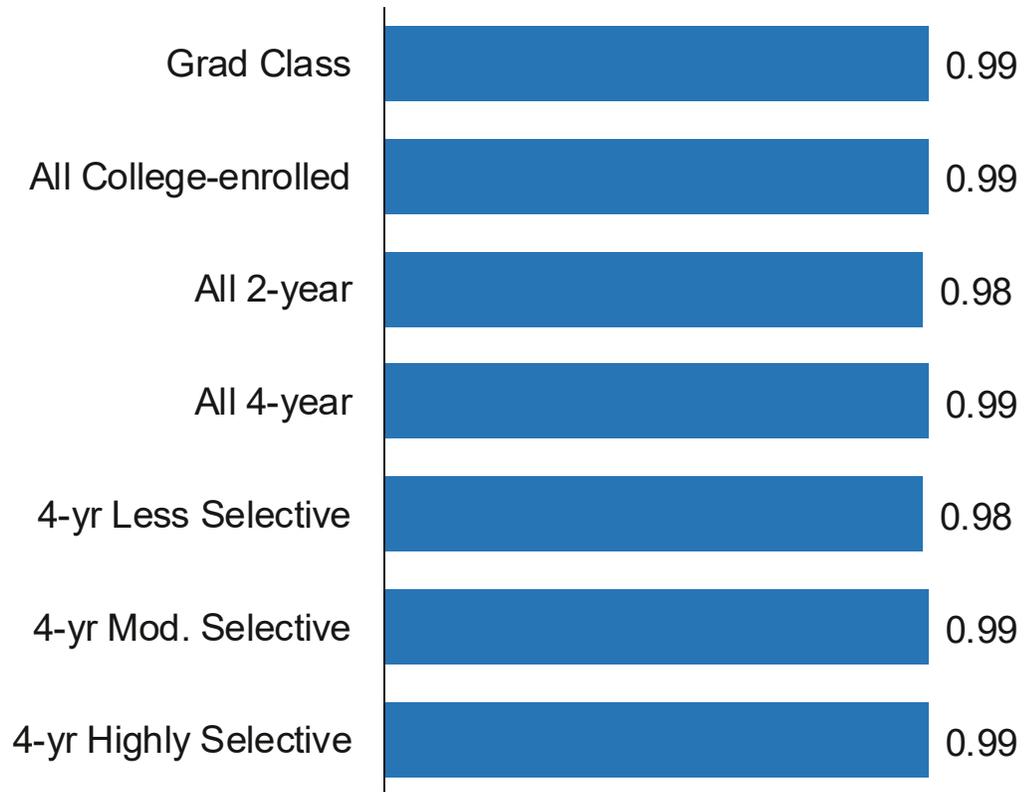
- This means that:
  - A student's EMR score may not always equal their EMRS score
  - EMR scores and EMRS scores will not follow the exact same distribution



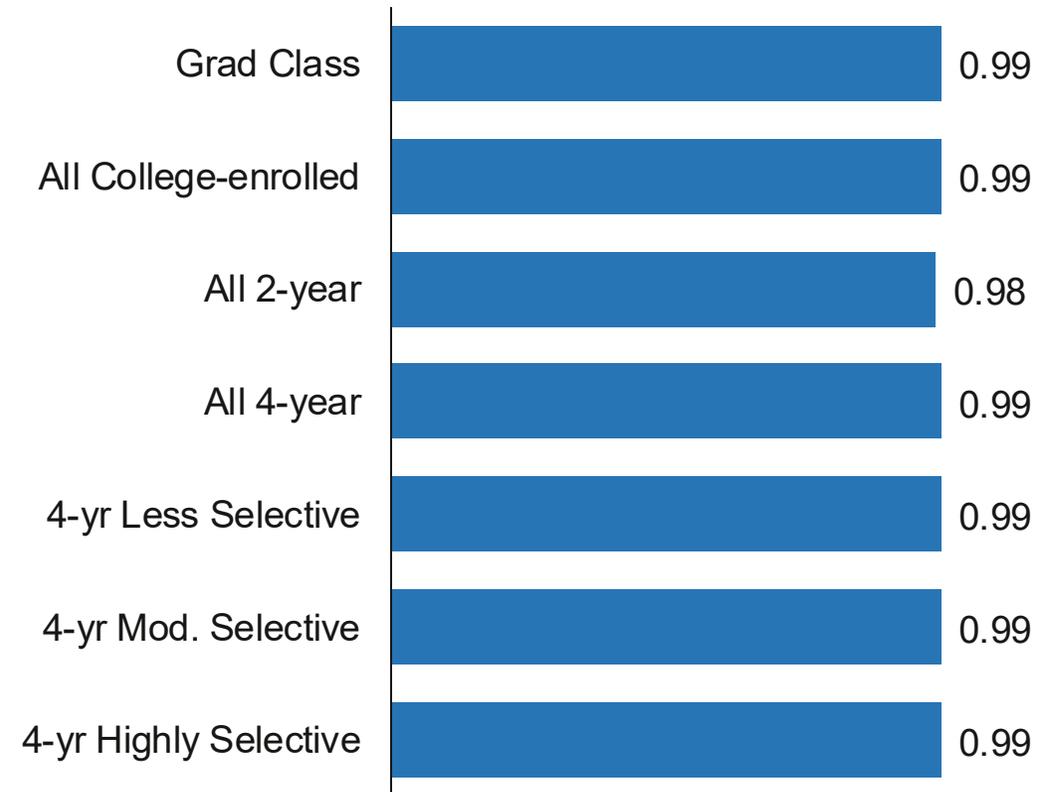
# Why can EMR and EMRS be used interchangeably? EMR is a Nearly-Perfect Predictor of EMRS

## Correlation between EMR and EMRS

### Highest Composite



### Superscore









# EMR and EMRS have practical differences

What are the practical differences between these two scores?

## **For individual students:**

An EMR score may not always be equal to their EMRS score

- Difference in rounding logic when moving from a 4-score to a 3-score composite
- Students' science score relative to their other three section scores

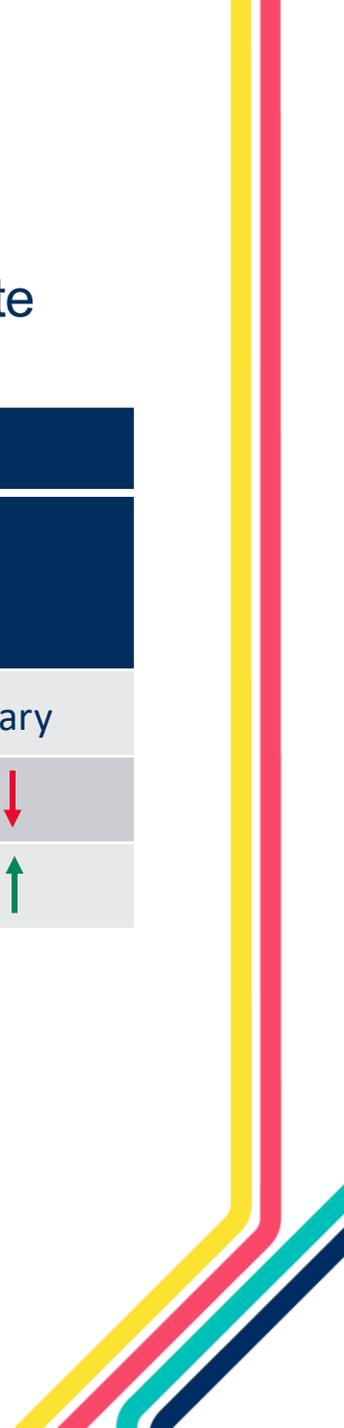
Important Note: Most students' will have an EMR score within  $\pm 1$  point of their EMRS score

# Students' EMR score may not equal their EMRS Score...

- Because of differences in rounding when moving from a 4-score to a 3-score composite

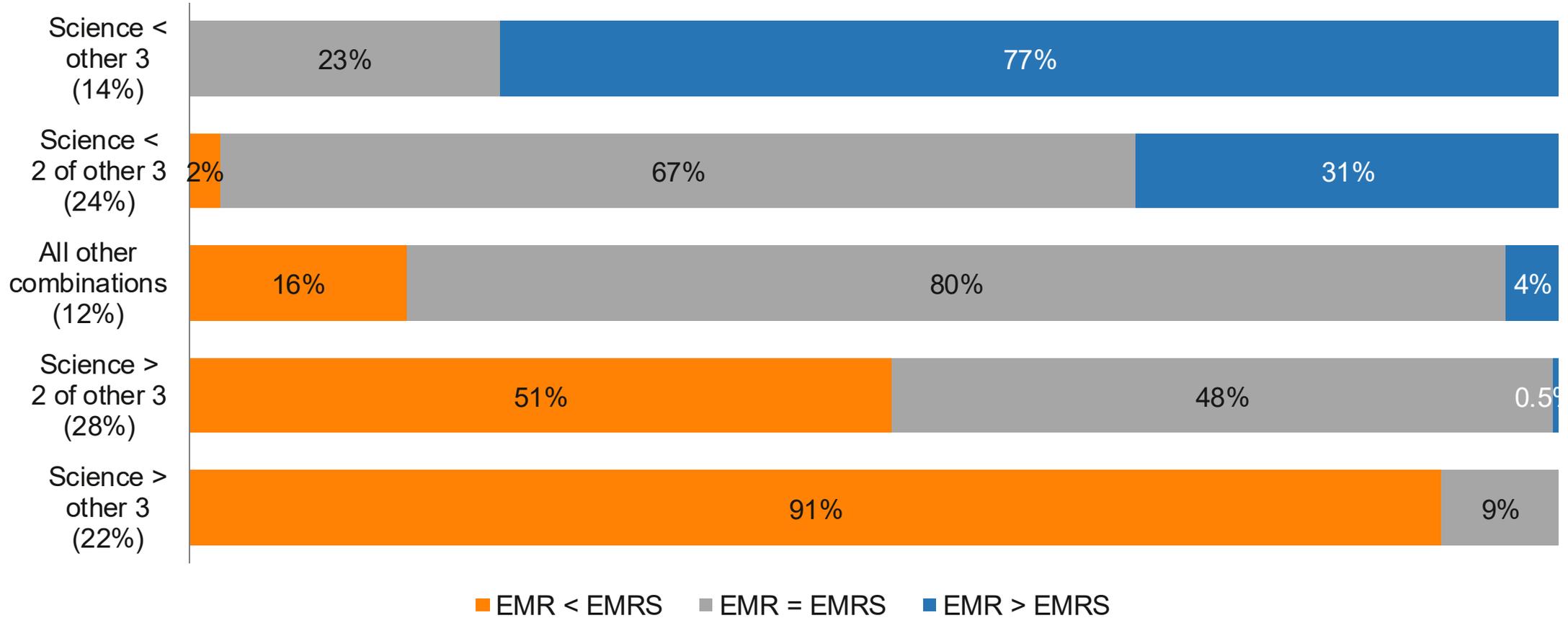
EMRS = (E + M + R + S) / 4		
Value After Decimal	% Earning Mean Score	Rounding Logic
.00	~25%	No rounding necessary
.25	~25%	Rounded down ↓
.50	~25%	Rounded up ↑
.75	~25%	Rounded up ↑

EMR = (E + M + R) / 3		
Value After Decimal	% Earning Mean Score	Rounding Logic
.00	~33%	No rounding necessary
.33	~33%	Rounded down ↓
.67	~33%	Rounded up ↑



# Students' EMR score may not equal their EMRS Score...

- Common section test score scenarios



# The New ACT Composite Score and Superscore

Comparative Information for the Composite Score and Superscore With and Without Science

Fall 2024 First-Time Students



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- Report for colleges
- Helps to understand practical differences between EMR and EMRS scores
- Reports coming in July

# New Composite Score – Example College

	Highest Composite Score		Superscore	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
EMR < EMRS by 2+ points	75	2.5%	69	2.3%
EMR < EMRS by 1 point	644	21.1%	762	24.9%
EMR = EMRS	1,468	48.0%	1,595	52.2%
EMR > EMRS by 1 point	768	25.1%	593	19.4%
EMR > EMRS by 2+ points	102	3.3%	38	1.2%



**Within +/- 1 point**  
**Composite: 94.2%**  
**Superscore: 96.5%**

# Share of Your First-Time Students Meeting a Particular Score: Highest Composite Score

# EXAMPLE

Small differences between the EMR Composite score and EMRS Composite score distributions can result in more (or fewer) students over (or under) a particular threshold (i.e., cut score) along that distribution. It is important for colleges to be aware of these differences when evaluating the choice of cut score for awarding admission or a scholarship.

This page provides the count and percent of students meeting (i.e., scoring at or above) each score along the EMR and EMRS Composite score scale for your institution's Fall 2024 first-time students. Also included are the counts and percentages of students meeting each score along the EMRS Composite score scale for your institution's Fall 2023 and Fall 2022 first-time students so that you can place the differences between EMR and EMRS Composite scores within the context of year-to-year differences in the EMRS Composite scores of your most recent entering classes.

Score	EMR 2024		EMRS 2024		EMRS 2023		EMRS 2022	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
36	12	0.4%	11	0.4%	5	0.2%	9	0.3%
35	54	1.8%	49	1.6%	37	1.2%	45	1.6%
34	119	3.9%	112	3.7%	90	2.8%	110	3.8%
33	209	6.8%	195	6.4%	168	5.3%	192	6.6%
32	318	10.4%	292	9.6%	250	7.8%	277	9.6%
31	446	14.6%	405	13.2%	364	11.4%	393	13.6%
30	567	18.5%	513	16.8%	490	15.4%	558	19.3%
29	701	22.9%	658	21.5%	652	20.5%	691	23.9%
28	852	27.9%	799	26.1%	795	24.9%	833	28.8%
27	1,004	32.8%	944	30.9%	960	30.1%	992	34.3%
26	1,168	38.2%	1,118	36.6%	1,155	36.2%	1,183	40.9%
25	1,334	43.6%	1,311	42.9%	1,352	42.4%	1,386	48.0%
24	1,546	50.6%	1,524	49.9%	1,558	48.9%	1,574	54.5%
23	1,736	56.8%	1,710	55.9%	1,789	56.1%	1,769	61.2%
22	1,939	63.4%	1,963	64.2%	2,011	63.1%	1,943	67.3%
21	2,164	70.8%	2,196	71.8%	2,257	70.8%	2,137	74.0%
20	2,378	77.8%	2,406	78.7%	2,466	77.4%	2,325	80.5%
19	2,546	83.3%	2,575	84.2%	2,660	83.4%	2,472	85.6%
18	2,692	88.1%	2,719	88.9%	2,806	88.0%	2,593	89.8%
17	2,807	91.8%	2,839	92.9%	2,944	92.3%	2,692	93.2%
16	2,897	94.8%	2,928	95.8%	3,046	95.5%	2,759	95.5%
15	2,966	97.0%	2,991	97.8%	3,099	97.2%	2,823	97.7%
14	3,013	98.6%	3,026	99.0%	3,144	98.6%	2,858	98.9%
13	3,045	99.6%	3,047	99.7%	3,167	99.3%	2,875	99.5%
< 13	3,057	100.0%	3,057	100.0%	3,188	100.0%	2,889	100.0%



# The New Composite Score: Key Takeaways

**Takeaway 1:** New (EMR) and current (EMRS) Composite scores are *interchangeable*

- This means that either score can be used:
  - as a measure of general academic readiness for college
  - as a predictor of general academic performance in college
  - as a criterion for decisions that are based on general academic readiness

**Takeaway 2:** New (EMR) and current (EMRS) Composite scores have practical differences

- This means that:
  - A student's EMR score may not always equal their EMRS score
  - EMR scores and EMRS scores will follow a similar but not identical distribution
  - There may be more/fewer students over/under a specific threshold along that distribution

# ACT Superscore

# Enhanced ACT: Superscore Impact

- The Superscore Composite is the average of the best section scores from ANY administration.
  - Section scores can be used interchangeably (linking procedure)
  - Students' highest section score can come from a legacy or enhanced ACT administration.
- Score calculation is based on date of test event and will not change if score is sent later.

Last Test Attempt	Composite Score	Superscore
Legacy ACT (until 7/25)	$\frac{E + M + R + S}{4}$	$\frac{E + M + R + S}{4}$
Enhanced ACT	$\frac{E + M + R}{3}$	$\frac{E + M + R}{3}$

# Example #1 – EMRS to EMR

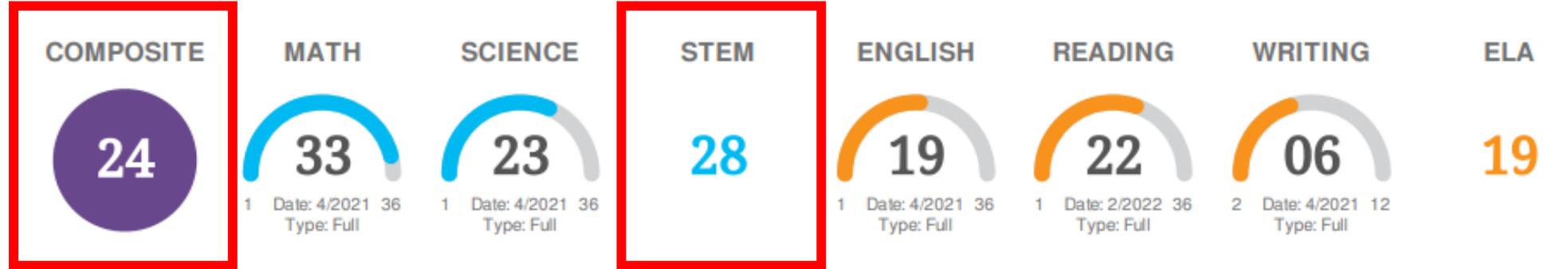
- Student who tests Legacy ACT, and retests with Enhanced ACT

	<b>E</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Composite</b>
Test 1: December Paper	<b>21</b>	22	22	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	22 (EMRS)
Test 2: April Online	20	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	22	7	22 (EMR)
<b>April Superscore Report</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22 (EMR)</b>

# Student Superscore Report

## ACT Superscore

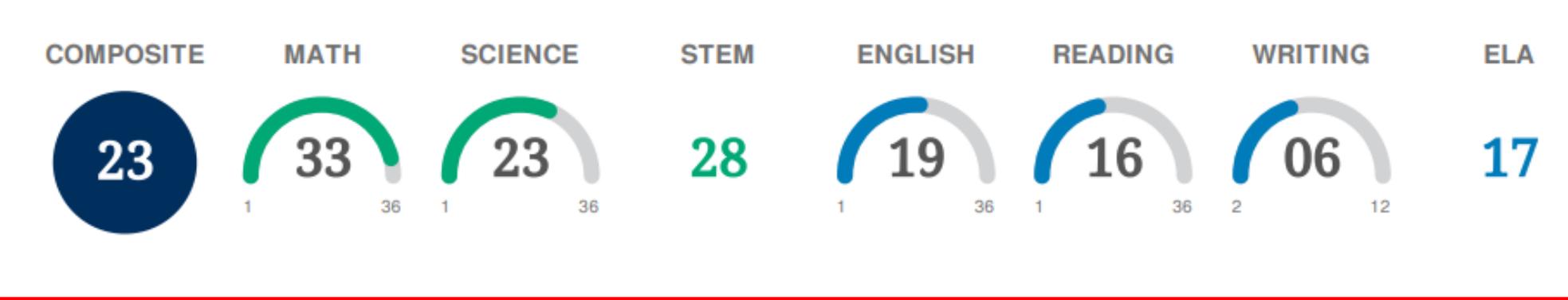
The ACT Superscore represents the best scores for this student across all attempts. ACT Research confirms this to be the most predictive of student success.



## Highest Full Battery

Date: 4/2021.

Highest Full Battery represents the full battery test which resulted in the student's highest earned ACT composite score.



# Enhanced ACT: Superscore Impact

- With changes to the calculations, there can be impacts on a student's Superscore during transition.
- A student who retakes an enhanced ACT, and whose science section score is higher, could see a decrease in their Superscore Composite.
  - ALL section scores are still reported and available through Encoura data if a student sends them.
  - There is a flag in the data to communicate the method of calculation.

## Example #2 – EMRS to EMR Score Decline

- Student who tests once Legacy, and retests with Enhanced ACT

	E	M	R	S	Composite
Test 1: April Paper	20	25	20	28	23 (EMRS)
Test 2: Oct Online	21	26	20	31	22 (EMR)
Oct Superscore Report	21	26	20	31	22 (EMR)

- Student improved in English, math, and science, but the Composite and Superscore Composite declined by a point because science is not included in the calculation.
- The inverse is also possible, where a student has taken the National Online April 2025, and then re-takes in June/July but on paper (EMRS).
- Both of these scenarios will be limited in duration – and we expect very few students to be affected after September 2027.
- Highest full battery (April in above example) is reported in Superscore Report.

## Example #3 – EMRS to EMR Superscore Decline

- Student who tests multiple times Legacy ACT, and then Enhanced Fall '25

	<b>E</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Composite</b>	<b>Superscore</b>
Test 1: March Paper	19	25	20	27	23 (EMRS)	--
Test 2: April Paper	20	24	19	28	23 (EMRS)	23 (EMRS)
Test 3: Oct Paper	21	26	20	31	22 (EMR)	22 (EMR)

# Ability to Send Highest (Legacy) Superscore

- ACT wants students to have choice to provide their highest Superscore to colleges and universities
  - This affects a small population (about 3%).
  - Option available to students with a Superscore decline to request their earlier Superscore be sent.
  - ACT then sends that to Encoura to be delivered to colleges and universities in the same manner as always.
    - Data will be sent from Encoura.
    - Will contain a flag that shows what type of calculation was used to compute the Superscore Composite.

# Updates

# Free ACT Practice Test and Resources

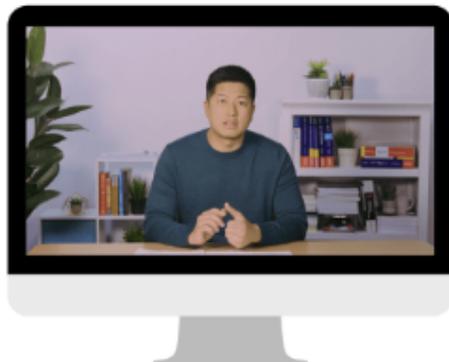
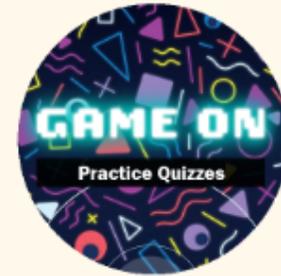
Test your knowledge with free prep from the makers of the ACT test.

Enhanced ACT Test Practice Test

## ACT Test Subject Practice Questions

Get your game on with ACT QuizMe ACT practice quizzes in math, English, reading, and science. Answer key provided at the end of the quiz!

Get Your Game On with QuizMe!



## Free Online ACT Test Prep and Events

Whether you're on the fence about buying prep or you just want to see what we're all about, our free online test prep and events—hosted in partnership with Kaplan—are a great starting place.

Want to try before you buy? [Sign up for a FREE Live Online class!](#)

Free Online Test Prep Events

Free Online Practice



2025 | 2026

## Preparing for the ACT<sup>®</sup> Test

### What's Inside

- Full-length practice ACT test, including the optional Science and Writing test
- Information about the multiple-choice and writing sections
- Test-taking strategies
- What to expect on test day

Esta publicación también se puede ver o descargar en español

**ACT**<sup>®</sup>

The **ACT**<sup>®</sup> [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

# Welcome to the PreACT Rising Stars Program!

We are excited to introduce the **PreACT® Rising Stars program**, designed to recognize and celebrate the outstanding achievements of students who have excelled on PreACT 8/9 during the 2024-25 school year. This initiative aims to honor the highest academic achievers and provide them with the tools and resources to plan the next steps in their educational journey.



**TOP 5%**

Highest-Scoring Students



**NEXT 10%**

Highest-Scoring Students



**NEXT 35%**

Highest-Scoring Students

## Wondering where the 2025 PreACT Rising Stars are located?

Check out our interactive tool that lets you look up the cumulative number of winners in each category — Distinguished Scholars, Rising Scholars, and Early Scholars— by state, district, and school.

[View the Winners](#) 🔑

**learn more  
about the  
program**



# ACT / College Board Concordance Study

The College Board and ACT administer the nation's two leading college entrance exams, the SAT and the ACT. In 2018, our organizations updated the ACT/SAT Concordance, the official resource used by students, education institutions, and other professionals to compare scores from the two assessments. Given the recent updates to both tests, College Board and ACT will conduct an updated concordance study as part of our commitment to providing users with technically sound tools to compare scores between the digital SAT and the enhanced ACT.

Changes to the SAT and ACT reflect a changing educational landscape. In recent years, student populations and higher education policies have shifted. Conducting a transparent, joint concordance study using a large and representative sample of test takers reflects responsible maintenance of these widely used tests.

Concordance tables provide a statistically validated relationship between scores on different assessments and are essential tools not only for admissions decisions but also for scholarship eligibility, course placement, and other academic purposes. As with previous studies, College Board and ACT will utilize rigorous, industry-standard methodological approaches.

Planning for the updated study is currently underway. College Board and ACT anticipate releasing the study findings and corresponding concordance tables in fall 2027.

# Resources

# ACT Enhancements: Higher Ed Info

Available at: [www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-changes/enhancements/higher-ed.html](http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-changes/enhancements/higher-ed.html)



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## ACT Test Enhancements: Higher Ed

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# ACT Research & Policy Publications

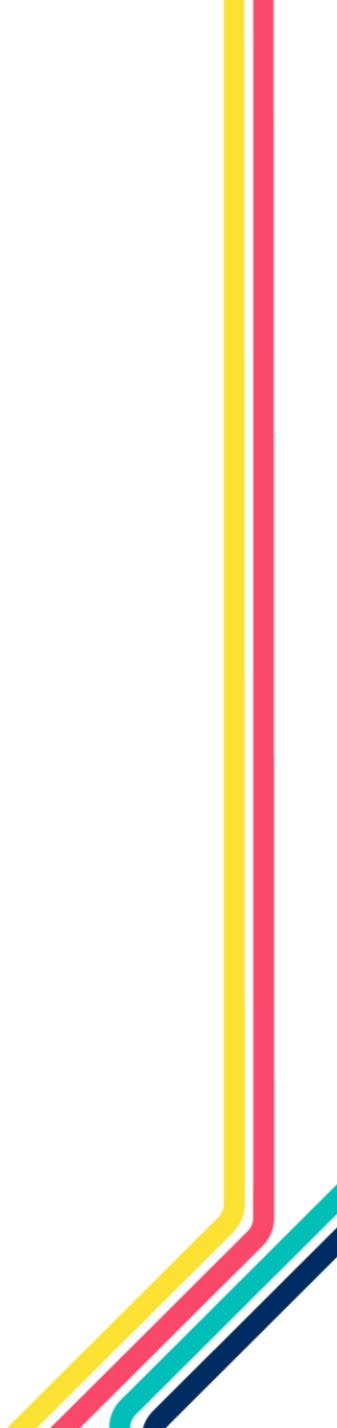
Available at [ACT.org/Research](https://ACT.org/Research)

Linking Study Report for the Enhanced ACT Test

“Initial Evidence Supporting Interpretations of Scores from the Enhanced ACT Test”

“Stakeholder Guide to the ACT Enhancements”

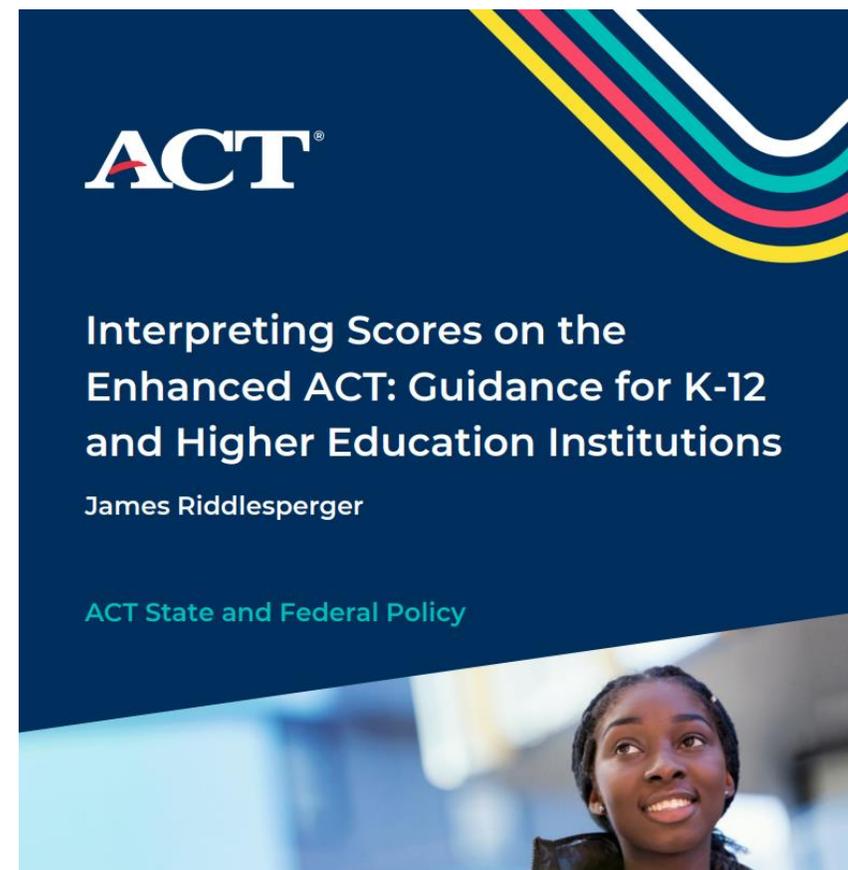
Test Design Document for the Enhanced ACT Test



# Stakeholder Brief:

## *Interpreting Scores on the Enhanced ACT: Guidance for K-12 and Higher Education Institutions*

- Provides an overview of key research publications and reinforces the ability to use ACT scores interchangeably with scores from the legacy exam



# Discussion



**ACT**<sup>®</sup>