

# FairTest

## National Center for Fair & Open Testing

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### **STAGNANT ACT SCORES REFLECT FAILURE OF “NO CHILD” LAW; MOVE TO TEST-OPTIONAL COLLEGE ADMISSIONS RECOGNIZES EXAM-DRIVEN “REFORM” DOES NOT BOOST UNDERGRAD READINESS**

Stagnant ACT college admissions scores indicate that the federal “No Child Left Behind Law” (NCLB) is failing to meet its primary goals. NCLB proponents claimed that mandatory annual testing would improve educational performance, increase readiness for higher education and close racial achievement gaps. But five-year-trend ACT data released today show that scores have remained flat. Little progress has been made in college readiness or in reducing historic differences in test results among White, African American and Latino students.

“High school graduates in the class of 2009 have experienced NCLB’s test-driven approach to ‘school reform’ since they were in fifth grade,” explained Bob Schaeffer, Public Education Director of the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest). “Yet, they are not better prepared for college or the workforce, based on ACT scores. Over the same period, the racial achievement gap has not narrowed. The ACT trend data confirm recent results from the federal government’s own National Assessment of Educational Progress: NCLB is not effective.”

Schaeffer continued, “Fortunately many colleges and universities are recognizing that a focus on high-stakes tests does not improve educational quality or equity. That’s why more and more schools are replacing their entrance exam requirements with test-optional admissions.” Currently more than 830 accredited bachelor-degree granting institutions do not require all or many applicants to submit ACT or SAT scores before admissions decisions are made (<http://www.fairtest.org/optinit.htm>).

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### **2009 COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS AVERAGE ACT SCORES**

Approximately 1.48 million test takers of whom 55% were female

	COMPOSITE SCORE	2008-2009 CHANGE
<b>GENDER</b>		
Female	20.9	- 0.1
Male	21.3	+0.1
<b>ETHNICITY</b>		
African-American or Black	16.9	0.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	18.9	- 0.1
Asian-American or Pacific Islander	23.2	+0.3
Caucasian-American, White	22.2	+0.1
Hispanic	18.7	0.0
Other/No Response	20.9	-0.8
<b>ALL TEST-TAKERS</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Source: *ACT Profile Report - National - Graduating Class 2009*; Calculations by FairTest