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## **Texas math and science ACT scores increase; composite score holds at record level**

AUSTIN - Texas members of the Class of 2010 have earned the highest mathematics and science scores posted on the ACT in the past decade, even as the number of test takers rose by 12 percent this year.

The overall composite score for Texas test takers remained steady at last year's record high score of 20.8.

"The Class of 2010 has proven itself to be a pace setter. More of these students are planning to attend college and they set new records by earning Texas' highest math and science scores. In fact, their average math score is substantially higher than the national average for math. Most of our student groups also outperformed their counterparts nationally," said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott.

The ACT is comprised of four sections, English, mathematics, reading and science, and each section is scored on a scale of 1-36. In addition to receiving individual scores for each section, students also receive a composite score, which is an average of the four sections.

Among the Class of 2010, 92,615 Texas seniors took the ACT, compared to 82,640 members from the Class of 2009. Much of the increase is attributed to a fee waiver that allows low-income students to take the test for free.

When underclassmen are considered as well, a total of 188,209 Texans took the ACT this year, an increase of 18 percent over the previous year. This spring, Texas offered high school juniors the opportunity to take the ACT or SAT free of charge, and thousands took advantage of this offer. The Texas Education Agency will announce in early 2011 whether this opportunity will be available this spring for juniors in the Class of 2012.

Below are the ACT scores for Texas test-takers over the past decade. Scores have continued to rise even as the test-taking pool has expanded.

<b>Year</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Composite</b>
<b>2010</b>	19.7	21.4	20.8	20.9	20.8
<b>2009</b>	19.9	21.3	20.9	20.6	20.8
<b>2008</b>	19.8	21.2	20.9	20.5	20.7
<b>2007</b>	19.5	20.8	20.6	20.4	20.5
<b>2006</b>	19.4	20.6	20.5	20.3	20.3
<b>2005</b>	19.3	20.3	20.3	20.2	20.2
<b>2004</b>	19.4	20.3	20.5	20.2	20.2
<b>2003</b>	19.3	20.0	20.3	20.1	20.1
<b>2002</b>	19.3	20.1	20.3	20.1	20.1
<b>2001</b>	19.6	20.2	20.5	20.3	20.3

Following are the national ACT scores for the same period.

<b>Year</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Composite</b>
<b>2010</b>	20.5	21.0	21.3	20.9	21.0
<b>2009</b>	20.6	21.0	21.4	20.9	21.1
<b>2008</b>	20.6	21.0	21.4	20.8	21.1
<b>2007</b>	20.7	21.0	21.5	21.0	21.2
<b>2006</b>	20.6	20.8	21.4	20.9	21.1
<b>2005</b>	20.4	20.7	21.3	20.9	20.9
<b>2004</b>	20.4	20.7	21.3	20.9	20.9
<b>2003</b>	20.3	20.6	21.2	20.8	20.8
<b>2002</b>	20.2	20.6	21.1	20.8	20.8
<b>2001</b>	20.5	20.7	21.3	21.0	21.0

ACT defines students who take four or more years of English and three or more years of math, social studies and science classes as those having taken a “core or more” set of classes. According to the data, students who take a more rigorous course load in high school earned higher scores. Overall, students who took the core set of classes or more earned an average composite score of 21.2, while those with less preparation earned an average composite score 18.5.

On the English section of the exam, Texas students who took the “core or more” set of classes earned an average score of 20.2, compared to a score of 17.0 for those who had taken a lighter course load.

Students who took the core subjects scored an average of 21.8 on the math section, compared to a score of 19.1 for those who didn’t. The average reading score was 21.2 for those who took the core, compared to 18.4 for those students who took less than core. The average science score was 21.2 for those Texans who took the core, while those who took less than the core had an average score of 18.9.

Across most ethnicities, Texas students received a higher composite score than their counterparts nationally. While the composite score for Texas Hispanic students was below the Hispanic national average, the number of Hispanic test takers in the Lone Star state was

substantially higher, comprising 30 percent of Texans who took the exam compared to 10 percent nationally.

Below is a comparison of state and national composite scores disaggregated by ethnicity.

<b>Student group</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>National</b>
<b>African American</b>	17.3	16.9
<b>Indian</b>	21.6	19.0
<b>White</b>	23.1	22.3
<b>Hispanic</b>	18.3	18.6
<b>Asian American</b>	24.5	23.4
<b>Other/No Response</b>	20.7	20.6
<b>All Students</b>	20.8	21.0

The top 10 Texas universities, in rank order, that students asked to have their ACT scores sent to are:

- The University of Texas – Austin;
- Texas A&M University – College Station;
- Texas Tech University;
- Texas State University;
- Baylor University;
- University of Texas at San Antonio;
- University of North Texas;
- University of Texas – Pan American;
- University of Houston – Main Campus;
- Sam Houston State University.