



District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education



THE POSTSECONDARY ACCESS AND READINESS SERIES

osse.dc.gov

 facebook.com/ossedc

 [@OSSEDC](https://twitter.com/OSSEDC)

 (202) 727-6436



Table of Contents

<u>PART 1: COLLEGE READINESS & ACCESS METRICS FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR</u>	3
DATA NOTES	4
COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS: PSAT, SAT, AND ACT	5
ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS	6
FAFSA AND DCTAG ONEAPP COMPLETION	8
<u>APPENDIX A: COLLEGE READINESS METRICS STATE-LEVEL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR</u>	9
<u>APPENDIX B: COLLEGE READINESS METRICS BUSINESS RULES</u>	12

Part 1: College Readiness & Access Metrics for the 2014-15 School Year



Across the United States, there is an increasing recognition that earning a high school diploma alone is not enough for a successful future, and that states, cities, and school districts must prepare their students for postsecondary education. In the District of Columbia, 76 percent of jobs will require some postsecondary education by 2020.¹ This report is the first in a planned series and provides a first look at citywide college readiness and access outcomes for Washington, DC students.

For the first time in spring of 2015, District of Columbia students took the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exams. These new, more rigorous assessments for grades 3 through 8 and high school provide robust information about student development toward college and career ready academic standards in English language arts and mathematics. For high school subjects, 10 percent of students tested at the college and career ready level on the mathematics exam, and 25 percent of students met this benchmark for the English language arts exam.² PARCC results for the 2015-16 school year will be released in August of 2016. In addition to the rich information on students' college and career readiness which can be gleaned from the PARCC assessments, analysis of additional metrics of college and career readiness allows for a better understanding of how to best support the success of DC students and build pathways to the middle class.

This report includes measures related to both college access and college readiness for students attending District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and public charter high schools in the 2014-15 school year. College access indicators include student participation in the SAT and ACT and Advanced Placement (AP) exams, and completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG) application. College readiness measures include student performance on SAT, ACT, and AP exams.

The college readiness and access metrics explored in this report constitute important milestones for college-bound students. Along with grade point average (GPA), performance on SAT and ACT corresponds to success in first-year college courses.³ Strong performance in AP and other rigorous

¹ Carnevale, A., Smith, N. & Strohl, J. Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020. Washington, DC: Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce (2013).

² See District of Columbia state-level PARCC results: <http://results.osse.dc.gov/state/DC>

³ Adelman, C. (1999). Answers in the toolbox: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and Bachelor's degree attainment. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education; Adelman, C. (2006). The toolbox revisited: Paths to degree completion from high school through college. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

courses is a powerful indicator of a student’s ability to successfully demonstrate the complex writing, analysis, and critical thinking skills required to succeed in college as well as many high-growth and high-wage career pathways.⁴

The report aims to answer the question: *How were students performing on college readiness and access metrics during a particular point in time, in this case, the 2014-15 school year?* This report is the first in a series on postsecondary readiness, access, and completion data to be released over the next several months of 2016. In part two, OSSE will examine the same college readiness and access metrics for the cohort of students who were anticipated to graduate in the 2014-15 school year. These students began ninth grade for the first time in the fall of the 2011-12 school year and are assigned cohort membership based on the [Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate](#) methodology. While the methodological approach in the current report allows for a “point in time” snapshot of college readiness for students in a particular school year, the forthcoming second report will provide a slightly different perspective: to what extent did one group of ninth grade students realize college readiness and access as they moved toward high school graduation.

In the third installment of the series, OSSE will examine college enrollment, persistence, and graduation trends for students enrolled in postsecondary institutions employing both the point in time and adjusted cohort methodologies. OSSE will also release information about programmatic efforts in the District of Columbia to support college readiness for students from middle school through postsecondary completion. The final report will examine outcomes for District of Columbia students at select postsecondary institutions.

Data Notes

The body of this report presents outcomes for students enrolled in Washington, DC public high schools during the 2014-15 school year, as measured by the annual fall enrollment audit conducted by OSSE. Some metrics include only students in the graduating class of 2015 (e.g., FAFSA completion), while others include multiple grade levels (e.g., AP participation). Due to their different focus, alternative and adult-serving high schools are not included in the analysis. Additionally, all analysis was conducted using the grade level according to the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF), including certificate-track students attending non-alternative high schools.

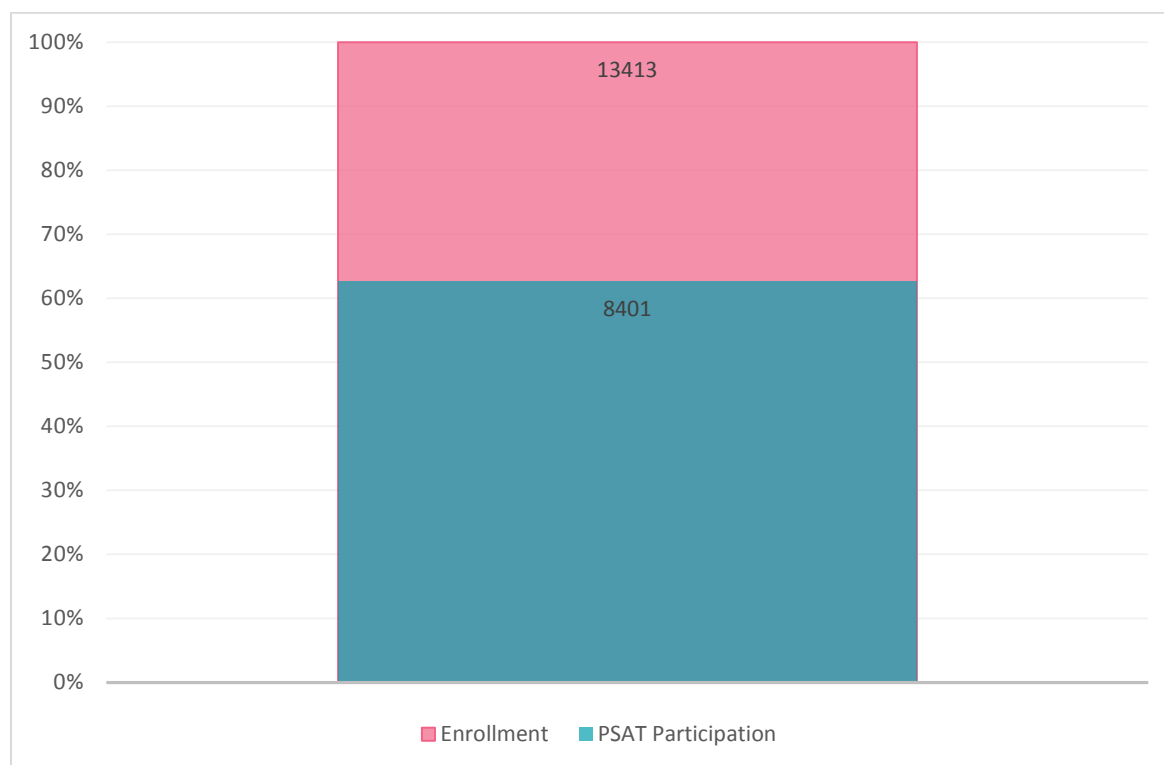
The series of college readiness metrics which are the basis for this report were developed by OSSE in collaboration with a working group of education partners. Appendix B provides a brief background on the development of these metrics, their associated business rules and specific data notes pertaining to individual metrics. Appendix A includes data corresponding to each metric, including those not highlighted in the body of this report.

⁴ Nagaoka, J., Roderick, M., and Coca, V. (2009). [Barriers to college attainment: Lessons from Chicago](#). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, Consortium on Chicago School Research; Dougherty, C., Mellor, L., & Jian, S. (2006). [The relationship between Advanced Placement and college graduation](#). Austin, TX: National Center for Educational Accountability.

College Entrance Exams: PSAT, SAT, and ACT

The PSAT, or “pre-SAT,” is typically taken in a student’s sophomore or junior year of high school as preparation for the SAT. The test is also used as the qualifier for the National Merit Scholarship Program. In the 2014-15 school year, 62.6 percent of students enrolled in grades 9 through 11 (n=8401) took the PSAT (Figure A).

Figure A. PSAT exam participation (2014-15 school year)



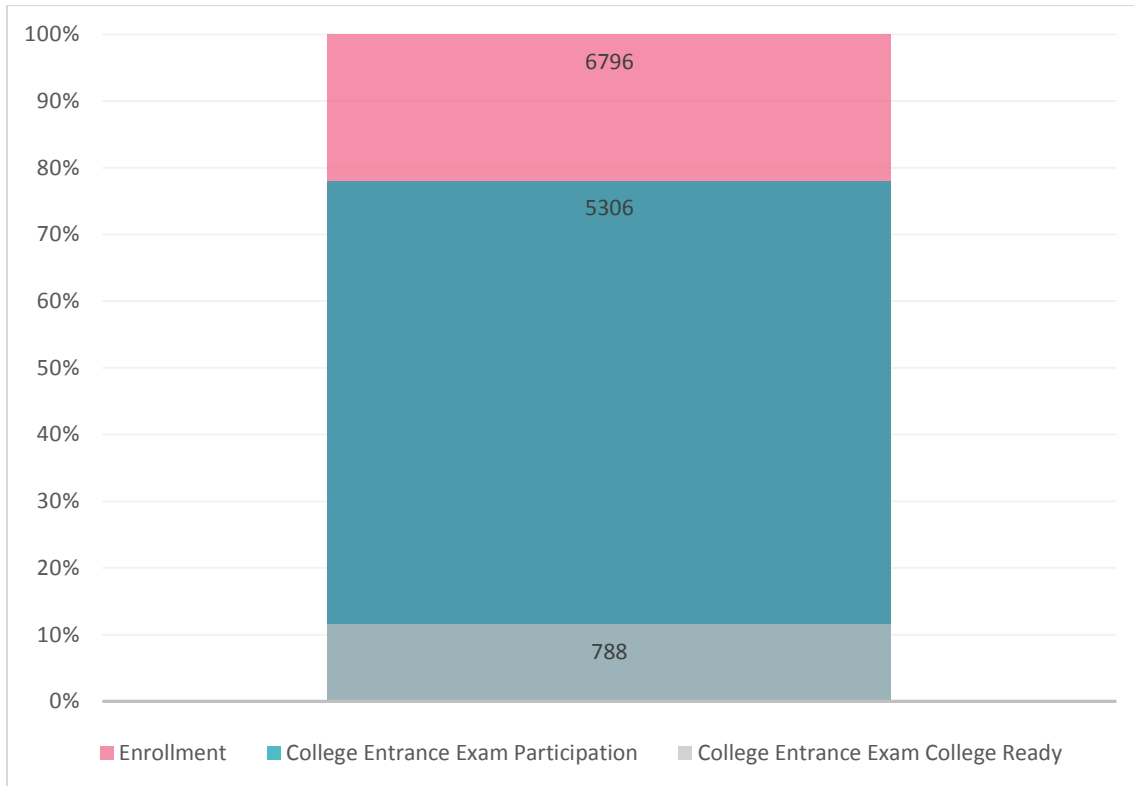
In the 2014-15 school year, 78.1 percent of students enrolled in grades 11 and 12 (n=5306) took either the SAT or the ACT (Figure B). Historically, students in Washington, DC have been more likely to take the SAT compared to the ACT. For the past three years, students in most public high schools have the opportunity to take the SAT for free during the school day during both their junior and senior year, which may partially account for the larger percentage of students who completed the SAT (76.2 percent, n=5178) as compared to the ACT (9.6 percent, n=655) in the 2014-15 school year.⁵

Of combined SAT and ACT test takers (n=5306), 14.9 percent (n=788) met the SAT or ACT “college readiness benchmark.” For SAT, the benchmark is an overall score of 1550 on a 2400 scale. For ACT, students must have met a section-specific benchmark on at least one of the four sections of the ACT

⁵ Students who took both the SAT and ACT are included in the calculation of each metric and would therefore be represented in each of the percentages provided.

(English, Reading, Mathematics, or Science).⁶ Figure B shows the number of students participating in either SAT or ACT, as well as the number who met the college readiness benchmark for at least one of the SAT or ACT exams.

Figure B. SAT and ACT exam participation and college readiness benchmark

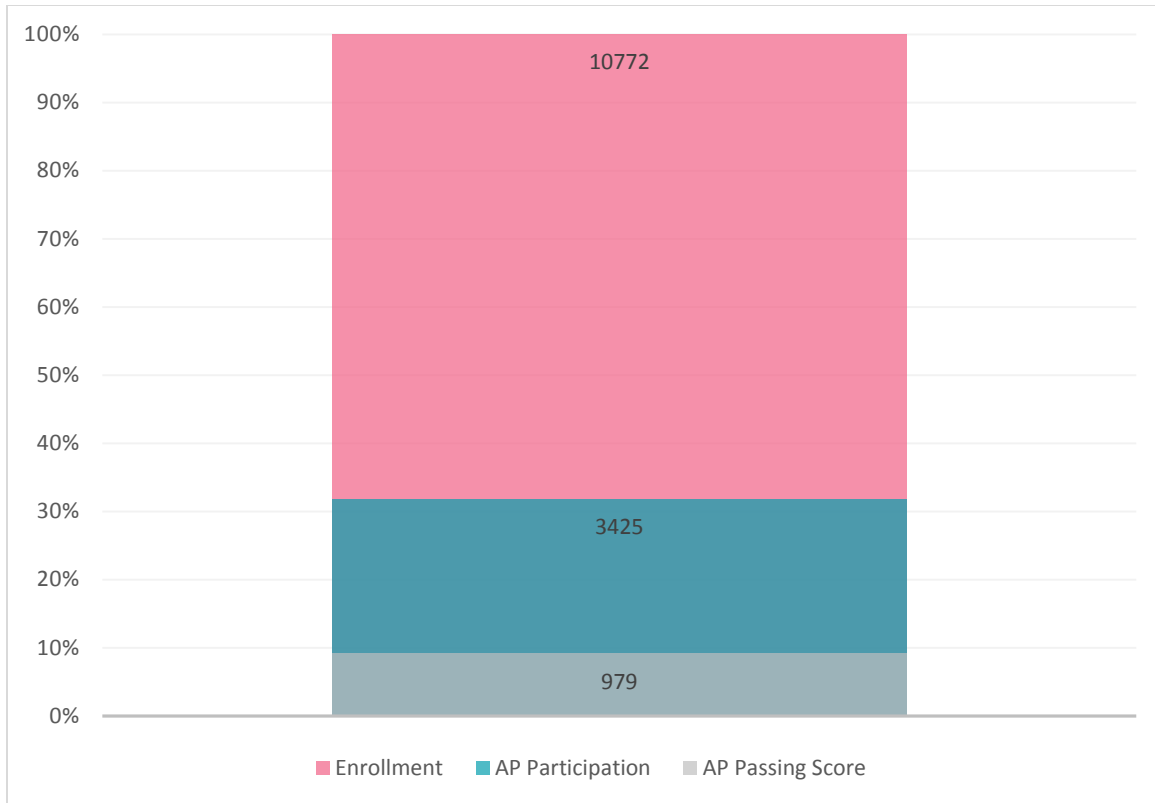


Advanced Placement Exams

Figure C shows the number of students in the 2014-15 school year participating in AP exams as well as their performance on these exams. For this metric, students receive a passing score if they score a three or better on at least one AP exam. Of the students enrolled in grades 9-12 (n=10772) in the 2014-15 school year, 31.8 percent (n=3425) took at least one AP exam during the 2014-15 school year. Of those, 28.6 percent (n=979) received a passing score of three or better.

Figure C. Advanced Placement exam participation and score (2014-15 school year)

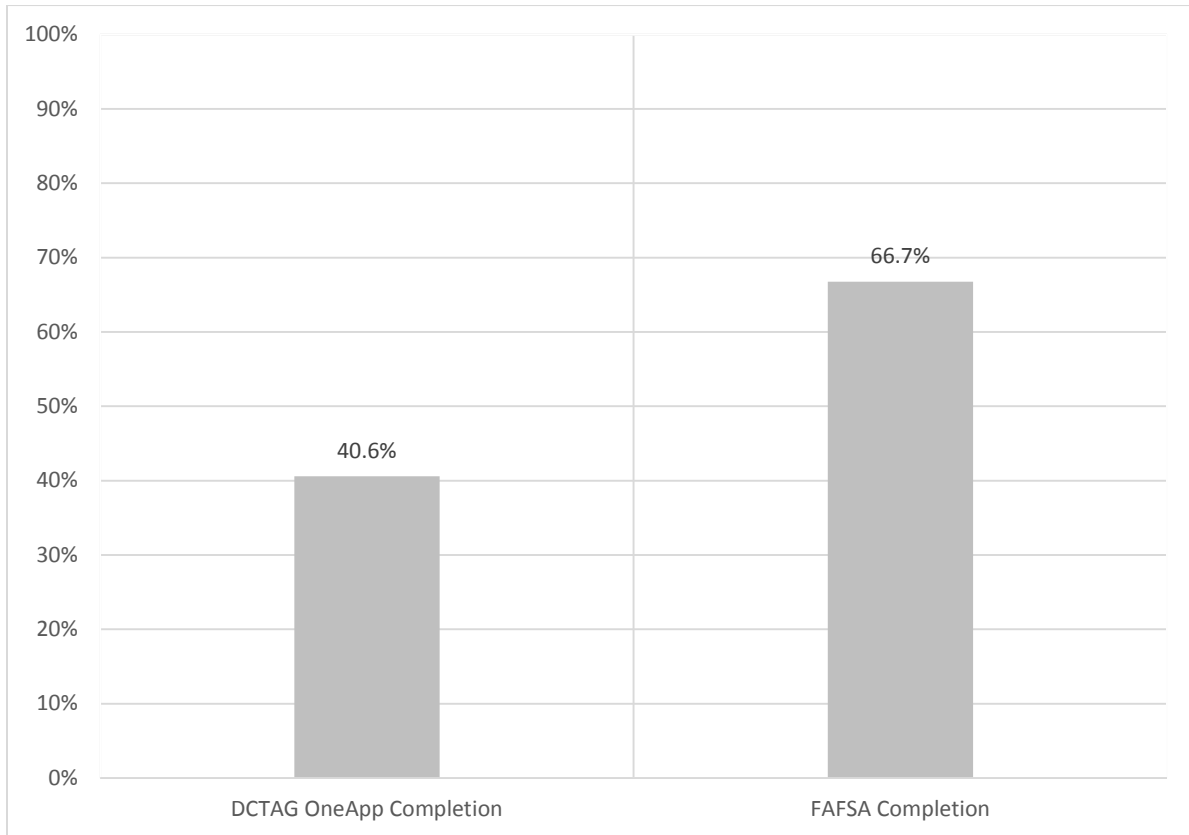
⁶ Meeting the SAT benchmark of 1550 indicates a 65 percent likelihood of achieving a B- average or higher during the first year of college (College Board, [The SAT college and career readiness benchmark user guide](#)). Meeting the benchmark on the ACT indicates approximately a 50 percent change of earning a B or better and approximately a 75 percent change of earning a C or better in a corresponding college course (ACT, Inc., [What are the ACT college readiness benchmarks?](#)). Subject-specific benchmarks for ACT are as follows: English = 18, Reading = 22, Mathematics = 22, Science = 23).



FAFSA and DCTAG OneApp Completion

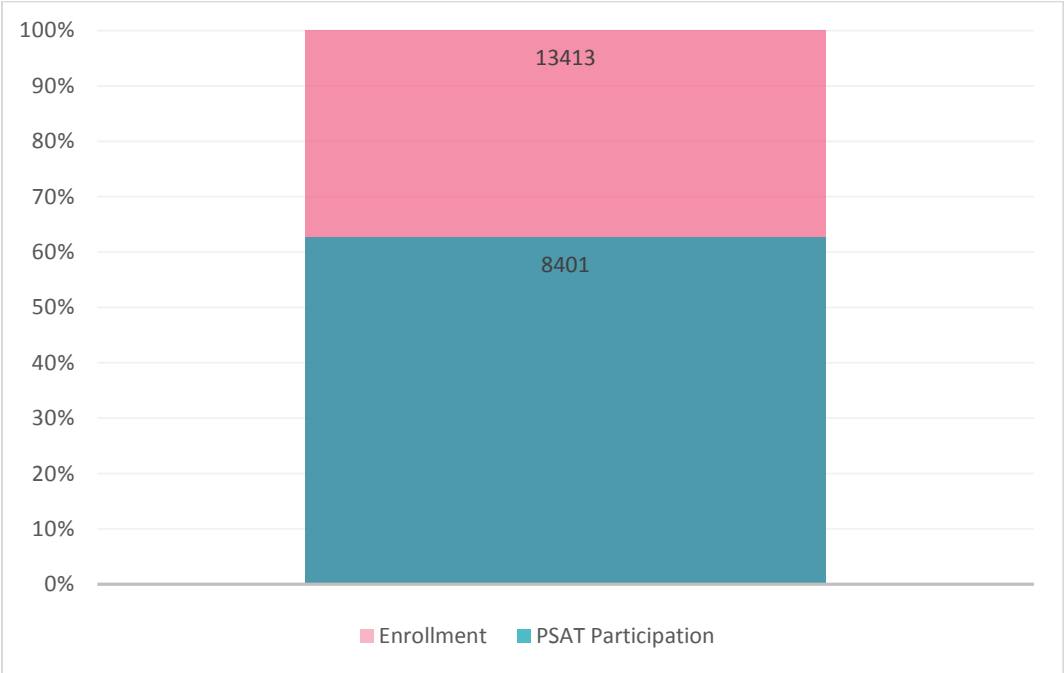
Figure D represents the students who completed the FAFSA and DCTAG OneApp in the 2014-15 school year. While 66.7 percent of students (n=2494) completed the FAFSA, 40.6 percent (n=1517) completed the DCTAG application. Please note that these measures only include those students who received a high school diploma in June or August of 2015.

Figure D. FAFSA and DCTAG OneApp Completion (2015 graduates)

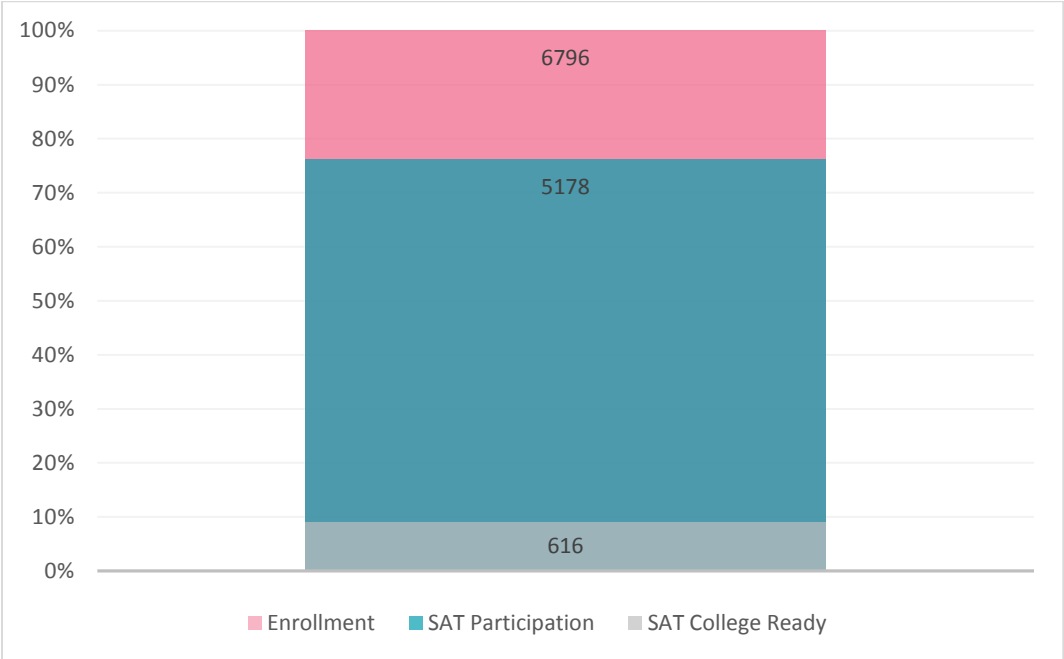


Appendix A: College readiness metrics state-level outcomes for students enrolled in the 2014-15 school year

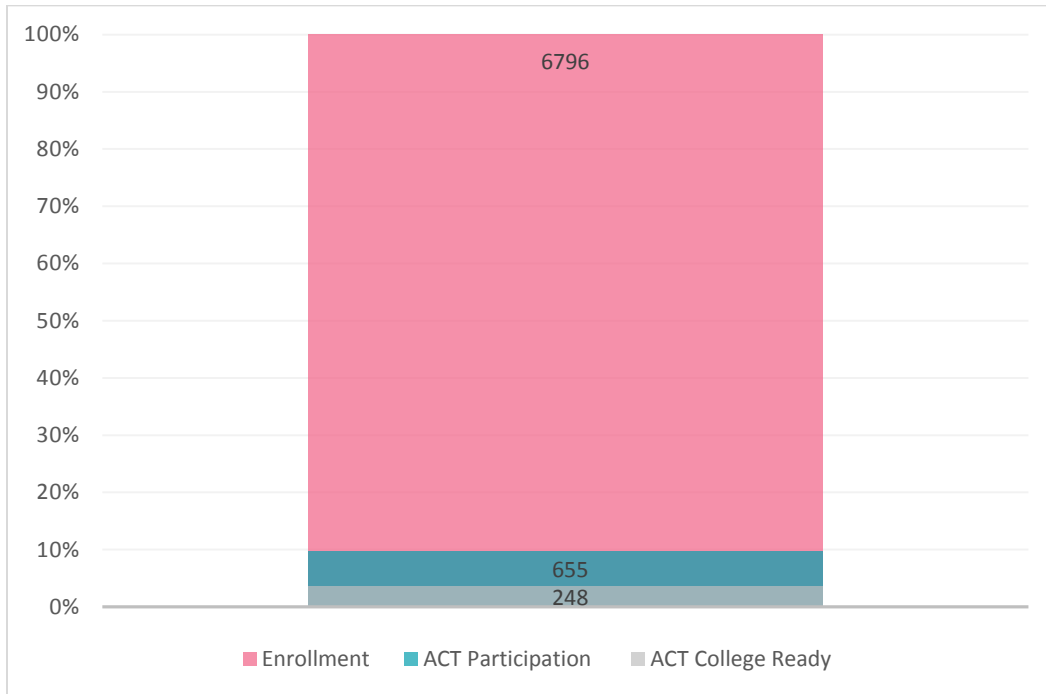
Graph 1. PSAT participation



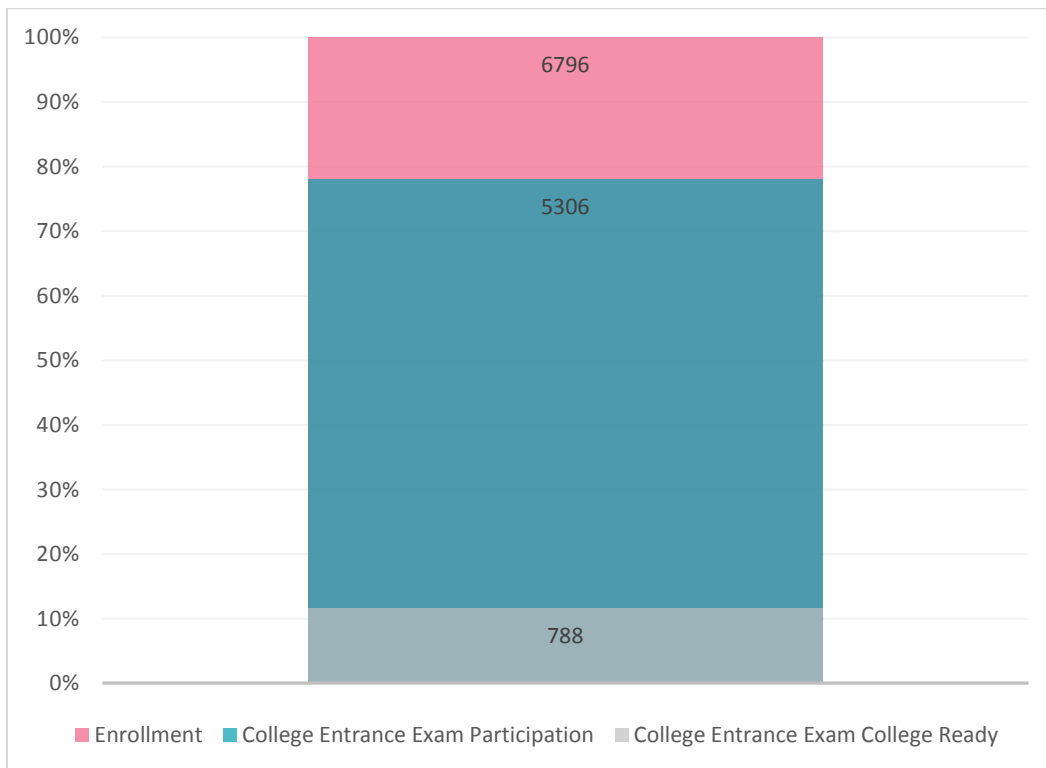
Graph 2. SAT participation and college ready benchmark (1550 or higher)



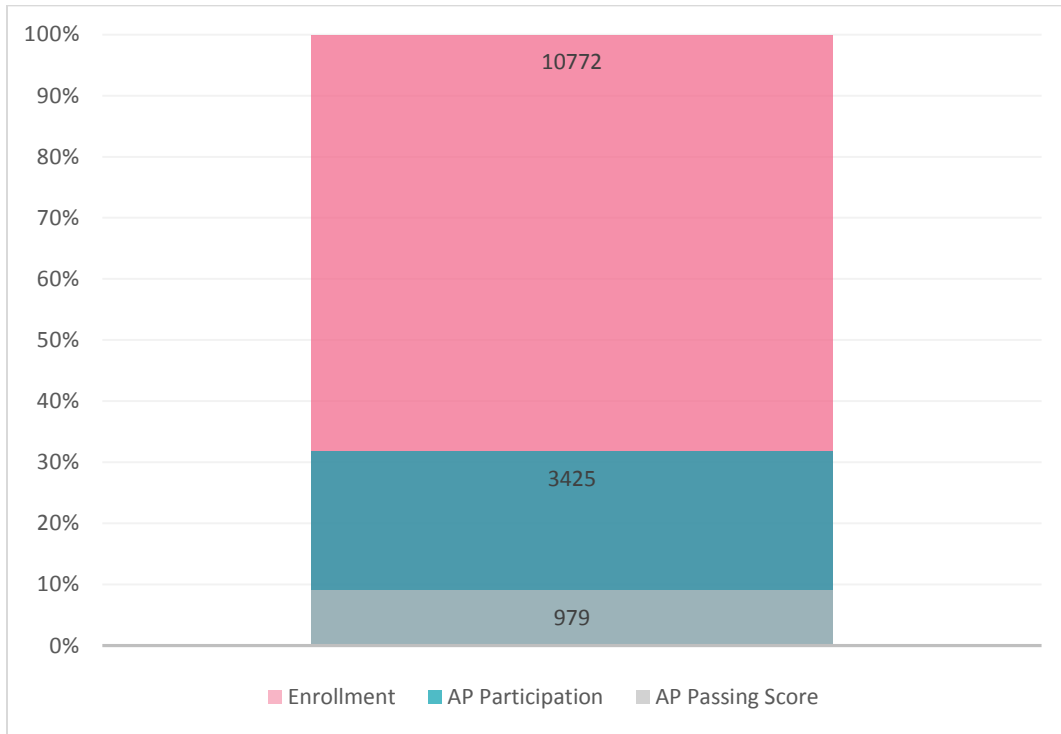
Graph 3. ACT participation and college ready benchmark



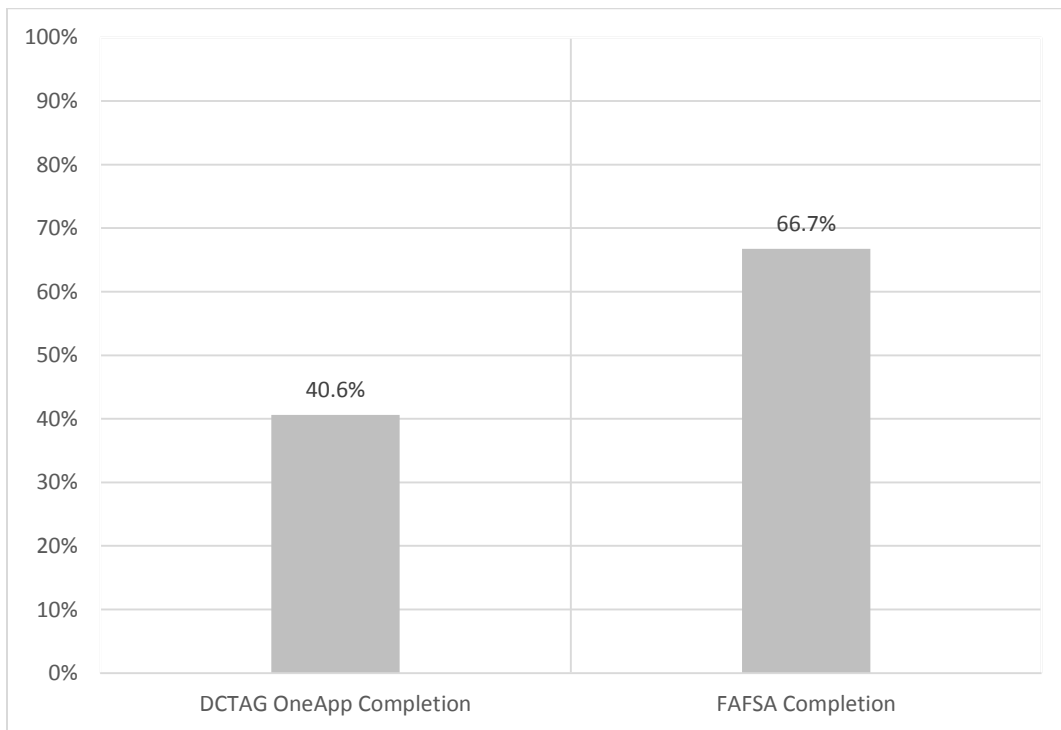
Graph 4. SAT and ACT participation and college ready benchmark



Graph 5. Advanced Placement participation and score of 3 or better



Graph 6. FAFSA and DCTAG application completion



Appendix B: College Readiness Metrics Business Rules

The following college readiness metrics and associated business rules were developed by OSSE in collaboration with a working group of education partners. Organizations involved in the crafting of the college readiness metrics business rules include: the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME), District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Public Charter School Board (PCSB), and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). In addition, OSSE gathered feedback from charter local education agencies (LEAs) around the college readiness metrics and the related business rules. Alternative and adult-serving high schools are not included in the state level analysis. All analysis was conducted using the grade level according to the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula (UPSFF).

Metric Name & Definition	Calculation	Data Source
PSAT participation The percentage of grade 9, 10, and 11 students who took the PSAT	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 9, 10, and 11 students who took the PSAT}}{\text{\# of students in grade 9, 10, and 11 from audited enrollment}}$	College Board
SAT participation The percentage of grade 11 and 12 students who took the SAT	$\frac{\text{\# grade 11 and 12 students who took the SAT}}{\text{\# of students in grade 11 and 12 from audited enrollment}}$	College Board
ACT participation The percentage of grade 11 and 12 students who took the ACT	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students who took the ACT}}{\text{\# of students in grade 11 and 12 from audited enrollment}}$	ACT
SAT or ACT participation The percentage of grade 11 and 12 students who took either the SAT or ACT	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students who took the ACT or SAT}}{\text{\# of students in grade 11 and 12 from audited enrollment}}$	College Board and ACT
SAT “college ready” benchmark The percentage of test-takers who scored at the “college ready” level on the SAT	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students achieving SAT college ready benchmark (1550)}}{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students with a valid SAT score}}$	College Board
ACT “college ready” benchmark The percentage of test-takers who scored at the “college ready” level on one or more of the ACT subject areas (English, reading, mathematics, and science)	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students achieving ACT college ready benchmark on one ACT subject area}}{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students with a valid ACT score on the given subject area}}$	ACT
SAT or ACT “college ready” benchmark The percentage of test-takers who scored at the “college ready” level on the SAT or ACT	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students achieving SAT or ACT college ready benchmark}}{\text{\# of grade 11 and 12 students with a valid SAT or ACT score}}$	College Board and ACT

Metric Name & Definition	Calculation	Data Source
<p>Advanced Placement (AP) exam participation</p> <p>The percentage of grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 students who took at least one AP exam</p>	$\frac{\text{\# of grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 students who took at least one AP exam}}{\text{\# of grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 students from audited enrollment}}$	College Board
<p>Advanced Placement (AP) passing score (3 or above)</p> <p>The percentage of AP test takers who received a three or above on at least one AP exam</p>	$\frac{\text{\# of students scoring 3 or above on AP exam}}{\text{\# of grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 grade students with a valid AP score}}$	College Board
<p>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion</p> <p>The percentage of graduates completing the FAFSA</p>	$\frac{\text{\# of certified high school graduates with a regular diploma with a completed FAFSA application by June 30 of their graduation year}}{\text{\# of certified high school graduates with a regular diploma}}$	U.S. Department of Education
<p>DC Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG) OneApp completion</p> <p>The percentage of graduates completing the DCTAG OneApp</p>	$\frac{\text{\# of certified high school graduates with a regular diploma with a completed OneApp}}{\text{\# of certified high school graduates with a regular diploma}}$	OSSE