



West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability

FROM: Brian Noland

DATE: January 10, 2011

RE: Assessment of Student Readiness / High School-to-College Success Report

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission contracted with ACT to produce a series of High School to College Success Reports which address student preparation and college success. These reports examine high school and district student profiles, as well as statewide data. A copy of the overall state report for the graduating class of 2008 is attached. A similar report was provided last January for the graduating high school class of 2007. Copies of this report, as well as school, county, and college level reports will be sent directly to each entity later this month. The purpose of the report is to describe performance indicators for ACT-tested high school graduates who attended public postsecondary institutions in West Virginia. This report provides a platform by which West Virginia can view its academic progress and determine how to most efficiently impact policy based on national research.

Several observations regarding the incoming West Virginia freshmen in 2008 include:

- When compared to the class of 2007, the average high school grade point average (gpa) for West Virginia college going students rose from 3.28 to 3.30. First-semester college gpa's rose from 2.53 to 2.58;
- College going students meeting all of the ACT readiness benchmark scores had an average fall gpa of 3.14 compared to a 2.46 gpa for those students who did not meet all of these indicators. Unfortunately, only 17 percent of West Virginia college freshmen met these standards which is one percentage point lower than the previous year's proportion;
- Across all test subjects (English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science) students with higher scores in each of the ACT College Readiness Standards (CRS) ranges performed better during their first year of college; and
- Students taking recommended core coursework in high school earned higher ACT scores, higher first-year college grades, and were less likely to be assigned to developmental courses.