

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
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December 14, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: Michael Bowers

RE: **New Mexico Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement, Inc. (NM MESA) Cohort Data**

During a presentation on NM MESA activities at the November 2011 interim meeting of the Legislative Education Study Committee, a committee member requested that NM MESA provide cohort data:

- showing the percentage of its students in need of remedial education; and
- comparing the percentage of its students ready for college-level coursework to non-NM MESA students.

Using its own internal data, NM MESA analyzed the high school transcripts of its 2011 graduating seniors and found that 247 out of 502 of the students had ACT¹ scores reported on their transcript. The average composite ACT score for these students was 21 points, compared to a national average composite score between 20 and 21 points. By utilizing the ACT criteria for the University of New Mexico (score <19), the results of the analysis reveal that among 2011 NM MESA high school graduates:

- 48 percent are likely to require remediation in math;
- 27 percent are likely to require remediation in science;

¹ Formerly known as the American College Testing Service, ACT, Inc., states that it is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides assessment, research, information, and program management services in the areas of education and work force development.

- 36 percent are likely to require remediation in reading; and
- 42 percent are likely to require remediation in English.

In the second phase of the analysis, NM MESA compared its 2011 high school graduates to all other graduates at the statewide and national levels for college-level readiness and found that:

- a higher percentage of NM MESA graduates were ready for math, science, reading and English compared to New Mexico graduates; and
- the percentage of college-ready NM MESA graduates compared with the percentage of nationwide college-ready graduates in science and reading.

The information provided by NM MESA grants a glimpse of the program's graduates whose ACT scores were available on their academic transcripts; however it does not take into account the remaining graduates from 2011. Also not shown are students who attended other higher learning institutions, which may have a variety of course placement policies.

A report with the complete results is attached.



December 12, 2011

Francis Ramirez-Maestas, Director
Legislative Education Study Committee
State Capitol North
325 Don Gaspar, Suite 200
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Ms. Ramirez-Maestas:

Pursuant to the request made by the LESC of Toney Begay, Executive Director for NM MESA Inc, to provide information about percentages of NM MESA students who take remedial courses in college, we have gathered the following information.

Using our own internal data, we analyzed the high school transcripts of our 2011 graduating seniors. 247 out of 502 (49%) of these graduating seniors had ACT scores reported on their transcript. The average composite ACT score for these students was 21%. Nationally, composite score averages are between 20 and 21.

Phase 1: We analyzed the individual subject areas scores (math, science, English and reading) that are averaged to arrive at the composite score to determine what percentage of our students will likely require college remediation courses. Since the vast majority of our college bound students attend The University of New Mexico (UNM), we utilized UNM's ACT criteria (score <19) for being placed in remedial classes. Here are those results:

Subject Area	Percentage of MESA students requiring remediation at UNM	Percentage of MESA students NOT requiring remediation at UNM
Math	48%	52%
Science	27%	73%
Reading	36%	64%
English	42%	58%

According to the February 4, 2011 report "Remedial and Developmental Education in New Mexico's Colleges: Which Students and What Courses?" prepared for the LESC by Dr. Peter Winograd, "about 47% of New Mexico high school graduates who attend the state's public colleges and universities took remedial courses in math and/or reading in 2009". MESA students compare very favorably against NM students in general.

Phase 2: We obtained a copy of the "ACT Profile Report – State: Graduating Class 2011 New Mexico" to determine how our students fared against the ACT's own criteria. With the exception of English, the ACT benchmark scores for remediation are higher than those of UNM: math is 22, reading is 21, science is 24 and English is 18. When measured against these benchmarks, our students once again compare very favorably to New Mexico and national averages.

Subject Area	Percent of Students Ready for College-Level Coursework		
	MESA	New Mexico	National
Math	41%	32%	45%
Science	30%	21%	30%
Reading	53%	44%	52%
English	63%	55%	66%

We appreciate this request from the LESC. This small study has provided some interesting and encouraging information about the New Mexico MESA model.

Sincerely,



Toney Begay, Executive Director, NM MESA Inc.



Fred Youberg, IT Manager, NM MESA Inc.