

## ACT prep to be offered in some school classes

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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### Local seniors score a bit below state composite

| 17-YEAR GOTHENBURG HIGH ACT RESULTS |              |            |         |      |         |         |                     |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------|---------|------|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Year                                | No. students | Core/less* | English | Math | Reading | Science | GHS composite State |
| 2011-12                             | 39           | 30/3       | 20.9    | 21.5 | 21.3    | 22.0    | 21.5 22.0           |
| 2010-11                             | 53           | 49/4       | 20.5    | 21.1 | 21.9    | 21.8    | 21.4 22.1           |
| 5-year avg.                         | 43.6         |            | 21.2    | 21.1 | 21.7    | 21.8    | 21.6 22.1           |
| 2009-2010                           | 42           | 40/2       | 21.4    | 21.0 | 21.5    | 22.1    | 21.7 22.1           |
| 2008-09                             | 45           | 36/9       | 21.8    | 20.9 | 22.4    | 22.0    | 22.0 22.1           |
| 2007-08                             | 45           | 38/7       | 21.8    | 21.2 | 21.9    | 21.8    | 21.6 22.1           |
| 2006-07                             | 40           | 30/10      | 19.8    | 19.9 | 20.4    | 21.3    | 20.5 22.1           |
| 2005-06                             | 46           | 33/12      | 21.2    | 22.2 | 22.2    | 21.9    | 22.0 21.9           |
| 5-year avg.                         | 43.2         |            | 21.2    | 21.5 | 21.7    | 22.2    | 21.7 21.7           |
| 2004-05                             | 44           | 35/9       | 21.9    | 22.5 | 22.0    | 23.1    | 22.7 21.8           |
| 2003-04                             | 45           | 42/3       | 20.5    | 20.7 | 20.1    | 20.7    | 20.7 21.7           |
| 2002-03                             | 44           | 36/8       | 20.3    | 20.7 | 20.1    | 20.7    | 20.7 21.7           |
| 2001-02                             | 46           | 40/6       | 21.9    | 22.0 | 22.0    | 22.2    | 22.5 21.7           |
| 2000-01                             | 37           | 30/7       | 21.1    | 21.5 | 21.6    | 22.4    | 21.8 21.8           |
| 5-year avg.                         | 44.6         |            | 20.2    | 20.9 | 20.9    | 21.6    | 21.6 21.6           |
| 1999-2000                           | 58           | 43/14      | 19.3    | 20.1 | 20.1    | 21.1    | 20.3 21.7           |
| 1998-99                             | 36           | 23/13      | 22.3    | 22.3 | 22.3    | 22.3    | 22.3 21.7           |
| 1997-98                             | 36           | 23/13      | 22.3    | 22.3 | 22.3    | 22.3    | 22.3 21.7           |
| 1996-97                             | 36           | 23/13      | 22.3    | 22.3 | 22.3    | 22.3    | 22.3 21.7           |
| 1995-96                             | 36           | 23/13      | 22.3    | 22.3 | 22.3    | 22.3    | 22.3 21.7           |

\*Denotes the number of students who take the suggested number of core academic classes in English, math, reading and science compared to those who did not.

Not since the 2004-05 school year have Gothenburg High School seniors scored above the state average on the ACT— a national college admissions exam.

This year was no different with local seniors, those in the Class of 2012, showing a composite score of 21.5 compared to the state composite of 22.

However local graduates were still above the national ACT composite of 21.1

The highest possible ACT score is 36.

Local high school guidance counselor Jerry Wiggins said the staff is always seeking ways to improve student scores.

Although the school has always offered some kind of ACT preparation, the staff is bumping up efforts this year.

Wiggins said ACT prep work will be integrated into higher-level classes and curriculum.

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For example, an ACT prep week, where students will focus on how to take the college-readiness test and test-taking strategies, will take place a week or two before the test is offered in the area in September, October, December, February and April.

The test is also offered in June but school is not in session.

Wiggins said ACT prep will be offered in junior and senior-level college-prep classes like in math, English and science.

“It allows students some time within the school day to work on the ACT,” he said, noting that in the past, students had to prep on their own outside of school.

He pointed out that there’s no longer a detachment between high school curriculum and the ACT and that the district tries to encourage all students, not only the four-year college bound, to take the test.

“Our curriculum should coincide with the ACT,” Wiggins said.

A separate ACT prep class, taught by local teachers will be offered Oct. 6 and 13 and March 25 and April 8.

School staff and administration are also looking at ways for students going to a vocational or community college to prep for the COMPASS test.

That test evaluates student skills in several subjects so students are placed in appropriate courses.

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Interestingly, Wiggins said most of the graduating class of 2012, or 45%, indicated an intention to attend a vocational or community college.

Wiggins said 42% planned to go to a four-year institution while 13% said they wanted to join the work force.

By scoring high enough on the ACT, he said students can

qualify for tuition waivers and scholarships.

Merit-based scholarships are based on high ACT scores in addition to class rank and grade-point average, Wiggins said.

Each year, the ACT is offered in the area for \$35.

Most students take the test several times since their best score is what they can use on college applications.

Some colleges, such as Mid-Plains Community College, offer one-day workshops.

Wiggins noted that ACT also offers on-line programs with sample test questions.

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