Despite a small gain from 2016 and 2017, the percentage of African American graduates meeting college benchmarks is very low compared to other graduates. In fact, compared to all graduates, **African American graduates are nearly twice as likely to meet zero ACT College Readiness Benchmarks**.

64% of ACT–tested African American high school graduates met zero benchmarks... compared to all graduates 35%

*Source: ACT*

For the past four years, African American graduates have been least likely to meet ACT college readiness benchmarks in STEM–related subjects such as math and science, among all racial groups.

White students are 4x more likely to meet science benchmarks than African American graduates.

As in 2015, 2016 and 2017 **only 6% of African American graduates** who took the 2018 ACT met college readiness benchmarks in all four subjects.

*Source: ACT*

While the percentage of all ACT–tested graduates aspiring to a post-secondary degree has decreased since 2015, **the majority of students still want to go to college**.

*Source: ACT*
UNCF’S MANIFESTO—WHAT WE BELIEVE IN

We believe that if students are academically prepared for college, we can radically change the story of what’s possible—not just for African American students but for the African American community as a whole. UNCF is passionately invested in transforming dreams of college into reality and we will continue to push until all students who want to go to college are afforded that opportunity.

For our students to be college ready, we need to ensure that their K-12 educational experience is preparing them to excel in college and beyond. As a result, we believe students must:

- **Attend a quality school** that offers a rigorous college preparatory curriculum and enables them to graduate at a college-ready level. We believe that free, safe, high-quality school options should be available and accessible to all students in every neighborhood.

- **Have effective teachers** in each of their classes who guide them through challenging course work, building the academic and social skills needed to ensure they are successful in college, career and life.

- **Understand how to navigate critical decisions along their K-16 journey**, such as selecting quality schools, understanding their full breadth of choices, learning how to secure financial support for college, and positioning themselves for college and career success.

- **Receive guidance and mentoring** from an adult who can help them navigate the complex college-going process and provide them with the support along the way.

- **Understand how, along with their parents and communities, to hold their school and teachers accountable** for providing a high-quality education.

- **Be immersed in a college-going culture**, where college is not an exception, but an expectation coupled with the belief that all students have the aptitude to reach this goal.