

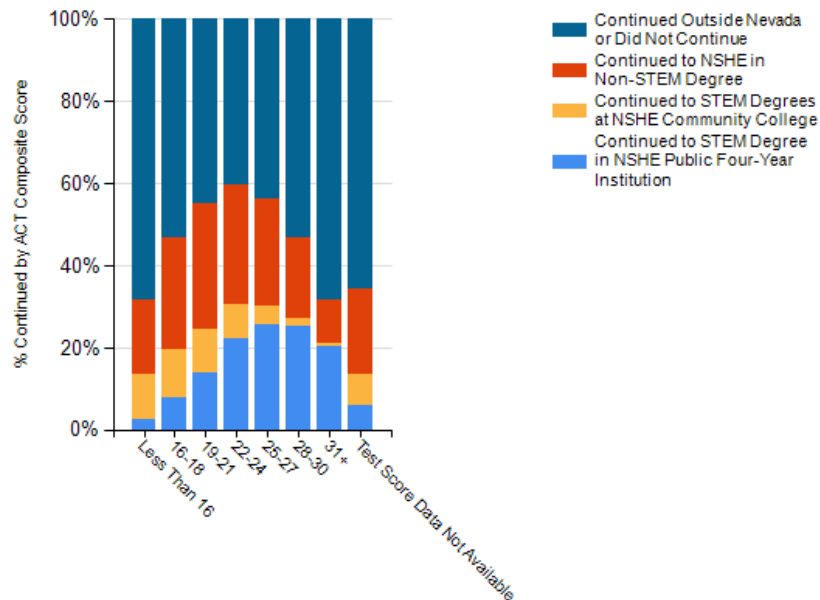
Research Notes



NPWR STEM Continuation Rates
Jeremey Hays, Economist

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Higher ACT Scores Correlate With Greater Enrollment in STEM Degrees



- Using NPWR's¹ Summary of Continuation for Nevada 2016 High School Graduates report, we looked at the percentage Nevada Department of Education (NDE) high school graduates who continued to Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions, with breakouts for whether those grads entered into STEM majors and the range in which their ACT scores fell.
- Of those NDE graduates who scored between 16 and 18 on the ACT, eight percent continued to an NSHE four-year university STEM Degree program. 12 percent of graduates in this cohort chose to pursue STEM degrees at NSHE Community Colleges.
- The total enrollment in STEM degrees increases as ACT scores increase, to a maximum of 26 percent and four percent attending four-year and community colleges when ACT scores are in the 25-27 range.
- Interestingly, there is an observed substitution effect within NSHE. At higher ACT scores, fewer students choose to attend community colleges to pursue their STEM degrees, opting instead for four-year institutions.
- Further, it is evident that students with ACT scores at the top of the range are not continuing within NSHE, likely indicating that those students are pursuing educational opportunities outside of Nevada.

¹ NPWR is a research tool resulting from a collaborative effort by the Nevada Department of Education, the Nevada System of Higher Education, and the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. NPWR is a system that securely integrates each agency's de-identified data to provide first-hand information on trends and outcomes across education and workforce programs in the State of Nevada.