



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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LITTLE ROCK: AT 33.3 percent, Arkansas remains one of the states with the highest percentage of public high school 2008 graduates who have taken at least one Advanced Placement (AP) Exam during their high school careers, according to a report released by the College Board today. Only four states had a larger percentage of AP test-taking seniors last spring: Maryland (37.2), New York (35.4) Florida (34.0) and Virginia (34.1). Nationally, 25 percent of high school students have participated in at least one AP exam during high school.

“Students who complete Advanced Placement courses are much more prepared for the problem-solving and self-motivation required to succeed in college,” said Dr. Ken James, Arkansas Commissioner of Education. “Research continues to show that students who have taken an AP course, even if they don’t score a top score, are more likely to complete a bachelor’s degree than peers who were similar on measures of income and college-placement exam scores but who did not participate in an AP class.”

Of the 9,721 Arkansas public high school seniors in 2008 who took an AP Exam during high school, 3,102 scored a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam. AP scores range from “1” to “5” and, in Arkansas, students with a score of “3” or higher receive college credit for the AP course. The College Board recognizes Arkansas for ranking fourth in terms of expansion of AP scores of 3 or higher since 2003.

“This is great news from both a short-term and a long-term perspective regarding the preparation students are receiving during their first 12 years of education,” said Dr. Jim Purcell, director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. “The growth of AP and the support shown by Governor Beebe and the state to ensure the availability of this type of instruction to students at the high school level can only pay off in positive dividends as these students continue moving into the post-secondary education pipeline.”

Arkansas state policy encourages access for all students to Advanced Placement courses by requiring all high schools to offer at least one AP class in each of the four core areas of math, English, social studies, and science, and by paying the AP Exam fee for all students.

The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.