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More Minnesota Public School Students Taking, Succeeding on Advanced Placement Exams

Roseville - Minnesota is defying national trends with 10 percent more Minnesota students taking Advanced Placement exams and 13 percent more students succeeding with scores of 3 or higher - the score predictive of college success.

The College Board's sixth annual AP Report to the Nation reports that 15.5 percent of Minnesota's public school students in the class of 2009 achieved an AP Exam score of 3 or higher during their high school years — up from 14.2 percent in 2008 and 10.6 percent in 2004.

"I congratulate Minnesota's educators, administrators and policymakers for increasing access to AP courses for all students," said College Board President Gaston Caperton. "Still, there is more work to do to meet our nation's education goals of ensuring more students, including underrepresented students, are prepared for the rigors of college and the lifetime of opportunities that college success provides."

The data in this year's report also show that more Latino and African American public school students in Minnesota are taking and succeeding on AP Exams, with both groups experiencing steady gains in participation and success during the last five years.

Since 2004, the number of Minnesota students participating in the rigorous Advanced Placement exams has doubled with over 60 percent of these students scoring well enough to earn college credit.

Minnesota's educational initiatives to increase access to minority populations is succeeding with more minority students participating in Advance Placement exams and earning scores of 3 or higher to qualify for college credit. Minnesota's five year trend exceeds national trends, especial in the minority and low income student populations.

"Minnesota is showing the nation that you can increase access to more and diverse students to rigorous courses with higher expectations and these students can and do succeed," Education Commissioner Alice Seagren said. "We must continue to offer opportunities to all of Minnesota students while building the capacity throughout the system for all of our students to succeed."

Over the past five years, Minnesota's systematic approach included improving academic standards, professional development, increasing student access to rigorous courses at middle school such as the addition of algebra in the eighth grade."

In the past five years, public high schools in Minnesota have increased the number of students gaining access to and experiencing success in AP:

- 14,396, or 24.4 percent, of the students in Minnesota's public high school class of 2009 took at least one AP Exam during high school, compared to 13,570 (22.5 percent) in the class of 2008 and 9,579 (16.2 percent) in the class of 2004.
- 9,111 students, or 15.5 percent, from Minnesota's public high school class of 2009 earned a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam during high school, compared to 8,558 (14.2 percent) in the class of 2008 and 6,257 (10.6 percent) in the class of 2004.
- Of the students in Minnesota's public high school class of 2009 who took at least one AP Exam during high school, 301, or 2.1 percent, were Hispanic or Latino, compared to 259 in the class of 2008 (1.9 percent) and 135 (1.4 percent) in the class of 2004.
- Of the students in Minnesota's public high school class of 2009 who earned a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam during high school, 157, or 1.7 percent, were Hispanic or Latino, compared to 139 (1.6 percent) in the class of 2008 and 78 (1.2 percent) in the class of 2004.
- Of the students in Minnesota's public high school class of 2009 who took at least one AP Exam during high school, 389, or 2.7 percent, were black or African American, compared to 377 (2.8 percent) in the class of 2008 and 154 (1.6 percent) in the class of 2004.
- Of the students in Minnesota's public high school class of 2009 who earned a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam during high school, 136, or 1.5 percent, were black or African American, compared to 123 (1.4 percent) in the class of 2008 and 45 (0.7 percent) in the class of 2004.
- 6.1 percent of Minnesota's public high school students took at least one AP Exam in science,¹ and 11.6 percent took at least one AP Exam in math,² compared to 8.8 percent and 9.7 percent, respectively, for the nation.

In November, Minnesota received a three-year \$4.5 million AP Access grant from the U.S. Department of Education intended to increase AP participation among low-income and underrepresented students.

¹. The AP science programs comprise Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics B, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, and Physics C: Mechanics.

². The AP math programs comprise Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Computer Science A, Computer Science AB and Statistics.