

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: School Board Members  
School District of Palm Beach County

FROM: Arthur C. Johnson, Ph. D.  
Superintendent

DATE: September 11, 2001

SUBJECT: FY1997 – FY2001 Advanced Placement (AP) Exam Results

The Advanced Placement (AP) exam is a cooperative educational endeavor between secondary schools and colleges/universities. There are 33 courses in 19 subject areas, offered by 14,000 secondary schools around the world. In 2001, 845,000 students took 1.4 million exams. The AP exam gives students an opportunity to take college-level courses and exams while still in high school, thereby providing a means for colleges to grant credit and/or placement to students who have applied themselves successfully. Tables 1 and 2 contain information about the participation rate and percent passing for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC), Florida, the Nation and the World (Global). Table 3 contains the information for black, Hispanic, and white seniors in the SDPBC.

AP results from multiple years can reveal trends in the demographics of the test takers and their academic preparation, and can provide individual schools and districts with one way of self evaluation and self comparison. However, as indicated by the College Board (publisher of the AP), caution should be used in making comparisons between local, state, and national results. Results may differ because not all students in a high school, school district, or a state take the AP.

AP performance and participation is a Key Result for the SDPBC. Some highlights of the AP exam results are described below.

### **Participation Rate**

- ◆ In FY2001, there were 3,145 juniors and seniors in the SDPBC who took an AP exam. The participation rate is the highest in the last five years, and continues an upward trend.
- ◆ The FY2001 participation rates for black, Hispanic and white students were higher than the FY1997 rates.

### **Passing Rate**

- ◆ In FY2001, the percent of SDPBC students passing an AP exam (61.3%) was about the same as the World and higher than Florida and the Nation.
- ◆ From FY1997 to FY2001, the SDPBC passing rate remained stable, as were the rates for black, Hispanic and white SDPBC students.

These results will be shared with appropriate staff members to provide direction for improvements in curriculum and instruction. Also, schools have received information about their AP exam test takers and will use this information in the school improvement planning process.

For questions about the AP exam results, contact Sharon Brannon, Manager of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability at 434-8848. For questions about the AP exam program in the SDPBC, contact Connie Boutwell, Program Planner, Secondary Education at 434-8250.

c/attachments:

- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Assistant to the Superintendent
- Area/Assistant Superintendents
- Curriculum & Learning Support Executive Director and Directors
- High School Principals

Table 1.

Participation Rate and Number (in Parentheses) of Students Taking the Advanced Placement Tests by High School and the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY1997 - FY2001

HIGH SCHOOL	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Atlantic	23.6% (229)	18.6% (172)	30.4% (283)	30.0% (319)	27.9% (310)
Boca Raton	9.5% (76)	11.0% (87)	14.4% (114)	14.8% (109)	17.9% (131)
Dreyfoos School of Arts	49.3% (165)	55.3% (183)	46.1% (199)	36.7% (217)	48.1% (268)
Forest Hill	9.6% (54)	14.5% (78)	17.3% (94)	22.4% (112)	16.2% (84)
Glades Central	3.5% (20)	3.3% (19)	6.6% (31)	3.6% (19)	3.6% (18)
J. I. Leonard	13.5% (142)	13.3% (130)	14.0% (134)	14.7% (133)	14.7% (132)
Jupiter	8.2% (61)	6.3% (44)	8.1% (57)	10.2% (77)	19.1% (144)
Lake Worth	9.3% (98)	10.7% (106)	12.3% (115)	15.8% (149)	17.1% (161)
Olympic Heights	19.1% (166)	20.5% (180)	24.6% (229)	24.1% (217)	25.1% (236)
P. B. Gardens	9.6% (82)	17.7% (142)	24.1% (203)	20.2% (188)	19.8% (177)
P. B. Lakes	6.2% (70)	3.5% (38)	5.1% (52)	6.5% (59)	6.5% (60)
Pahokee	14.8% (29)	14.7% (25)	23.5% (40)	6.1% (13)	5.9% (13)
Royal Palm Beach	N.R.	N.R.	13.2% (74)	10.3% (86)	11.0% (96)
Santaluces	6.6% (75)	7.9% (85)	7.8% (88)	7.8% (93)	11.1% (134)
Spanish River	19.4% (219)	22.8% (255)	25.1% (285)	24.7% (286)	30.6% (377)
Suncoast	69.1% (400)	54.9% (315)	79.9% (452)	73.9% (437)	74.8% (434)
W. T. Dwyer	9.2% (74)	11.1% (86)	10.9% (85)	13.1% (104)	19.6% (160)
Wellington	11.6% (149)	10.5% (131)	12.9% (141)	14.3% (171)	17.3% (210)
SDPBC	14.2% (2109)	14.4% (2076)	18.3% (2676)	18.5% (2789)	20.0% (3145)

Note: Each participation rate is determined by dividing the number of students taking an AP test by the total number of district juniors and seniors recorded in the fourth nine weeks. In the SDPBC, students who are enrolled in AP courses are required to take the examination for that course. This is not a requirement in other school systems. The AP program does not provide comparable participation rates for Florida, the Nation, or Global. N.R. = No results were reported because the school did not have a senior class.

Table 2.

Percent of Advanced Placement Tests Passed by High School, the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC), Florida, Nation, and Global: FY1997 - FY2001

HIGH SCHOOL	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Atlantic	64.1%	69.1%	71.7%	70.3%	70.6%
Boca Raton	72.5%	60.7%	69.7%	71.6%	56.4%
Dreyfoos School of Arts	78.9%	71.0%	79.7%	72.9%	72.9%
Forest Hill	38.2%	26.0%	36.5%	37.4%	48.7%
Glades Central	3.8%	15.4%	2.0%	0.0%	9.5%
J.I. Leonard	49.3%	45.1%	45.9%	49.1%	50.0%
Jupiter	62.1%	81.5%	86.6%	86.3%	66.9%
Lake Worth	49.3%	61.9%	45.9%	44.9%	41.7%
Olympic Heights	63.4%	60.5%	70.2%	66.1%	59.6%
P.B. Lakes	33.3%	56.5%	56.3%	56.0%	57.7%
P.B. Gardens	44.1%	54.3%	47.7%	51.1%	43.1%
Pahokee	5.4%	10.8%	1.7%	6.3%	0.0%
Royal Palm Beach	N.R.	N.R.	33.3%	36.7%	36.7%
Santaluces	66.4%	62.3%	62.6%	61.1%	41.2%
Spanish River	73.0%	73.2%	79.9%	76.0%	76.4%
Suncoast	60.0%	55.3%	52.7%	58.5%	61.1%
W.T. Dwyer	44.4%	51.6%	39.3%	35.2%	27.8%
Wellington	62.4%	66.0%	73.2%	77.4%	76.6%
SDPBC	59.7%	59.5%	60.6%	61.7%	61.3%
Florida	55.6%	56.2%	57.3%	58.0%	55.4%
Nation	64.5%	64.1%	63.5%	63.7%	57.2%
Global	64.7%	64.4%	63.8%	63.9%	61.6%

Note. In the SDPBC, students who are enrolled in AP courses are required to take the examination for that course. This is not a requirement in other school systems. N.R. = No results were reported because the school did not have a senior class.

Table 3.

Number of Advanced Placement Test Takers, Percent of AP Tests Passed, and Participation Rates\* By Race/Ethnicity for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY1997 - FY2001

**BLACK STUDENTS**

FISCAL YEAR	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Number of Test Takers	174	147	211	200	269
Percent of AP Tests Passed	32.4%	28.9%	30.9%	34.2%	34.3%
Participation Rate	4.3%	3.7%	5.5%	5.4%	6.9%

**HISPANIC STUDENTS**

FISCAL YEAR	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Number of Test Takers	290	283	370	410	478
Percent of AP Tests Passed	63.8%	66.7%	62.5%	66.6%	64.0%
Participation Rate	15.8%	16.1%	21.1%	19.3%	21.3%

**WHITE STUDENTS**

FISCAL YEAR	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001
Number of Test Takers	1351	1321	1682	1830	2038
Percent of AP Tests Passed	62.2%	62.1%	63.0%	62.8%	63.4%
Participation Rate	15.9%	16.3%	19.9%	21.1%	23.0%

\* The participation rates for reported groups are determined by dividing the number of students in the group taking an AP exam by the total number of district juniors and seniors in that group recorded in the fourth nine weeks.