

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: School Board Members  
School District of Palm Beach County

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

DATE: December 20, 2002

SUBJECT: FY1998 – FY2002 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 2002, 900,000 students took 1.6 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). Tables 3 and 4 contain the information by race/ethnicity/language groups, free/reduced lunch status, ESOL category, and ESE or non-ESE status of SDPBC seniors, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The data for some groups is not available for years prior to FY2001.

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 global 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. An analysis of the AP exam results using the World Class method revealed the following:

### **Participation Rate**

- ◆ In FY2002, there were 3,885 juniors and seniors in the SDPBC who took an AP exam.
- ◆ The FY2002 participation rates for all tested students, and for black, Hispanic, and white students continued an upward trend and were significantly higher than in FY1998.

### **Passing Rate**

- ◆ In FY2002, the percent of AP Exams passed by SDPBC students (60%) was higher than Florida and lower than the Nation and Global.
- ◆ The FY2002 passing rate for black students was higher than in FY1998, while the passing rate for all tested students, Hispanic, and white students remained stable.

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 Christie Ragsdale, Secondary Guidance Specialist, at 357-7666.

c/attachments:

- Chief Academic/Operational Officer
- Area/Assistant Superintendents
- Chief of Staff
- Chief Public Information Officer
- High School Principals
- Academic Executive Director/Directors

Table 1.

Number of Students Tested (N) and the Participation Rate (%) for the Advanced Placement Tests by High School and the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY1998 - FY2002

HIGH SCHOOL	FY1998		FY1999		FY2000		FY2001		FY2002	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Atlantic	172	19%	283	30%	319	30%	310	28%	323	32%
Boca Raton	87	11%	114	14%	109	15%	131	18%	133	17%
Boynton Beach	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	32	8%
Dreyfoos School of Arts	183	55%	199	46%	217	37%	268	48%	323	52%
Forest Hill	78	15%	94	17%	112	22%	84	16%	77	15%
Glades Central	19	3%	31	7%	19	4%	18	4%	23	4%
J. I. Leonard	130	13%	134	14%	133	15%	132	15%	183	16%
Jupiter	44	6%	57	8%	77	10%	144	19%	171	22%
Lake Worth	106	11%	115	12%	149	16%	161	17%	176	17%
Olympic Heights	180	21%	229	25%	217	24%	236	25%	329	30%
P. B. Gardens	142	18%	203	24%	188	20%	177	20%	230	24%
P. B. Lakes	38	4%	52	5%	59	7%	60	7%	73	7%
Pahokee	25	15%	40	24%	13	6%	13	6%	32	12%
Royal Palm Beach	N.R.	N.R.	74	13%	86	10%	96	11%	153	15%
Santaluces	85	8%	88	8%	93	8%	134	11%	142	12%
Spanish River	255	23%	285	25%	286	25%	377	31%	398	29%
Suncoast	315	55%	452	80%	437	74%	434	75%	547	90%
W. T. Dwyer	86	11%	85	11%	104	13%	160	20%	234	26%
Wellington	131	11%	141	13%	171	14 %	210	17%	301	22%
SDPBC	2076	14%	2676	18%	2789	19%	3145	20%	3880	22%

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 junior and/or 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: FY1998 - FY2002

HIGH SCHOOL	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002
Atlantic	69%	72%	70%	71%	73%
Boca Raton	61%	70%	72%	56%	65%
Boynton Beach	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	42%
Dreyfoos School of Arts	71%	80%	73%	73%	77%
Forest Hill	26%	37%	37%	49%	38%
Glades Central	15%	2%	0%	10%	7%
J.I. Leonard	45%	46%	49%	50%	50%
Jupiter	82%	87%	86%	67%	59%
Lake Worth	62%	46%	45%	42%	44%
Olympic Heights	61%	70%	66%	60%	64%
P.B. Lakes	57%	56%	56%	58%	67%
P.B. Gardens	54%	48%	51%	43%	46%
Pahokee	11%	2%	6%	0%	0%
Royal Palm Beach	N.R.	33%	37%	37%	31%
Santaluces	62%	63%	61%	41%	50%
Spanish River	73%	80%	76%	76%	76%
Suncoast	55%	53%	59%	61%	60%
W.T. Dwyer	52%	39%	35%	28%	24%
Wellington	66%	73%	77%	77%	67%
SDPBC	60%	61%	62%	61%	60%
Florida	56%	57%	58%	55%	56%
Nation	64%	64%	64%	57%	63%
Global	64%	64%	64%	62%	63%

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 junior and/or senior class.

Table 3.

**Number of Students Tested (N) and the Participation Rate (%) for the Advanced Placement Tests by Group for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY1998 - FY2002**

	FY1998		FY1999		FY2000		FY2001		FY2002	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All	2076	14%	2676	18%	2789	19%	3145	20%	3880	22%
Black	147	4%	211	6%	200	5%	270	7%	339	7%
Hispanic	283	16%	370	21%	410	19%	447	19%	572	21%
White	1321	16%	1682	20%	1830	21%	2104	24%	2635	28%
Free/Reduced Lunch							203	7%	229	7%
ESE							11	1%	26	2%
ESOL							36	6%	21	4%

Data for groups in the shaded areas were not reported for years prior to FY2001. 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.

Table 4.

**Number of Advanced Placement Tests Taken (N) and Percent of AP Tests Passed (%) By Group for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY1998 - FY2002**

	FY1998		FY1999		FY2000		FY2001		FY2002	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All	3362	60%	4577	61%	4831	62%	5509	61%	7192	60%
Black	211	29%	324	31%	292	34%	404	33%	535	36%
Hispanic	409	67%	538	63%	611	67%	659	66%	869	64%
White	2153	62%	2924	63%	3215	63%	3781	63%	5062	61%
Free/Reduced Lunch							262	49%	329	52%
ESE							15	.	34	68%
ESOL							37	78%	25	.

Data for groups in the shaded areas were not reported for years prior to FY2001. Data is not reported (indicated by ".") when the number of tests taken was less than 30.