



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

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CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER


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MEMORANDUM

TO: School Board Members
School District of Palm Beach County

FROM: Ann Killets 
Chief Academic Officer

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

DATE: October 20, 2006

SUBJECT: FY2002–FY2006 Advanced Placement (AP) Exam Results

The Advanced Placement (AP) exam is a cooperative educational endeavor between secondary schools and colleges/universities. Within the AP curriculum, 36 courses in 19 subject areas are offered by 16,000 secondary schools throughout the world. The AP exam provides students with 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.

Table 1 reports the number of students tested and the participation rate for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC) and for each of its high schools over the past five years. Table 2 reports the percent of AP exams passed within the SDPBC and each of its high schools, as well as within Florida and the nation. Tables 3 and 4 contain disaggregated data by race/ethnicity.

AP performance and participation is a Key Result for the SDPBC. A brief summary of statistically significant AP exam results revealed the following findings:

Participation Rate

- ◆ In FY2006, there were 7,485 students (32%) in the SDPBC who took at least one AP exam.
- ◆ The FY2006 participation rates for all students, Black, and Hispanic students are significantly higher than those in FY2002, and from FY2004 to FY2006, participation rates have consistently increased for all students, Black, and Hispanic students.

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Percent of Tests Passed

- ◆ In FY2006, the SDPBC's percent passing was higher than Florida's and lower than the Nation's¹.
- ◆ In FY2006, the SDPBC's percent passing for all students, Black, Hispanic, and White students were significantly lower than those in FY2002, and from FY2004 to FY2006, the percent passed has consistently decreased for all students, Black, Hispanic, and White students. This decrease is likely due to the increased participation rates for these groups.

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 the means to evaluate progress in comparison to themselves and to others. 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 state take the AP exam.

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 Dean Stecker, Director of Research and Evaluation at 432-3842. For questions about the AP Program in the SDPBC, contact Mary Wilson, K-12 Literacy Program Planner, at 434-8054.

AJ:AK:MB:DS:jl

c/attachments:

- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief of Performance Accountability
- Chief Public Information Officer
- Chief, Safety & Learning Environment
- Area/Assistant Superintendents
- Academic Executive Directors/Directors
- High School Principals

¹ Source: Florida Department of Education.
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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): FY2002 - FY2006

	FY2002		FY2003		FY2004		FY2005		FY2006	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A. W. Dreyfoos School of Arts	323	52%	397	62%	499	83%	628	100%	866	100%
Atlantic	325	32%	384	41%	409	45%	410	48%	482	49%
Boca Raton	133	17%	146	18%	196	24%	330	40%	528	58%
Boynton Beach	32	8%	118	14%	82	8%	76	8%	150	20%
Forest Hill	77	15%	109	21%	109	17%	235	38%	257	40%
Glades Central	23	4%	39	9%	24	5%	52	9%	60	12%
J. I. Leonard	184	16%	210	18%	191	17%	181	19%	192	21%
Jupiter	171	22%	295	39%	259	30%	358	34%	404	32%
Lake Worth	176	17%	179	16%	154	12%	143	12%	156	14%
Olympic Heights	329	30%	366	32%	372	31%	303	32%	248	38%
Park Vista	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	134	30%	323	33%
P. B. Gardens	230	24%	248	25%	233	21%	336	31%	326	28%
P. B. Central	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	336	32%	360	32%
P. B. Lakes	73	7%	99	10%	99	9%	109	10%	203	21%
Pahokee	32	12%	35	14%	33	15%	46	22%	33	16%
Royal Palm Beach	153	15%	204	17%	167	13%	191	14%	195	16%
Santaluces	142	12%	200	18%	254	20%	229	20%	177	20%
Spanish River	398	29%	500	35%	519	36%	590	48%	608	58%
Suncoast	548	91%	565	88%	629	99%	662	100%	745	100%
W. T. Dwyer	235	26%	259	27%	269	30%	337	39%	351	40%
Wellington	301	21%	380	25%	386	27%	390	29%	485	38%
West Boca	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	138	34%	336	38%
SDPBC	3885	22%	4733	25%	4884	23%	6214	28%	7485	32%

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, and the Nation. 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, and the Nation: FY2002 - FY2006

	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006
A. W. Dreyfoos School of Arts	77%	71%	69%	59%	55%
Atlantic	73%	70%	66%	71%	70%
Boca Raton	65%	57%	50%	49%	45%
Boynton Beach	42%	15%	23%	33%	16%
Forest Hill	38%	37%	34%	24%	23%
Glades Central	7%	25%	19%	8%	9%
J. I. Leonard	50%	62%	58%	59%	49%
Jupiter	59%	49%	59%	51%	59%
Lake Worth	44%	49%	61%	63%	58%
Olympic Heights	64%	60%	64%	63%	59%
P. B. Central	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	36%	49%
P. B. Gardens	46%	52%	39%	44%	35%
P. B. Lakes	67%	52%	45%	21%	25%
Pahokee	0%	0%	2%	3%	5%
Park Vista	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	45%	46%
Royal Palm Beach	31%	25%	37%	40%	26%
Santaluces	50%	50%	44%	52%	56%
Spanish River	76%	70%	78%	75%	73%
Suncoast	60%	59%	50%	51%	41%
W. T. Dwyer	24%	21%	29%	27%	27%
Wellington	67%	57%	67%	64%	57%
West Boca	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	51%	60%
SDPBC	60%	55%	57%	53%	50%
Florida	56%	52%	52%	50%	45%
Nation	63%	61%	62%	60%	58%

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 Race/Ethnicity for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY2002 - FY2006

	FY2002		FY2003		FY2004		FY2005		FY2006	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SDPBC	3885	21.7	4733	24.8	4884	22.7	6214	28.1	7485	32.3
Black	321	6.7	420	8.1	400	6.3	560	8.8	769	11.9
Hispanic	600	21.6	732	23.5	812	21.8	1034	26.1	1236	28.7
White	2486	26.2	3041	30.9	3090	29.6	3833	36.2	4379	39.8

Data Source: College Board

Table 4. Number of Advanced Placement Tests Taken (N) and Percent of AP Tests Passed (%) by Race/Ethnicity for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC): FY2002 - FY2006

	FY2002		FY2003		FY2004		FY2005		FY2006	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
SDPBC	7192	59.7	8779	55.4	9003	56.6	11667	52.8	14568	49.6
Black	509	36.5	660	28.8	626	33.2	904	29.6	1251	23.7
Hispanic	928	63.3	1146	59.2	1347	62.0	1746	56.4	2269	51.8
White	4779	61.5	5884	57.1	5872	58.4	7414	54.8	8723	52.5

Data Source: College Board