

Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education

The College Board

Greg Walker, Vice-President of the Midwest Region

March 2, 2017

Chairman Cupp and Ranking Member Miller, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

I am Greg Walker, Vice-President of the Midwest Region of the College Board.

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership organization. College Board members are post-secondary institutions, K12 districts, schools and other organizations that work to support college/career readiness and success. Most people know the College Board for our iconic brands which include the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT and Advanced Placement. There are 166 member organizations of the College Board from Ohio. Our members are directly engaged in the governance of the organization at the national and regional level. Jefferson Blackburn-Smith, Vice-President of Enrollment at Otterbein College has served as Chair of the Midwest Regional Council over the past year.

The mission of the College Board is “Clearing a path for all students to own their future.” There are two key cornerstones that really drive the College Board’s work in the primary and secondary education arenas: “Prepare” and “Propel.” So what do we mean by “Prepare?” We want to challenge all students to focus their efforts and practice hard based on evidence and data. To support “Prepare”, the College Board provides vertically aligned assessments of college and career readiness in grades 8-12, personalized practice through Khan Academy, curricular resources and professional development for teachers in grades 7-12, resources and professional development for school counselors, and college/career planning tools.

Now let’s turn to “Propel.” The College Board is working to help all students achieve college and career success by removing barriers. For example, low-income SAT test takers are provided with benefits, including free score sends and college application fee waivers, to help ensure students complete their college application process. We also provide guidance and resources, such as near peer mentoring, to support the college and career planning process. College Board has implemented a streamlined process for requesting accommodations and is providing new accommodations for ELL learners. This is just a sample of work that the College Board does that supports our mission of “Clearing a path for all students to own their future.”

Now I’d like to turn to our work to support Ohio districts and schools.

The College Board has been working with districts/schools through the state of Ohio that have chosen to administer the SAT to all of their eleventh grade students. The College Board has a dedicated staff who live and work in Ohio to work closely with administrators, counselor and teachers to fully leverage the data, tools and resources of that are part of the SAT and the SAT Suite of Assessments. For example,

two Ohio school districts were recently named as winners of the Official SAT Practice District Challenge. A unique feature that no other testing company can match is that of the SAT partnership with Khan Academy to provide students with world class personalized practice that is grounded in driving mastery of content that is directly tied to day-to-day classroom instruction. This practice is directly linked to individual student performance on our SAT Suite of Assessments. Further, this service is available for FREE to any student because the College Board believes in access and a level playing field for all students to benefit from productive practice. There have been 118 Ohio students who have improved their SAT scores over 200 points from their PSAT/NMSQT scores using Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy.

One of the ways that students can get started with personalized practice is by using their PSAT/NMSQT test scores. Brunswick City Schools and Princeton City Schools had the 2nd and 3rd highest percentage of PSAT/NMSQT test takers connecting to Khan Academy in the country as of January 20th. Chromebooks were donated to local libraries in each district to ensure that all students can engage in productive practice. Districts and schools are excited by the resources and opportunities provided to all students with productive practice through Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy.

As districts have the opportunity to select which college entrance exam they wish to offer to their students in 17-18, we hope you encourage your local districts to learn more about the full range of on the ground support, the rich data, tools and resources that are available for educators, students and parents. Ohio is to be commended for providing an opportunity for all students to complete an important step in the college planning and admissions pathway.

The College Board also helps students put their best foot forward in the college preparation process through our Advanced Placement program. The Advanced Placement, or AP Program as it is commonly referred to, provides opportunities for students to engage in first-year college level work while in high school. It also provides students with the opportunity to earn college credit or placement into advanced courses based on the AP exam(s) taken in May each year.

Over the past 60 years, participation in AP has grown significantly. For two historically under-represented groups: students of color and students from low socio-economic backgrounds, growth has been particularly strong. In “AP at Scale: Public School Students in Advanced Placement, 1990–2013,” American Enterprise Institute researcher Nat Malkus presents data showing that increasing numbers of students are embracing and succeeding in AP courses. The report points out that while AP participation increased significantly between 2000 and 2009, there was no corresponding drop in the test scores of AP students, demonstrating that the program continued to grow while maintaining its high level of quality. Malkus wrote, “Expanding at scale without sacrificing rigor is the rarest kind of success in public education, and AP is showing just that.” Malkus also noted that “AP’s dramatic growth has made it an indispensable part of public education, but the real feat has been maintaining quality at scale.” Malkus called AP perhaps “the single happiest education story of the century.”

The ability for students, especially low-income students to benefit from AP course and exams is in jeopardy. For the past decade, Ohio utilized the Federal AP Test Fee Grant to provide support for low-income AP student exam fees. The Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) eliminated the dedicated funding for the program. As a result, states, districts and schools are struggling with how to continue to provide low income exam fee support so that there continues to be equitable access to AP. Several states already provide or have decided to allocate state funds to ensure that the cost of the exam is not a barrier for low-income students in the future.

But why is ensuring all students have access to AP important? The research is clear. Students who participate in AP courses and exams have better post-secondary outcomes – across a variety of indicators – compared to students who pursue other options such as dual credit. Attached are the findings from three studies which highlight key post-secondary outcome metrics. In addition, The Ohio Department of Higher Education has conducted its own research on the performance of AP students. Their findings, which I quote, “Relative to students without AP tests, AP credit recipients record substantially higher first-year grade point average (GPA), the number of attempted hours, course completion rates, and first-to-second year persistence rates.” mirror those found in numerous other studies. Given these findings, Ohio would be well served to continue to ensure that all students, including those that need financial support to fully participate in AP exams, have the opportunity and resources to do so.

Many states, districts and schools provide multiple pathways so that students can determine the best options based on individual college and career interests and aspirations. However, not all options can or should be considered equal in terms of quality, rigor, and outcomes. One of the concerns we hear most often from districts/schools in Ohio pertains to the rule that College Credit Plus courses must be given the same weight as AP, IB or other forms of college level course work. Local districts are in the best position to evaluate the quality and rigor of the programs offered in their schools and should be able to determine how various options are calculated into the high school grade point average. If, as the research indicates, post-secondary outcomes are not the same for these various options, why should the impact on a student’s high school grade point average be the same?

Just as the Ohio has researched the impact of its AP Credit Policy, we encourage the state to investigate the outcomes of College Credit Plus. While dual credit has been available for many years, College Credit Plus is very different model which is relatively new and unproven. Our hope is that the state will engage in a thorough study of the program and its outcomes on college first-year grade point average (GPA), the number of attempted hours, course completion rates, first-to-second year persistence rates, and real cost-savings for students and families to accurately inform recommendations to improve the program.

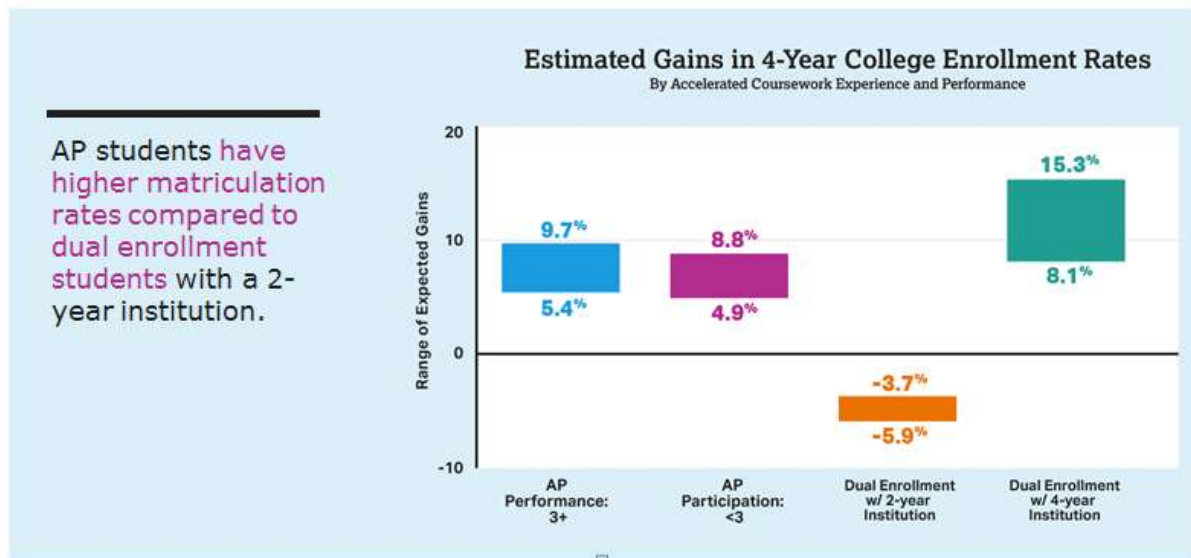
One of the strengths of the College Board is our willingness to adapt current programs or offer new options as the needs of educators and students change. As you probably know, virtually every field today — from the arts and the media to lab sciences — requires an understanding of computing. It’s important to give students the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of computer science and understand its application across a wide range of careers and disciplines. In response to the need for

more students to have an understanding of and experience with computer science, the College Board launched AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP). AP CSP is designed to focus on the innovative aspects of computing as well as the computational thinking that helps students make connections to their everyday lives. AP Computer Science Principles has been designed to attract and engage a wide variety of students, including those traditionally underrepresented in computer science, such as women and minorities

During the 2016-17 academic year, 66 schools in Ohio are offering AP CSP. We look forward to supporting policy changes that will make it easier for schools to offer AP CSP as well as other computer science related courses.

Chairman Cupp and Ranking Member Miller, thank you again for the opportunity provide this update on College Board related programs and services. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

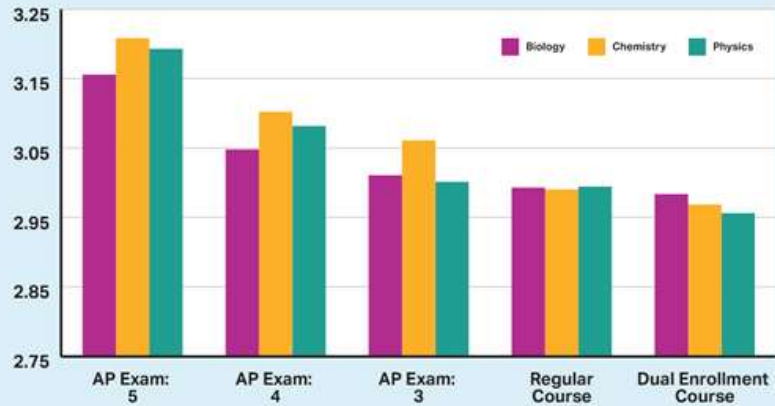
Research on Post-Secondary Outcome for AP Students



Wyatt, J., Patterson, B.F. & Di Giacomo, F. T. (2015). *A comparison of the college outcomes of AP and dual enrollment students.* (College Board Research Report 2015-3). New York: The College Board.

AP students have higher average college first-year GPAs than dual enrollment students, a strong predictor of longer-term outcomes.

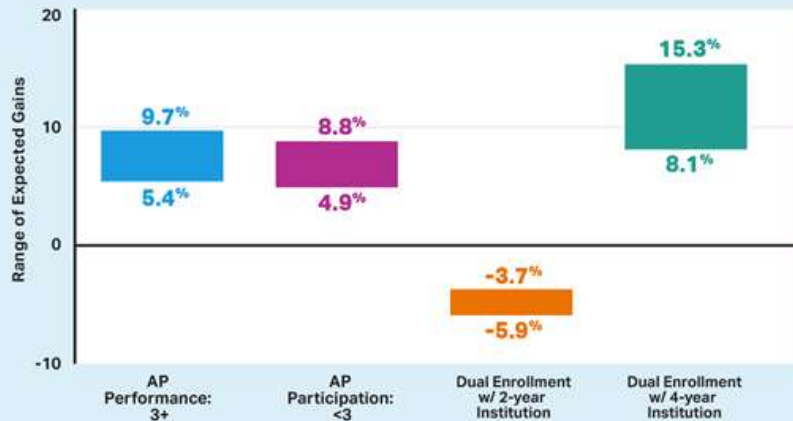
Better Educational Outcomes for AP® Students
 Predicted First-Year College GPAs for Takers of AP, Regular, or Dual Enrollment Science Courses



Kaliski, P. K. & Godfrey K. E. (2014). *Does the type of high school science course matter? An investigation of the relationship between science courses and first-year college outcomes.* (College Board Research Report No. 2014-2). New York: College Board.

AP students have higher matriculation rates compared to dual enrollment students with a 2-year institution.

Estimated Gains in 4-Year College Enrollment Rates
 By Accelerated Coursework Experience and Performance



Wyatt, J., Patterson, B.F. & Di Giacomo, F. T. (2015). *A comparison of the college outcomes of AP and dual enrollment students.* (College Board Research Report 2015-3). New York: The College Board.