

Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education

The College Board

Greg Walker, Regional Vice President, College Board

May 8, 2019

Chair Terhar, Vice-Chair Lehner, Ranking Member Fedor and Members of the Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Greg Walker and I am the Regional Vice President at the College Board.

The College Board is not-for-profit membership organization. Our members are post-secondary institutions, K12 districts and schools and other organizations that work to support college/career readiness and success. However, most people know the College Board for our iconic brands, which include the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT and Advanced Placement.

Today, I am here to focus on Advanced Placement. 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.” He 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.”

But the ability for students, especially low-income students to benefit from AP course and exams are 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 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. Some of those states include: Michigan, West Virginia, Indiana,

Kentucky, and North Carolina.

In Ohio, low-income students are paying \$38 per exam, which serves as an impediment to access and closing the achievement gap. By way of contrast, low-income students in Indiana and Minnesota pay nothing for their exams. Low-income students in Michigan pay \$5 per exam.

For such a small investment in this vulnerable population, the ROI is significant. 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.

It is because of this important funding that I am here today to ask you to support and retain language in Substitute HB 166 that will increase the student assessment line item by \$543,168 in each fiscal year. These funds will be specifically earmarked to reimburse a portion of the costs associated with Advanced Placement tests for low-income students. This proposal would reduce the costs of AP exams for low-income students to \$5 per exam.

I urge the committee members to keep this imperative language in the bill and would welcome any questions.

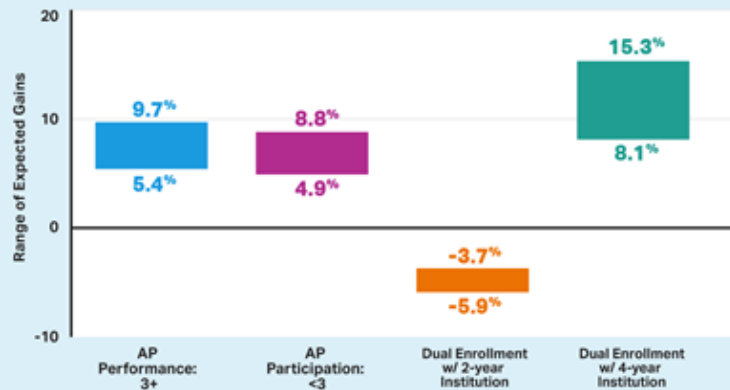
Sincerely,

Greg Walker

Research on Post-Secondary Outcome for AP Students

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

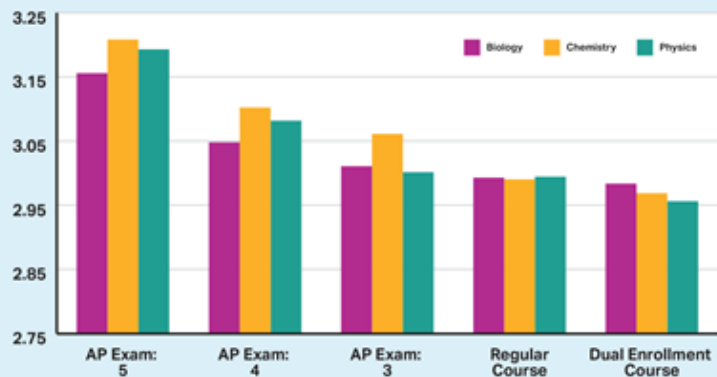
Estimated Gains in 4-Year College Enrollment Rates By Accelerated Coursework Experience and Performance



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



AP students who score a 3 or above have higher on-time college graduation rates compared to dual enrollment students. And for students who take dual enrollment at a high school, there is no increase in degree attainment.

Estimated Gains in 4-Year Graduation Rates

By Accelerated Coursework Experience and Performance

