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## General

### LDOE General Statement

Advanced Placement® courses offer students the opportunity to earn college credit by taking rigorous courses in high school. Students who demonstrate mastery of the material on a national standardized end-of-course exam – a score of 3 or higher out of 5 – may be eligible for college credit for the course.

Research suggests that students who complete AP® coursework are:

- Better prepared for college-level work
- Stand-outs in the college admissions process
- More likely to continue beyond their freshman year in college
- More likely to graduate within 4-5 years
- More competitive in qualifying for scholarships

With AP®, students can get a feel for the rigors of college level studies while they still have the support of a high school environment. When students take AP courses, they demonstrate to college admission officers that they have sought out an educational experience that will prepare them for success in college and beyond. Performing well on an AP Exam means more than just the successful completion of a course. Research consistently shows that students who score a 3 or higher typically earn higher GPAs in college and have higher graduation rates.

### *The College Board's Equity and Access Policy Statement*

AP® Equity and Access Policy The College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP® programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. The College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging coursework before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

**The AP Program believes that all motivated and academically prepared students should be able to enroll in AP courses. The College Board strongly encourages all high schools to follow this principle.**

Schools and teachers are responsible for creating a culture and expectations that demonstrate AP is for all students, but that students should be ready. Students do not need to be at the top of the class to be an AP student, but should be prepared for the AP course(s) selected. Some AP classes have recommended courses to be taken first and all AP courses ask that students come willing to do the students' best work.

The [College Board](#) offers additional resources on their website.

### **About AP**

Advanced Placement® (AP) is a program created by the College Board and offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. Colleges and universities may grant course placement, course credit, or both to students who obtain high scores on the AP exams. Each college or university determines its criteria for awarding credit for AP exam scores.

AP courses give students access to rigorous college-level work, but with the support of high school teachers and peers. Students build confidence and learn the essential time management and study skills needed for college and career success. Students have the opportunity to dig deeper into subjects that interest them, develop advanced research and communication skills, and learn to tap their creativity and their problem-solving and analytical skills to address course challenges. AP students also learn what will be expected of them in college.

The Advanced Placement Program® (AP) enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. The program consists of college-level courses developed by the AP Program that high schools can choose to offer, and corresponding exams that are administered once a year. The AP Program currently offers more than [30 courses and exams](#). Full course descriptions and exam descriptions can be found online on the College Board website. There are a number of benefits to students who take AP courses and exams including better preparation for post-secondary education and opportunities to earn college credits and/or skip introductory courses in college.

### **AP Exams**

Each AP course concludes with an AP Exam. AP exams provide a standardized measurement of what the student has learned in the classroom. These assessments are designed by the same expert committee that designed the course. The examinations are structured to measure depth of knowledge, completeness of thought, and synthesis of ideas. The exams are scored on a scale of 1 to 5 by college and university professors and experienced AP teachers. College credit is usually given for scores of 3 or higher. Approximately 1200 institutions of higher learning award credit based on a student's AP examination scores. AP exams are administered to high school students each May at authorized schools and test centers; exam scores are then reported in July to colleges, students, and their high schools. Students are not required to take an AP course before taking the AP exam; conversely, a student does not need to take the AP exam to receive high school credit for taking the AP course. Schools strongly encourage students to take the exam upon completion of the course.

The [2021 AP Exam Schedule](#) is available for review.

### Benefits of AP

High school students across the country and around the world take AP courses and exams to challenge themselves, explore their interests, and earn college credit and placement. Studies have shown the following benefits for AP students:

- Higher ACT/SAT scores
- Better prepared academically for college admission on all measures of ability and achievement
- Earn college credit
- Exposed to a more rigorous curriculum
- Able to perform significantly better over four years in college
- More likely to be leaders and have significant accomplishments
- Earn a higher 1st year GPA than other students
- Strong likelihood of returning the following fall in contrast to students who entered college with no college credit
- Financially helps with the cost of college (Save Money)
- More likely to graduate from college in four years
- Typically qualify for scholarships

### How AP Relates to Louisiana Graduation Plans

AP<sup>®</sup> INCENTIVE:

- AP aligns the Core Four Diploma course sequence with the TOPS core sequence.
- AP ensures students going to four-year colleges have taken a true college prep curriculum and have every chance to receive TOPS.
- AP Creates incentives for students to take more rigorous AP courses by giving courses approved by the state additional weight in the calculation of the TOPS GPA.
- The new cohort graduation index recognizes a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP<sup>®</sup> exam as the highest level of achievement earned by a cohort graduate. Each student with at least one AP<sup>®</sup> score of 3 or higher will earn the maximum 150 points toward the graduation index. Students who take an AP<sup>®</sup> exam and earn a 1 or 2 on an AP<sup>®</sup> exam will receive 110 points toward the graduation index

### Fees and Financial Considerations

2020-2021 AP Exam Fees

- \$95 per exam
- \$33 College Board reduction for [eligible students](#)

See College Board's website for updates to [Federal and State assistance](#) for AP Exams.

### [Funding Options for Advanced Placement \(AP<sup>®</sup>\) Programs](#)

The Louisiana Department of Education recommends several options for schools and districts to subsidize the cost of AP exams for low-income students. View more information on available funding options for [AP<sup>®</sup> Programs](#).

The school entity pays no fee for participating in AP. However, a school must obtain a College Board school code and complete the AP Participation Form. If the school has never offered AP before, it must complete specific steps. The College Board offers a simple guide to [starting an AP course](#).

College Board provides [estimated costs](#) to start each of its 30 courses for a class of 25. These estimates include professional development, textbooks, supplemental reading materials, and materials and equipment. Costs may vary based on resources already available at the secondary entity. These estimates exclude travel expenses for professional development.

**Courses Offered**

A list of all AP courses can be found on the [AP Central Courses](#) website. Check with your school counselor to find out which AP courses are offered at your school.

**Important Deadlines**

Beginning July 1 through November 13, there are critical steps for schools to complete to access AP resources and register students for exams. AP teachers, coordinators, and principals all play a role in important deadlines for student AP success. Click to view information for AP teachers and coordinators related to [Important Deadlines for Setup, Enrollment, and Ordering](#).