

News Release

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Wisconsin Advanced Placement results continue to climb

State's performance on the college-level exams is 'Best in the Midwest'

MADISON — Wisconsin is 14th in the nation for the percentage of seniors who successfully complete an Advanced Placement (AP) exam while in high school. With 18.3 percent of state graduates scoring a three or higher on an exam, Wisconsin also has the highest success percentage among the 13-state Midwest region.

“Congratulations to Wisconsin high schools, teachers, and students for increasing Advanced Placement participation and increasing the percentage of students who were successful on their AP exams,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers.

According to the Seventh Annual Advanced Placement Report to the Nation, Wisconsin had 16,691 seniors who took an AP exam while in high school and 11,618 (69.6 percent) who scored a three or higher on an AP exam. Participation showed a one-year increase of

3.7 percent and a jump of 24.3 percent over five years. AP test-takers represent 26.3 percent of Wisconsin’s 2010 graduates. Nationally 853,314 seniors, 28.3 percent of the nation’s graduates, took an AP exam while in high school. The national passing rate, scores of three or higher on the five-point scale, was 16.9 percent.

Wisconsin is in the third and final year of a \$2.2 million Advanced Placement Incentive program grant to expand AP participation, particularly among low-income students. The grant funding targets both middle schools and high schools in participating districts to ensure students have the academic preparation to pursue college-level work in high school and have access to AP coursework once they are in high school. The state had a 20.6 percent increase in participation among students from economically disadvantaged families from 2009 to 2010; the number more than doubled over five years. For 2010, low-income students were 8.0 percent of the graduates taking AP exams and 5.7 percent of those who earned a score of three or higher on their AP exam.

Wisconsin’s growth in AP participation has been steady while also improving the percentage of students earning a score of three or higher on the exams. The state’s African American students represent 6.8 percent of the

AP Report to the Nation Public School Students

Wisconsin	2010
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	16,691
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	18.3
Nation	
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	853,314
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	16.9

(more)

state’s 2010 graduates, and 1.1 percent of the seniors who successfully completed an AP exam. Hispanic and Latino students represent 5.1 percent of the state’s 2010 graduates, and 2.7 percent of the seniors who passed an AP exam. American Indian students are 1.2 percent of the state’s 2010 graduates and 0.4 percent of successful AP exam-takers. Wisconsin’s Asian students are 3.6 percent of 2010 graduates and 3.4 percent of seniors who successfully completed an AP exam. White students are 82.5 percent of 2010 graduates and 89.1 percent of seniors who scored a three or better on an AP exam while in high school.

“We want to grow our AP program to reach more students, while ensuring that these young people are successful on their exams because that puts them on the path to successful college completion,” Evers said. “Experience in AP coursework helps students in college, passing an AP exam is an even better predictor for earning a college or university degree.”

Through a partnership between the Department of Public Instruction and Cooperative Education Service Agency 9, the Wisconsin Web Academy offers 20 AP courses to students throughout the state via CESA 9’s Wisconsin Virtual School. During fall 2010, 192 students from 44 school districts took AP coursework via the Wisconsin Web Academy. Enrollments are still occurring for spring. Any public, private, or charter school student can access these AP courses through their local schools.

Advanced Placement is a high school academic program with courses in more than 30 subjects that culminate with college-level assessments. Exams are graded on a scale of one to five, with a score of three or higher considered successful and eligible for credit or advanced standing at most colleges and universities. According to the College Board, earning a score of three or higher an AP exam is a good predictor of a student’s ability to succeed in college academic studies and graduate.

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NOTE: Tables that follow provide additional background on the Advanced Placement Report to the Nation. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpinr2011_15.pdf.

Seventh Annual AP Report to the Nation

AP Participation Public School Students

Wisconsin	Class of			
	2001	2006	2009	2010
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	9,597	13,430	16,095	16,691
Percent Taking an AP Exam	16.2	21.1	25.3	26.3
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	10.8	14.7	17.3	18.3
Nation				
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	432,343	646,310	797,629	853,314
Percent Taking an AP Exam	16.8	22.3	26.4	28.3
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	10.8	13.9	15.9	16.9

Midwest Region Public Schools Percent of 2010 Graduates

State	Taking an AP Exam in High School	Scoring 3 or Higher
Illinois	26.3	17.2
Indiana	29.3	12.4
Iowa	14.4	8.8
Kansas	16.0	9.5
Michigan	23.2	15.0
Minnesota	26.4	16.8
Missouri	13.4	7.5
Nebraska	12.4	7.4
North Dakota	10.4	6.8
Ohio	18.9	11.8
South Dakota	18.4	11.0
West Virginia	18.4	7.6
Wisconsin	26.3	18.3
Nation	28.3	16.9

AP Participation by Low-Income Students*

Wisconsin Public School Students

Year	Graduates Taking an AP Exam	Low-income Graduates Taking an AP Exam	Percent of AP Examinee Population	Percent Scoring 3 or Higher
2006	13,430	662	4.9	3.4
2009	16,095	1,132	7.0	4.9
2010	16,961	1,365	8.0	5.7

*Low-income students are identified as those students who request an exam fee waiver for financial reasons.

10 Most Popular AP Exams Wisconsin Public School Class of 2010

Subject	Number of Exams	Percent Scoring 3 or Higher
Psychology	5,569	79.6
English Literature and Composition	5,229	66.0
U.S. History	4,823	61.5
Calculus AB	3,940	65.0
English Language and Composition	3,249	75.0
Biology	2,788	54.7
Statistics	2,047	68.8
Government and Politics: U.S.	1,895	61.4
Chemistry	1,829	59.2
Calculus BC	1,372	84.0