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INFORMATION

Office of Shared Accountability
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Rockville, Maryland

March 15, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: High School Principals

From: Janet S. Wilson, Associate Superintendent

Subject: INFORMATION: Class of 2017 Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Exam Participation and Performance

The College Board released national Advanced Placement (AP) Cohort Results. This memorandum provides you with information pertinent to the AP and International Baccalaureate (IB) examination participation and performance for the Class of 2017 in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The AP exam results in MCPS were benchmarked with the results for the state of Maryland and the nation for public school graduates in 2017. Trends of AP and IB exams participation and performance for MCPS graduates from 2015 to 2017 are provided.

Advanced Placement Exam Participation and Performance: MCPS, Maryland, and the Nation

Students in the MCPS Class of 2017 continued to outperform public school students in the state of Maryland and the nation on AP exam based on AP Cohort Results released by the College Board. In 2017, 66.2 percent of MCPS graduates took one or more AP exams, a rate that was 16.4 and 28.5 percentage points higher than the rate for public school graduates in Maryland (49.8 percent) and the nation (37.7 percent), respectively (Figure 1). Districtwide, 52.1 percent of the 2017 MCPS graduates earned at least one AP exam score of 3 or higher, while 31.2 percent of the public school graduates in the state of Maryland and 22.8 percent of the national graduates in public schools attained an AP score of 3 or higher.

	% Took at Least an AP exam	% Earned at Least an Exam Score 3+
MCPS	66.2%	52.1%
Maryland	49.8%	31.2%
Nation	37.7%	22.8%

Figure 1. Advanced Placement Exam Participation and Performance of 2017 Public School Graduates in MCPS, Maryland, and the Nation

MCPS is committed to improving AP exam participation among racial/ethnic groups. The racial/ethnic demographic data for the Class of 2017 and the AP exam population revealed that we still have work to do. Among racial/ethnic groups in MCPS, Asian and White graduates made up 14.9 and 33.6 percent of the student body in the Class of 2017, respectively, whereas 19.0 and 41.7 percent of AP exam takers were either Asian or White graduates, respectively (Figure 2). The percentage of Asian and White AP exam takers was higher than the percentage of Asian and White students in the Class of 2017, which revealed an overrepresentation of these two student groups among AP exam takers. Although Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino graduates comprised more than 47 percent of the graduating class, only 35 percent of AP exam takers were students of these two groups. Among racial/ethnic groups in the nation, the percentage of Asian and Hispanic/Latino AP exam takers was higher than those in the national class, while Black or African American and White graduates were underrepresented in the AP exam population. The percentage of Two or More Races AP exam takers in the nation was not provided in AP Cohort Data by the College Board and was not included in comparison data presented in this section.

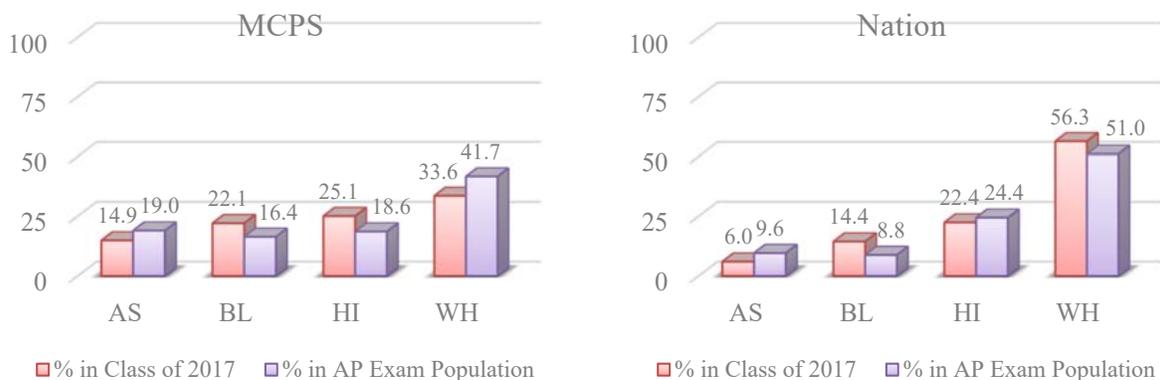


Figure 2. Racial/Ethnic Composition and AP Exam Takers in the Class of 2017 in MCPS and the Nation

Note. AS = Asian; BL = Black or African American; HI = Hispanic/Latino; WH = White. Percentage does not add up to 100% because not all racial/ethnic groups are presented.

AP exam performance among Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino graduates in the MCPS Class of 2017 was notable districtwide. The percentage of Black or African American graduates in the MCPS Class of 2017 that earned at least one AP exam score of 3 or higher (28.2 percent) was 21.5 percentage points higher than the rate for Black or African American graduates in the nation (6.7 percent) (Table 2). The AP Exam performance rate by Hispanic/Latino graduates (35.3 percent) was 12.0 percentage points higher than the rate of Hispanic/Latino graduates in the nation (23.3 percent). The largest gap between MCPS and the nation was observed for the AP exam performance by MCPS White graduates, which was 48.4 percentage points higher than the rate by White graduates in the nation.

		Graduates with AP Exam Scores 3+		
		<i>N</i> Graduates	<i>N</i>	%
All	MCPS	10,628	5,541	52.1
	Nation	3,117,638	711,518	22.8
Asian	MCPS	1,588	1,148	72.3
	Nation	187,134	83,195	44.5
Black or African American	MCPS	2,344	661	28.2
	Nation	449,121	30,288	6.7
Hispanic/Latino	MCPS	2,667	942	35.3
	Nation	698,632	162,804	23.3
White	MCPS	3,575	2,534	70.9
	Nation	1,755,937	395,804	22.5

Advanced Placement Exam Participation and Performance Trends

From 2015 to 2017, the proportion of MCPS graduates who took at least one AP exam remained steady, but there was a 1.0 percentage point increase for graduates who earned an AP exam score 3 or higher (Table 3). Generally, AP exam participation rates increased with the performance rates for most student groups. The most notable change was the three-year rate increase in AP participation and performance for Black or African American and Two or More Races graduates. The percentage of Black or African American graduates who took at least one AP exam increased 3.5 percentage points along with an increase of 2.5 percentage points in AP performance rate. The AP participation rate for Two or More Races graduates increased nearly 4.0 percentage points and performance improved 5.6 percentage points. Conversely, the participation and performance rates for Hispanic/Latino graduates declined 2.5 and 1.6 percentage points, respectively. The three-year rate change in both participation and performance for male graduates and students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) remained relatively steady.

	% Took AP Exam			% Earned an AP Score 3+		
	2015	2017	3-year Rate Change	2015	2017	3-year Rate Change
All Students	65.7	66.2	↔ 0.5	51.1	52.1	↑ 1.0
Male	61.2	60.8	↔ -0.4	48.1	47.9	↔ -0.2
Female	70.2	71.7	↑ 1.5	54.1	56.5	↑ 2.4
Asian	83.2	84.0	↔ 0.8	69.0	72.3	↑ 3.3
Black or African American	45.7	49.2	↑ 3.5	25.7	28.2	↑ 2.5
Hispanic/Latino	51.4	48.9	↓ -2.5	36.9	35.3	↓ -1.6
White	81.0	82.0	↑ 1.0	69.7	70.9	↑ 1.2
Two or More Races	65.7	69.6	↑ 3.9	52.5	58.1	↑ 5.6
Free and Reduced-price Meals System	44.4	46.6	↑ 2.2	26.5	28.6	↑ 2.1
Special Education	21.8	23.6	↑ 1.8	11.8	14.4	↑ 2.6
Limited English Proficiency	37.6	37.4	↔ -0.2	29.2	29.8	↔ 0.6

AP exam participation and performance for minority graduates continued to rise across MCPS high schools. Between 2015 and 2017, 17 of the 25 high schools demonstrated an increase in the AP exam participation rate for Black or African American and 8 of the 25 high schools had an increase in participation rate for Hispanic/Latino graduates. Seventeen and 10 of the 25 high schools experienced an increase in the percentage of Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino graduates who earned an AP exam score of 3 or higher, respectively. Sixteen and 5 of the 25 high schools had increases for both AP exam participation and performance rates for Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino graduates, respectively.

Of note, from 2015 to 2017, Damascus, Albert Einstein, Gaithersburg, and Walt Whitman high schools demonstrated increases in both AP exam participation and performance for both Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American graduates. Seven out of 25 high schools—Montgomery Blair, Damascus, Albert Einstein, Gaithersburg, Northwest, Northwood, and Walt Whitman high schools—demonstrated an increase in AP exam participation for both Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American graduates. Six of the 25 high schools—Damascus, Albert Einstein, Gaithersburg, Springbrook, Wheaton, and Walt Whitman high schools—demonstrated an increase in AP exam performance for both Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American graduates.

International Baccalaureate Exam Participation and Performance Trends

In addition to AP programs, MCPS also provides the IB program for students at selected high schools as an option for experiencing college-level coursework and earning college credits in high school. There are eight high schools in MCPS with IB programs. Richard Montgomery High School offers a countywide magnet IB program and the remaining seven high schools—Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Albert Einstein, John F. Kennedy, Rockville, Seneca Valley, Springbrook, and Watkins Mill—offer school-based programs. The percentage of 2017 MCPS graduates who took one or more IB exams (9.3 percent) increased 1.5 percentage points compared with 2015 MCPS graduates (7.8 percent) and the proportion of graduates who earned at least one IB exam score of 4 or higher increased 1.1 percentage points (Table 4). In the last three years, there was a positive trend in IB exam participation and performance among all student groups although the increase remained relatively flat for male graduates, White graduates, and those graduates receiving special education or LEP services. The most noteworthy increase was demonstrated by Two or More Races graduates with IB participation and performance rates increasing 4.1 and 3.9 percentage points, respectively.

Table 4. Percentage of Students in MCPS Classes of 2015 and 2017 Who Took at Least One International Baccalaureate Exam and Earned a Score of 4 or Higher by Student Group						
	% Took IB Exam			% Earned an IB Score 4+		
	2015	2017	3-year Rate Change	2015	2017	3-year Rate Change
All Students	7.8	9.3	↑ 1.5	6.4	7.5	↑ 1.1
Male	7.0	7.9	↔ 0.9	5.3	6.2	↔ 0.9
Female	8.7	10.7	↑ 2.0	7.5	8.8	↑ 1.3
Asian	9.3	11.1	↑ 1.8	8.0	9.3	↑ 1.3
Black or African American	7.4	9.0	↑ 1.6	5.1	6.0	↔ 0.9
Hispanic/Latino	6.3	8.6	↑ 2.3	4.8	6.7	↑ 1.9
White	8.5	8.9	↔ 0.4	7.7	8.0	↔ 0.3
Two or More Races	8.1	12.2	↑ 4.1	6.9	10.8	↑ 3.9
Free and Reduced-price Meals System	6.1	8.8	↑ 2.7	4.1	5.8	↑ 1.7
Special Education	1.4	1.5	↔ 0.1	1.1	1.1	↔ 0.0
Limited English Proficiency	4.5	5.1	↔ 0.6	3.3	3.8	↔ 0.5

The wide range of IB participation rates reflected the varying degree of IB course offerings in schools. Among the eight high schools offering IB programs, the proportion of 2017 graduates who took at least one IB exam ranged from 11.6 to 47.2 percent (see Table B2 in the Attachment). The percentage of 2017 graduates who earned at least one IB score of 4 or higher varied from 10.7 to 40.0 percent across all IB schools. From 2015 to 2017, five of the eight high schools with IB programs—John F. Kennedy, Richard Montgomery, Rockville, Seneca Valley, and Springbrook high schools—demonstrated an increase in both IB exam participation and performance for all students.

AP/IB Exams Participation and Performance Trends

The AP/IB exams are indicators to measure students' readiness for college-level coursework and exam scores are used by colleges for possible course credit and advanced placement. One way to gauge students' college readiness is measured by an AP exam score of 3 or higher or an IB exam score of 4 or higher. The AP/IB participation rate for MCPS graduates increased from 66.6 percent in 2015 to 67.8 percent in 2017 (Table 5). Correspondingly, there was an increase of 1.7 percentage points in performance rate. Overall, most student groups realized gains in AP/IB participation and performance in the last three years. Black or African American and Two or More Races graduates had the highest gains; both groups increased at least 4.0 percentage points on AP/IB participation rates and more than 3.0 percentage points in AP/IB performance rates. The trends for male graduates and LEP students remained steady. Hispanic/Latino graduates were the only student group that exhibited a downward trend in participation, but held steady in performance.

Table 5. Percentage of Students in MCPS Classes of 2015 and 2017 Who Took at Least One Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Exam and Earned a Score of 3 or Higher on AP and/or 4 or Higher on IB by Student Group						
	% Took AP/IB Exam			% Met a College-ready Score		
	2015	2017	3-year Rate Change	2015	2017	3-year Rate Change
All Students	66.6	67.8	↑ 1.2	52.6	54.3	↑ 1.7
Male	62.1	62.3	↔ 0.2	49.4	49.7	↔ 0.3
Female	71.1	73.5	↑ 2.4	55.9	59.0	↑ 3.1
Asian	83.8	85.1	↑ 1.3	70.2	73.9	↑ 3.7
Black or African American	47.3	51.8	↑ 4.5	27.8	31.2	↑ 3.4
Hispanic/Latino	52.4	51.0	↓ -1.4	38.5	38.3	↔ -0.2
White	81.4	82.9	↑ 1.5	70.9	72.1	↑ 1.2
Two or More Races	67.2	71.2	↑ 4.0	53.9	60.1	↑ 6.2
Free and Reduced-price Meals System	46.0	49.0	↑ 3.0	28.5	31.6	↑ 3.1
Special Education	22.2	23.9	↑ 1.7	12.3	14.7	↑ 2.4
Limited English Proficiency	40.0	39.4	↔ -0.6	31.0	31.5	↔ 0.5

The attached tables provide additional information for your review. Table A1 presents AP exam participation and performance for 2016 to 2017 public school graduates in MCPS, Maryland, and the nation. Data on AP exam participation and performance for the graduates in the MCPS Class of 2017 by student groups and by high schools is included in Tables A2 through A7. AP exam participation and performance, IB exam participation and performance, and data on the AP and/or IB exam participation and performance and the attainment of college readiness scores—at least one AP exam score of 3 or higher or one IB exam score of 4 or higher—by student group and by high school in 2017 are included in Tables B1 and B2.

If you have any questions about AP/IB course enrollment and exam participation and performance data, please contact Dr. Kecia L. Addison, supervisor, Applied Research Unit, Office of Shared Accountability, at 240-740-2930 or via e-mail.

JSW:sl

Attachment

Copy to:

Executive Staff
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Approved: _____
 Henry R. Johnson, Jr., Chief of Staff