

Series 2006-2007
Circular Letter: C-7

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: George A. Coleman, Interim Commissioner of Education

DATE: February 23, 2007

SUBJECT: Support for Advanced Placement Courses

Expanding the number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses to all students in Connecticut is one effective strategy to increase the rigor in secondary school offerings. Beginning this year, the College Board is conducting an AP Course Audit. The purpose of the audit is to:

- provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements that must be present in a secondary school course before it can be considered college level and labeled “AP”; and
- ensure consistency across courses labeled “AP” on students’ transcripts for higher education admission offices.

All high schools in Connecticut wishing to label a course “AP” for the 2007-08 school year and beyond, must receive authorization to do so. This authorization involves each teacher submitting an electronic copy of the course syllabus and completing the AP Course Audit Form. Within two months of submitting the materials, schools will receive authorization for qualifying courses to use the “AP” designation.

The last date for submitting a syllabus for the fall 2007 register of “AP” approved courses is June 1, 2007. More information about the AP Course Audit is available on the following website: <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>.

Additionally, in May high school students enrolled in AP courses will have the opportunity to take AP examinations. All students enrolled in these courses should be encouraged to take these exams. Many students complete all of the course requirements but opt out of the examination. In doing so, these students unwittingly compromise a semester of strenuous work, lose out on scholarship opportunities and relinquish an opportunity to sharpen their test-taking skills for the intensity of college-level examinations. It is important that a very clear message is given to all district and school staff about the importance of students sitting for the AP examinations.

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For students currently taking an AP course who do not have the resources to pay the \$82 test fee, the Connecticut State Department of Education holds a federal grant to cover the fee. Eligible students are those who qualify for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program. Further information regarding fee reductions and eligibility criteria, can be found at: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=321460>.

Connecticut continues to be a national leader in all aspects of the AP program and has demonstrated significant growth in student participation in AP courses and in the number of students passing AP exams. This growth is especially significant for Hispanic and black students. We must continue to work together to ensure that every Connecticut student leaves high school prepared for college and post-secondary experiences. Together, we can make their futures truly promising.

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