



News Release

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Michigan Students Experiencing Significant Growth in Advanced Coursework

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LANSING – Michigan’s numbers of students enrolling and succeeding in advanced coursework have grown significantly over the past four years, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) released today.

There has been a 78 percent increase in the number of Michigan students enrolled in International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, from 7,185 in the 2014-2015 school year to 12,822 in 2018-2019. Historically underrepresented groups grew substantially: special needs students by 201%; economically disadvantaged by 111%; Hispanic/Latino by 99%; and African American/Two or More Races by 83%.

In addition, there has been an 18 percent increase in the number of Michigan students enrolling in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, from 67,285 in 2014-2015 to 79,546 in 2018-2019. Historically underrepresented groups grew significantly: Hispanic/Latino by 63%; economically disadvantaged by 39%; and African American/Two or More Races by 14%.

“This is very good news that more of our students are taking advantage of the opportunity to tackle challenging coursework and qualify for college credit,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice. “When students are provided with opportunity and encouragement, along with great instruction from their teachers, they succeed.”

Students scoring well on end-of-course AP and IB exams are eligible to earn college credit. Students need to receive a score of “3 or higher” on an AP exam, or a score of “4 or higher” on an IB exam, to qualify for college credit.

Over the past four years, Michigan had an 11 percent increase in students receiving college credit-bearing scores of 3 or higher on their AP assessments. During the same time, there has been a 21 percent increase in Michigan students scoring a 4 or higher on the IB assessment.

“Jobs today and in the future will require advanced learning, training, and skills,” Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Director Jeff Donofrio said. “Programs like AP and IB help expand opportunities for students to advance and get a jump start on a future career pathway.”

In 2018-2019, the state provided funds for nearly 17,000 low-income students to take AP assessments – a 22 percent increase from the previous year.

In 2018, 670 Michigan schools participated in AP exams and 97 colleges accepted AP exam credits.

Advanced Placement (AP)

AP is a program created by the College Board that offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. American colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations.

The AP curriculum for each of the various subjects is created for the College Board by a panel of experts and college-level educators in that field of study. For a high school course to have the designation, the course must be audited by the College Board to ascertain that it satisfies the AP curriculum. If the course is approved, the school may use the AP designation and the course will be publicly listed on the AP Course Ledger.

Some colleges use AP test scores to exempt students from introductory coursework, others use them to place students in higher designated courses, and some do both. Each college's policy is different, but most require a minimum score of 3 or 4 to receive college credit.

International Baccalaureate® (IB)

IB programs aim to do more than other curricula by developing inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who are motivated to succeed.

They strive to develop students who will build a better world through intercultural understanding and respect.

IB programs encourage students of all ages to think critically and challenge assumptions; incorporate quality practice from research and the global community of schools; encourage students of all ages to consider both local and global contexts; and develop multilingual students.

The programs encourage both personal and academic achievement, challenging students to excel in their studies and in their personal development.

Students are able to take responsibility for their own learning and understand how knowledge itself is constructed. They are encouraged to try different approaches to learning and to take responsibility for their own educational progress.

IB programs help students ask challenging questions; think critically; and develop research skills proven to help them in higher education.

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