



# ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) REPORT, 2008–2009

San Diego Unified School District  
Fall 2009

Research and Reporting Department  
Research and Evaluation Division

## Introduction

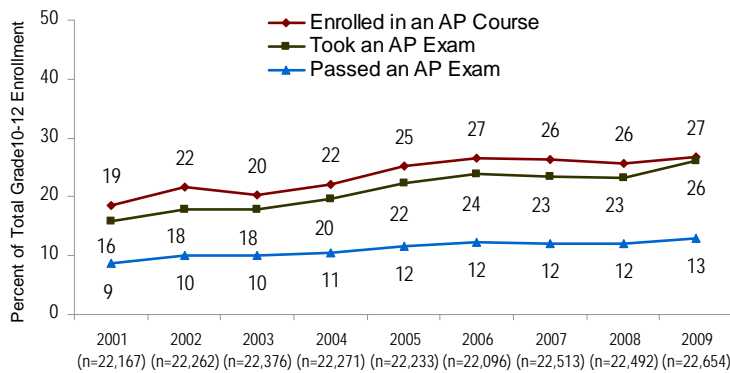
The College Board’s Advanced Placement (AP) program consists of college-level courses and corresponding end-of-course examinations. Ninety percent of colleges and universities grant credit, placement, or both to students receiving a qualifying score on an AP exam (usually 3 or higher on a scale of 1 to 5). Many such schools grant up to a full year of college credit to students who earn a sufficient number of qualifying AP scores. Studies show that students who take AP courses and exams are more likely to succeed in college. Each AP course is developed by a committee of college faculty and AP teachers and has a corresponding exam that is administered in May of each year. Most AP exams contain multiple-choice questions and a free-response section (e.g., essay, problem solving, oral response).

To broaden program access, the College Board allows students to take AP exams whether they have completed the corresponding AP course or not. However, because the performance on AP exams following AP course completion reflects the effectiveness of San Diego Unified School District’s AP program, this report includes only exams taken in conjunction with an appropriate AP course and is limited to data from district-operated schools.

## AP Course Participation and Exam Performance

In 2008–2009, the College Board offered 37 courses/exams in 22 disciplines; the San Diego Unified School District offered 32 of these courses/exams at its comprehensive, non-alternative high schools.<sup>1</sup> Individual district schools offered up to 21 courses, with more than a third of schools offering at least ten distinct AP courses. AP program participation among Grade 10–12 students increased by 8 percentage points over the past eight years in terms of those

Figure 1  
Grade 10–12 Student AP Participation and Performance



enrolled in at least one AP course; 10 percentage points for students who took at least one AP exam; and, 4 percentage points for students who took and passed at least one AP exam (Figures 1 and 2).

The overall examination pass rate (i.e., exams passed out of all exams taken) declined slightly in 2009 from 49 to 48 percent, and by 2 percentage points over the past eight years (Table 1).

In 2009, 6,061 students were enrolled in 10,129 AP courses, with 43 percent of enrollees taking more than one AP course. AP course enrollees took 9,843 AP exams, 4,687 of which (48 percent) received a passing score (Figure 3).

Figure 2  
Distribution of AP Course Offerings, 2009

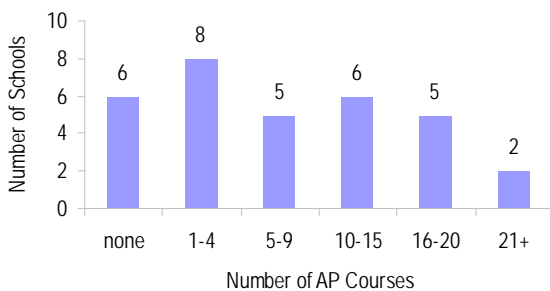
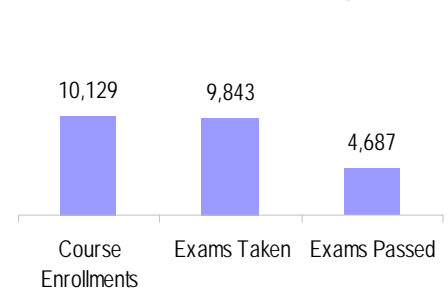


Table 1  
Exam Pass Rate

Year	Rate*
2001	50%
2002	51%
2003	52%
2004	49%
2005	45%
2006	46%
2007	48%
2008	49%
2009	48%

\*Exams passed/exams taken

Figure 3  
AP Course and Exam Count, 2009

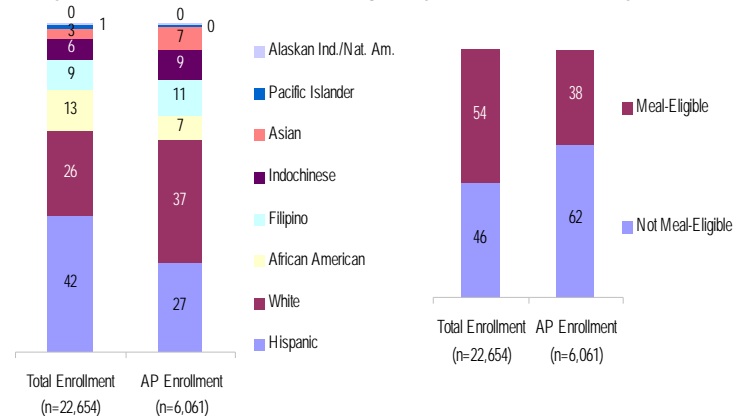


<sup>1</sup> In 2008–2009, district students did not take matched AP courses/exams in Chinese Language and Culture, German Language, Italian Language and Culture, Latin Literature, and Studio Art 3-D Design.

## Program Participation and Performance by Selected Subgroup

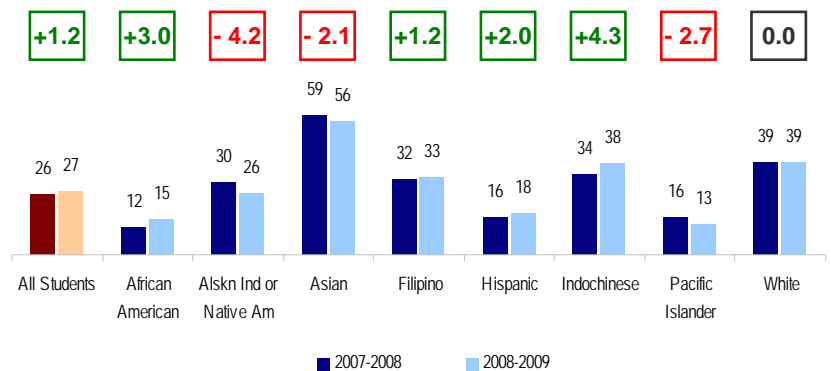
**Course Participation.** Despite district efforts to broaden access to the AP curriculum, sizable gaps remain. In 2008–09, Hispanic and African American students—two of the three largest ethnic groups in the district—continued to be underrepresented in AP enrollment. Hispanic students, for example, comprised 42 percent of total Grade 10–12 enrollment and yet represented only 27 percent of AP course enrollment. Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals are similarly underrepresented—such students constituted more than half of Grade 10–12 enrollment but only 38 percent of AP course enrollment (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Grade 10–12 Student Enrollment and AP Course Participation by Free/Reduced-Price Meal Eligibility and Race/Ethnicity, 2009



The good news is that gaps in AP course participation among the district's larger racial/ethnic subgroups appeared to narrow in 2008–09. Rate gains by groups with historically lower participation rates (Indochinese, African American, Hispanic, and Filipino) combined with the unchanged rate for White students and a decline in the rate for Asian students—groups with historically higher participation rates—reduced participation gaps (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Change in AP Course Participation Rates by Race/Ethnicity



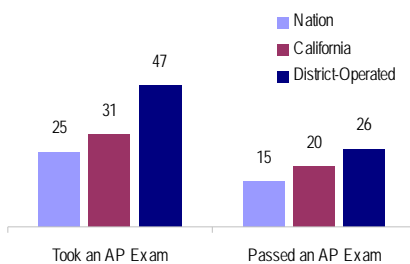
**Exam Pass Rates.** In 2008–09, the overall AP exam pass rate did not improve and gaps in pass rates appeared to widen among the district's larger racial/ethnic groups. Groups with lower pass rates experienced declines while groups with higher pass rates saw increased rates this past year. African American and Hispanic students experienced the largest pass rate declines this year—from 22 to 17 percent for African American students and from 40 to 38 percent for Hispanic students (Table 2).

Table 2. Change in AP Exam Pass Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	2007–2008			2008–2009			Difference
	Taken	Passed	Rate	Taken	Passed	Rate	
African American	427	96	22	573	95	17	(5.9)
Alskn Ind/Native Am	60	30	50	43	21	49	(1.2)
Asian	1,026	655	64	897	595	66	2.5
Filipino	1,017	365	36	1,093	435	40	3.9
Hispanic	1,731	698	40	2,387	910	38	(2.2)
Indochinese	819	282	34	1,024	390	38	3.7
Pacific Islander	39	11	28	43	16	37	9.0
White	3,892	2,280	59	3,783	2,225	59	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,011</b>	<b>4,417</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>9,843</b>	<b>4,687</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>(1.4)</b>

## Comparison with California and the Nation

Figure 6. Percent of 2008 Graduates Who Took and Passed an AP Exam\*



\*2009 data not available when this report was written.

The College Board reports AP participation as a percentage of graduates who have taken and passed an AP exam at any time during their high school years. The district has performed well in relation to both the state and the nation with higher proportions of graduates taking and passing one or more AP exams during high school than their counterparts in the state and nation.

In 2007–08, the most recent year for which data are available, 47 percent of district graduates took an AP exam compared with 25 percent for the nation and 31 percent for California; 26 percent of district graduates passed at least one AP exam compared with 15 percent for the nation and 20 percent for California.

# AP Participation and Performance Data by School

Table 3  
AP Student Data by School, 2008–2009

School	Total Grade 10–12 Enrollment	Enrolled in an AP Course		Took an AP Examination		Passed an AP Examination		
		N	Pct	N	Pct	N	Pct	
<b>Comprehensive Schools</b>								
332	Clairemont	922	229	24.8	224	24.3	118	12.8
704	Crawford CHAMPS	224	40	17.9	39	17.4	14	6.3
702	Crawford IDEA	218	58	26.6	55	25.2	5	2.3
705	Crawford Law & Business	199	41	20.6	40	20.1	15	7.5
703	Crawford Multimedia & Vis Arts	257	98	38.1	90	35.0	5	1.9
336	Henry	1,603	577	36.0	574	35.8	360	22.5
338	Hoover	1,311	338	25.8	328	25.0	76	5.8
736	Kearny Construction Tech	298	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
733	Kearny Digital Media & Design	299	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
735	Kearny International Business	195	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
734	Kearny SCT	297	48	16.2	48	16.2	20	6.7
342	La Jolla High	1,126	580	51.5	568	50.4	442	39.3
637	Lincoln	1,316	248	18.8	233	17.7	33	2.5
346	Madison	780	219	28.1	211	27.1	50	6.4
349	Mira Mesa	1,792	618	34.5	604	33.7	347	19.4
350	Mission Bay <sup>2</sup>	1,120	32	2.9	31	2.8	23	2.1
352	Morse	1,603	309	19.3	306	19.1	98	6.1
395	Mt. Everest	73	10	13.7	10	13.7	9	12.3
369	Muir	66	29	43.9	27	40.9	2	3.0
354	Point Loma	1,352	583	43.1	575	42.5	211	15.6
749	San Diego Business	275	72	26.2	36	13.1	10	3.6
746	San Diego CIMA	208	69	33.2	65	31.3	26	12.5
744	San Diego Int'l Studies <sup>2</sup>	338	66	19.5	66	19.5	35	10.4
745	San Diego LEADS	312	47	15.1	46	14.7	6	1.9
500	San Diego Metro Career & Tech	131	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
750	San Diego MVP Arts	296	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
753	San Diego Sci Tech	310	2	0.6	2	0.6	1	0.3
368	SCPA	562	166	29.5	158	28.1	64	11.4
359	Scripps Ranch	1,567	593	37.8	586	37.4	435	27.8
503	SD Early/Middle College High	4						
357	Serra	1,328	409	30.8	403	30.3	190	14.3
355	University City	1,260	576	45.7	570	45.2	353	28.0
<b>Alternative Schools</b>								
331	A.L.B.A.	4						
361	Garfield High	450	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
382	Home and Hospital	9						
791	LCI	67	1	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
438	New Dawn	18	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
362	Twain	464	2	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.2
<b>All District-Operated Schools</b>		<b>22,654</b>	<b>6,061</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>5,896</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>2,949</b>	<b>13.0</b>

\*Results are suppressed when the size of the group under consideration (or denominator) is less than 10.

<sup>2</sup> Data do not include International Baccalaureate courses or exams offered at San Diego International Studies and Mission Bay.

**Table 4  
AP Course Enrollment and Exam Data by School, 2008–2009**

School		Total Grade 10–12 Enrollment	Courses Offered	Course Enrollments		Exams Taken <sup>3</sup>		Exams Passed	
				N	Per 100 Students	N	Pct of AP Enrts	N	Pct
<b>Comprehensive Schools</b>									
332	Clairemont	922	15	378	41.0	369	97.6	156	42.3
704	Crawford CHAMPS	224	8	56	25.0	54	96.4	15	27.8
702	Crawford IDEA	218	5	59	27.1	56	94.9	5	8.9
705	Crawford Law & Business	199	8	52	26.1	49	94.2	15	30.6
703	Crawford Multimedia & Vis Arts	257	8	123	47.9	111	88.6	5	4.5
336	Henry	1,603	17	1,016	63.4	1,008	99.2	608	60.3
338	Hoover	1,311	10	494	37.7	481	97.6	85	17.7
736	Kearny Construction Tech	298	0	0	0.0	0		0	
733	Kearny Digital Media & Design	299	0	0	0.0	0		0	
735	Kearny International Business	195	0	0	0.0	0		0	
734	Kearny SCT	297	2	48	16.2	48	100.0	20	41.7
342	La Jolla High	1,126	21	1,036	92.0	1,018	98.4	780	76.6
637	Lincoln	1,316	11	321	24.4	296	92.2	37	12.5
346	Madison	780	10	351	45.0	339	96.6	71	20.9
349	Mira Mesa	1,792	20	1,054	58.8	1,034	98.2	565	54.6
350	Mission Bay	1,120	2	64	5.7	59	70.3	28	47.5
352	Morse	1,603	15	524	32.7	516	98.5	146	28.3
395	Mt. Everest	73	3	17	23.3	17	94.1	14	82.4
369	Muir	66	2	29	43.9	27	93.1	2	7.4
354	Point Loma	1,352	18	896	66.3	891	98.8	313	35.1
749	San Diego Business	275	7	110	40.0	95	60.0	20	21.1
746	San Diego CIMA	208	4	122	58.7	90	73.8	26	28.9
744	San Diego Int'l Studies	338	1	66	19.5	66	100.0	35	53.0
745	San Diego LEADS	312	3	53	17.0	52	98.1	7	13.5
500	San Diego Metro Career & Tech	131	0	0	0.0	0		0	
750	San Diego MVP Arts	296	0	0	0.0	0		0	
753	San Diego Sci Tech	310	1	2	0.6	2		1	
368	SCPA	562	14	309	55.0	282	91.3	93	33.0
359	Scripps Ranch	1,567	21	1,019	65.0	982	96.4	704	71.7
503	SD Early/Middle College High	4							
357	Serra	1,328	17	853	64.2	839	98.2	284	33.8
355	University City	1,260	16	1,072	85.1	1,061	98.9	651	61.4
<b>Alternative Schools</b>									
331	A.L.B.A.	4							
361	Garfield High	450	0	0	0.0	0		0	
382	Home and Hospital	9							
791	LCI	67	0	1	1.5	0		0	
438	New Dawn	18	0	0	0.0	0		0	
362	Twain	464	1	3	0.6	1		1	
<b>All District-Operated Schools</b>		<b>22,654</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10,129</b>	<b>44.7</b>	<b>9,843</b>	<b>97.2</b>	<b>4,687</b>	<b>47.6</b>

\*Results are suppressed when the size of the group under consideration (or denominator) is less than 10.

*Please visit the district website for additional AP information (<http://studata.sandi.net/research/ap>).*

<sup>3</sup> Counts exclude AP subscores for Calculus BC (Calculus AB subscore) and Music Theory (Aural and Non-Aural subscores); “Pct of AP Enrts” data include a maximum of one AP exam per AP course enrollment.