



Press Release

For immediate release

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Massachusetts Advanced Placement Gains Lead the Nation

Has seen largest 5- and 10-year gains in the percent of graduates who score at least a 3

MALDEN – Advanced Placement results that the College Board released this week show that Massachusetts continues to see increases in the percentage of graduating seniors who took at least one AP exam and in the percentage who scored at least a 3 on the exam's 5-point scale. Those consistent increases gave the Commonwealth the nation's greatest 5- and 10-year gains in terms of the percentage of graduates earning a 3 or higher.

Participation by members of the class of 2015 rose by 7.8 percent compared to the prior year, and the number of exams on which students scored 3 or higher increased by 6 percent. According to the College Board, 27,865 members of Massachusetts' class of 2015, or approximately 45 percent, took at least one AP exam while they were in high school, and 31.5 percent of the class of 2015 scored 3 or higher on an AP exam.

A score of 3 or above shows that a student is capable of doing the work for an introductory college-level course in that subject area, according to the College Board.

Massachusetts (31.5 percent) is second in the nation behind Maryland (31.7 percent) in terms of the percentage of the class of 2015 who scored 3 or higher on an AP exam.

"I congratulate students and teachers for undertaking the challenging course work involved in Advanced Placement classes," said Secretary of Education James A. Peyser. "As we continue our efforts to close the achievement gap, I hope more students will enroll in rigorous courses like AP in order to prepare for college and a career."

Black and Hispanic/Latino students continue to make strong gains in participation and performance. In 2005, 9.5 percent of Massachusetts' black high school graduates took at least one AP exam; in 2015, 35.2 percent did. In 2005, 3.4 percent of black high school graduates scored at least 3 on one or more AP exams; in 2015, 13.5 percent did.

Hispanic/Latino students saw similar gains. In 2005, 14.2 percent of the commonwealth's Hispanic/Latino high school graduates took at least one AP exam; in 2015, 32.8 did. In 2005, 5 percent of Hispanic/Latino high school graduates scored at least 3 on one or more AP exams; in 2015, 12.1 percent did.

Low-income members of the Massachusetts' class of 2015 earned a 3 or higher at almost the same rate (22 percent) as all students nationally (22.4 percent).

"I am pleased to see the continued growth in Advanced Placement participation and success," said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester. "I thank Mass Insight Education for their work to expand access to AP courses across the state, and I appreciate all the districts who worked with us on Race to the Top-funded efforts to better prepare students in middle school for challenging coursework in high school."

William Guenther, president, CEO and founder of Mass Insight, said, "These results are the culmination of a successful seven-year partnership between Mass Insight, state leadership and school districts. They also are a testament to the dedication of the AP teachers and the hard work of the students in our program – many of whom give up their Saturdays for extra AP preparation. We're especially proud to play a role in ensuring those from underserved communities have the skills they need to thrive in college and their future careers."

About Mass Insight Education

Founded in Boston in 1997, Mass Insight Education is a national nonprofit dedicated to improving student achievement and increasing college success through rigorous academic programs. Their Advanced Placement work with select districts in Massachusetts is supported by state funds and private donations. For more information, visit www.massinsight.org/home.

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