



MUSCLE SHOALS HIGH SCHOOL

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Muscle Shoals City Schools Placed on the College Board's 5th Annual AP[®] District Honor Roll for Significant Gains in Student Access and Success

A Record 547 School Districts Across the Nation Are Honored

Muscle Shoals — Muscle Shoals City Schools is one of **547** school districts in the U.S. and Canada (and **only one of five districts in Alabama**) being honored by the College Board with placement on the **5th Annual AP[®] District Honor Roll for increasing access to AP course work while simultaneously maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP Exams.** The year 2014 is a milestone year for the AP District Honor Roll, and more districts are achieving this objective than ever before. Reaching these goals indicates that the district is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for the opportunity of AP. **Since 2012, Muscle Shoals has increased the number of students participating in AP while improving the number of students earning AP Exam scores of 3 or higher.**

Muscle Shoals High School Principal Chad Holden attributes his school's success to a shared vision for academic success among all stakeholders in the community. "Excellence in academics continues to be the primary focus behind decisions made in our school system. Our superintendent and board members know that the classroom is where it all begins and where the magic truly happens as we prepare students for college and a career," Holden said.

Muscle Shoals High School served as a program school with A+ College Ready from 2010-2013 which provided the district with financial resources for equipment, professional development, evaluation, and performance incentives. After the grant ended in 2013, the system became a partner school which continues to provide Muscle Shoals with \$5,000 in matching funds to support similar components of an AP program. The partnership with A+ College Ready and the emphasis on enrollment and increasing qualifying scores has proven successful.

"I can't say enough about how A+ and our work with other program and partner schools have helped grow our AP programs. In 2010, we administered 97 AP exams. In 2014, we administered 389. Our goal is to have as many or more students taking AP classes as anything else on campus. Advanced Placement classes prepare students better than any other avenue for the rigor of college coursework," said Holden.

Data from 2014 show that among African American, Hispanic, and Native American students with a high degree of readiness for AP, only about half of students are participating. The first step to delivering the opportunity of AP to students is providing access by ensuring courses are available, that gatekeeping stops, and that the doors are equitably opened so these students can participate. **Muscle Shoals City Schools is committed to expanding the availability of AP courses among prepared and motivated students of all backgrounds.**

“The devoted teachers and administrators in this district are delivering an undeniable benefit to their students: opportunity. When coupled with a student’s hard work, such opportunities can have myriad outcomes, whether building confidence, learning to craft effective arguments, earning credit for college, or persisting to graduate from college on time.” said Trevor Packer, the College Board’s senior vice president of AP and Instruction. “We applaud your conviction that a more diverse population of students is ready for the sort of rigor that will prepare them for success in college.”

Helping more students learn at a higher level *and* earn higher AP scores is an objective of all members of the AP community, from AP teachers to district and school administrators to college professors. Many districts are experimenting with a variety of initiatives and strategies to determine how to simultaneously expand access and improve student performance.

In 2014, more than 3,800 colleges and universities around the world received AP scores for college credit, advanced placement, and/or consideration in the admission process, with many colleges and universities in the United States offering credit in one or more subjects for qualifying AP scores.

Inclusion on the 5th Annual AP District Honor Roll is based on the examination of three years of AP data, from 2012 to 2014, looking across 34 AP Exams, including world language and culture. The following criteria were used.

Districts must:

- Increase participation/access to AP by at least 4 percent in large districts, at least 6 percent in medium districts, and at least 11 percent in small districts;
- Increase or maintain the percentage of exams taken by African American, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian/Alaska Native students; and
- Improve performance levels when comparing the percentage of students in 2014 scoring a 3 or higher to those in 2012, *unless* the district has already attained a performance level at which more than 70 percent of its AP students are scoring a 3 or higher.

When these outcomes have been achieved among an AP student population in which 30 percent or more are underrepresented minority students (Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native) and/or 30 percent or more are low-income students (students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch), a symbol has been affixed to the district name to highlight this work.
