

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DATE: November 6, 2001

TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: Dr. J. Hairston, Superintendent

SUBJECT: Advanced Placement Incentive: Higher Standards for Student Achievement

ORIGINATOR: Christine Johns, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

RESOURCE PERSON(S): Q. Estelle Collins, Executive Director of Secondary Programs

INFORMATION

Nature of the Issue: The Advanced Placement Incentive Program provides funding to local school systems to increase the availability of Advanced Placement courses and increase enrollment of low-income and traditionally-underrepresented students in AP courses. The U.S. Department of Education has awarded the Maryland State Department of Education funding to continue this program for the 2001-2002 school year. As a result, MSDE is offering a \$10,000 grant to each local school system. BCPS is applying for a continuation of this grant for our system to provide support and assistance for several schools that have yet to progress toward reaching the targets established in *The Blueprint for Progress*. Five high schools and five middle schools will participate in *Building Success*, a two-day workshop for schools serving students traditionally underrepresented in the college-bound and Advanced Placement Program populations. The workshop is designed to assist English and history teachers and curriculum coordinators in redesigning curriculum for grades 7 and above. The philosophy behind *Building Success* comprises the following three premises:

1. Thinking and communication skills can be taught
2. Efforts to improve these skills should focus on all students
3. With continuing, coordinated preparation, academically able students can be prepared and motivated to succeed in challenging courses, including AP

One Social Studies teacher, one English teacher, and one mentor from each of the five identified high schools and their middle school feeder will participate in this workshop which is planned for December 7 and 8. The schools involved are: Chesapeake High School (Deep Creek Middle); Overlea High School (Golden Ring Middle); Randallstown High School (Deer Park Middle); Milford Mill Academy (Old Court Middle); and Woodlawn High School (Southwest Academy).

History of the Issue: There have been steady increases in high school achievement on the Maryland Functional tests and in decreasing the dropout rate. However, there is a wide range in SAT and AP participation and score results in BCPS schools. In addition, although BCPS has focused on increasing the percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses and taking AP exams, the overall pass rate has declined by 20 percentage points since 1992-93. Several high schools have made little, if any, progress in increasing the number of AP courses or increasing the number of underrepresented students in Advanced Placement courses.

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