



NJDOE News

For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:

**Tom Rosenthal
Rich Vespucci
609-292-1126**

For Release: July 29, 2002

New Jersey Increases Opportunities For High School Students to Take College Level Courses and Tests

High school students from 44 high-need districts throughout New Jersey will be able to take advantage of a program designed to create new opportunities for them to take college-level courses and tests. The 44 districts will receive aid under the Advanced Placement Incentive Program for two types of awards: planning awards and teacher training reimbursements.

"This is a valuable program that helps to eliminate barriers that have prevented students from disadvantaged families from participating in the most challenging courses," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "Although the total dollar amount of the grant may seem modest to some, every penny will be targeted to areas where the greatest need exists."

Districts eligible for funding included all districts with Abbott or special needs designations, and districts in which 40 percent or more of the students have family incomes that meet income criteria for free or reduced price meals. The districts selected to receive awards enroll more than 75,000 high school students.

The Advanced Placement Incentive Expansion Program begins this year as a three-year, federally funded program. Each year for three years, approximately one-third of the districts will be awarded \$86,000 in AP Planning Award funds, for a total of \$258,242.

Planning awards will be used by the districts to fund their needs assessments and advanced placement (AP) plan. Each district has to complete a state-approved advanced placement plan in order to participate in the advanced placement teacher training reimbursement plan.

Beginning this year, the Department of Education also will reimburse eligible districts for the costs of up to 300 teachers to attend week-long advanced placement teacher institutes to be offered in the summers of 2003 and 2004. Districts will be reimbursed for tuition, fees, and travel and lodging (up to \$1,000 per teacher) and for substitute pay (up to \$100 per day for five days). Over three years, these reimbursements will total \$485,000.

The planning awards range from \$2,000 to \$36,312 and average \$5,869 per award. The training awards range from \$4,000 to \$67,668 and average \$11,033.

Last year, New Jersey began to address the issue of increasing the number of students in high-need areas taking AP courses, taking AP tests, and achieving a score of 3 or better on those tests. AP exams are offered by the College Board in a variety of subjects and are scored on a scale of 0 to 5. Scores achieving 3 or higher qualify students to receive college credit at most accredited institutions of higher education.

In addition to the new expansion program, New Jersey is continuing a related program called the AP Test Fee Subsidy Program. The program pays the balance of AP test fees for income eligible students after the College Board deducts \$22 from its fee and high schools waive their \$7 portion of the fee. For the 2001-02 school year, the Department of Education will pay the \$49 balance for more than 1,800 test takers, or more than \$88,000. This represents a 30 percent increase over the previous year.

[Attached is a list of the districts receiving awards.](#)