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Florida Ranks Fourth in Advanced Placement Results

College credit-level classes taken in Florida high schools paying off

The College Board released its 2017 AP Cohort Data Report in February, which details Advanced Placement course participation and completion by state. Florida's results are positive, with student participation and exam completion both on the rise. Also encouraging are the number of females, minorities, and rural students taking an AP computer science course – nearly double – with the introduction this past year of a basic principles course.

Here are a few highlights:

- Florida remains fourth in the nation in the percentage of graduates scoring a 3 or above on their exams, which provides students an opportunity to earn college credit.
- More than 54 percent of Florida's 2017 high school graduates participated in AP courses.
- Florida public and private high school students completed more than 200,000 AP exams in 2017, with a passing scores of 3 or higher.

The Foundation for Florida's Future (AFloridaPromise.org) trumpets the good numbers as the result of Florida's nearly 20-year focus on student-centered legislation that promotes equity and opportunity.

AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP), offered for the first time in the 2016-17 school year, has dramatically expanded access to advanced computer science education. This new AP course was designed as a precursor to the intensive Java-coding AP Computer Science A course available since 1983 but taken by only a fraction of the students who take other AP STEM courses. The College Board reports that with the launch of AP CSP, the number of females who took an AP computer science course more than doubled, as did the number of Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, and rural students.

"For too long, we as a nation have talked about engaging more students—and a more diverse set of students—in computer science education. Despite the best intentions, such growth has been elusive. The eye-opening expansion in participation among female, rural white, and minority students in AP Computer Science this year is a tribute to educators who have used this new AP course to deliver concrete college and career readiness opportunities to many more students," said Trevor Packer, senior vice president of the AP Program.

Research consistently demonstrates that AP students are better prepared for college. According to the College Board, they're more likely to enroll in college, stay in college, do well in their classes, and graduate in four years.