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Miami-Dade County Public Schools Named the College Board's Advanced Placement[®] District of the Year

**District recognized for increasing access and performance, particularly for traditionally
underrepresented minority students**

MIAMI — Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) in Florida has been named the College Board Advanced Placement[®] Equity and Excellence District of the Year for being the nation's leader, among large school districts, in simultaneously expanding access to Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]) courses and improving AP Exam performance. M-DCPS students, teachers, district and school administrators, local public officials, and College Board leaders will celebrate these achievements during an award ceremony on Wednesday, Jan. 22.

"This accomplishment proves that through hard work, equity and excellence can be achieved in classrooms across the country," said College Board President David Coleman. "I congratulate the students of Miami-Dade for their excellent work, and I applaud Miami-Dade's teachers and administrators for their commitment to deliver rigorous work worth doing."

In November 2013, Miami-Dade was one of 477 school districts across the U.S. and Canada that achieved placement on the Annual AP District Honor Roll. From this list, three AP Districts of the Year — one for each category of district population size: small, medium, and large — were selected based on an analysis of three academic years of AP data. From 2010 to 2013, Miami-Dade County Public Schools:

- Increased student participation in AP by five percent annually;
- Increased the percentage of AP students earning a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam by five percent annually, with 46 percent of their AP students scoring 3 or higher in 2013; and
- Increased the percentage of traditionally underrepresented minority AP students earning a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam by six percent annually — an increase of 1,561 students last year.

Increasing access to AP course work while simultaneously increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher is the ideal scenario for a district's AP program, indicating that the district is successfully preparing a larger array of its students for the rigor of AP and college studies.

"Miami-Dade County Public Schools is a shining example of what can happen when educators insist on providing the highest quality education for every student — no matter their zip code or background. Through the rigorous course work of Advanced Placement, these schools are better preparing students for success in college and beyond," said U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "I hope that Miami-Dade can serve as a model for school districts across the country on how raising the bar leads to more — not less — success for every student."

Miami-Dade County Public Schools offer students a combination of 32 AP courses among 51 high schools to prepare them for postsecondary education and maximize their academic talents and interests. The District offers a variety of professional development opportunities for all middle school teachers in order to help them better prepare students for the rigors of advanced placement course work. Additionally, Pre-AP workshops are held every year for teachers of advanced and honors courses to engage in research-based instructional practices and to strengthen teaching and learning.

"The AP District Award reflects Miami-Dade's focus on educating all students equally and providing a skill set that prepares them to contribute to a world economy driven by technology and borderless organizations," said Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho. "Participation in rigorous Advanced Placement courses empowers students and helps them to engineer their own paths into a brave new world that requires a global sophistication seen by no other generation before this."

Miami-Dade has also created a strong AP Mentor/Mentee Program, a full-year program where veteran teachers support and mentor teachers with less than two years of teaching experience in AP courses. The professional development programs — including the AP Teacher Curriculum Review, which offers workshops for approximately 600 AP teachers, the AP Program Florida Summer Institute, and the AP Student Curriculum Review — are also strong contributors to Miami-Dade's overall success with AP.

“Among large districts, Miami-Dade stands out because it has achieved increases in AP scores at the exact same rate as it increased AP access, an achievement both exceptional and rare,” said Trevor Packer, the College Board’s senior vice president for AP and Instruction. “This award is a testament to Miami-Dade’s belief that academically prepared students deserve access to the sort of rigor that prepares them for college and careers.”

Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the large district — defined as more than 50,000 students — selected to receive this year’s College Board Advanced Placement Equity and Excellence District of the Year Award. In addition to celebratory events at the district level, all three winning districts will be honored during the AP Annual Conference in Philadelphia in July 2014.

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

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About the Advanced Placement Program®

The College Board’s Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies — with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement or both — while still in high school. Through AP courses in 34 subjects, each culminating in a rigorous exam, students learn to think critically, construct solid arguments and see many sides of an issue — skills that prepare them for college and beyond. Taking AP courses demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought the most rigorous curriculum available to them, and research indicates that students who score a 3 or higher on an AP Exam typically experience greater academic success in college and are more likely to earn a college degree than non-AP students. Each AP teacher’s syllabus is evaluated and approved by faculty from some of the nation’s leading colleges and universities, and AP Exams are developed and scored by college faculty and experienced AP teachers. Most four-year colleges and universities in the United States grant credit, advanced placement or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores — more than 3,300 institutions worldwide annually receive AP scores. In the last decade, participation in the AP Program has more than doubled and graduates succeeding on AP Exams have nearly doubled. In May 2013, 2.2 million students representing more than 18,000 schools around the world, both public and nonpublic, took approximately 4 million AP Exams.

About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT[®] and the Advanced Placement Program[®]. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.

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