EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Report: To provide to the School Board the District’s 2013 Advanced Placement program report.

Sioux Falls School District high school students continue to successfully complete Advanced Placement (AP) courses across a wide variety of areas while scoring better than their state or national peers on AP exams.

The AP program is available to high school students interested in college preparatory work that is academically rigorous and rich in content. At the conclusion of each course, students have the option of taking an AP exam. If students earn a score of three or higher they may earn college credit for work in the course.

During the 2012-13 school year, 40 percent of juniors and seniors were enrolled in at least one AP course. District students took a total of 1,918 AP exams. The percent of students scoring a 3 or higher on the exam was 70 percent, while nationally the rate is 60.8 percent and the South Dakota rate is 65.1 percent. While Sioux Falls School District students only account for 16 percent of the total student population in the state, they comprise 44.3 percent of the total AP exams taken in South Dakota.

The College Board, a non-profit organization committed to helping students experience college success by taking academically challenging classes in high school, recognized 290 District AP scholar award winners in 2013. The District also has two students receiving the AP State Scholar Award and 14 receiving the AP National Scholar Award.

The cost for students for taking the exam in 2013 is $87, a fee which can be waived by the College Board and the Department of Education for students with financial need. The District subsidizes the fees for students who have a financial need but do not meet the requirements of the College Board and the State.

Administrative Recommendation to School Board: Acknowledge the results from the District’s 2013 Advanced Placement Report.
2013 Advanced Placement Report

**Purpose of Report:** To provide to the Sioux Falls School Board information on the District’s 2013 Advanced Placement program.

**District Priority Area:** Student Achievement

**Goal/Strategy:** Multiple programs and pathways will support improved student achievement across the curriculum.

**Explanation:** The Advanced Placement (AP) program is available to high school students interested in college preparatory coursework that is academically rigorous and rich in content. Advanced Placement courses are an integral part of the high school curriculum offerings. The College Board, a non-profit organization committed to helping students experience college success by taking academically challenging classes in high school, approves the curriculum for all AP courses.

At the conclusion of the course, students who are taking AP classes have the option of taking an AP exam designed by the College Board. Test results are reported on a scale of 1-5, and students must achieve a score of 3 or higher (pass rate) in order for the course to be considered for college credit. Individual colleges make the determination whether or not the AP class will transfer as college credit or exempt the student from taking other college courses.

**Enrollment:**
During the 2012-2013 school year, students selected AP classes in the areas of English, math, social studies, science, fine arts, and world language. Courses included: composition, history, geography, chemistry, calculus, statistics, biology, physics, environmental science, Spanish language, music theory, macroeconomics, government, psychology, and studio art. Enrollment in AP courses decreased in 2013 by 173 students or 7.8 percent, from 2,209 to 2,036. This decrease is partially mitigated by an overall decline in high school enrollment of 2.2 percent in the same time period.
Chart A below shows the percentage of cohort students enrolled in at least one AP course over the past three years. Under the NGA (National Governors Association) which began in 2011 to identify the four-year cohort graduation calculation method, students are expected to graduate within four years of their first point of entry into the 9th grade. The percentage of cohort students enrolled in at least one AP course decreased by 1.6 percent from 2012 to 2013.

Traditionally, the number of Junior and Seniors enrolled in one or more AP courses has been evaluated. The trend line compares to the cohort data. Chart B below shows the percentage of juniors and seniors enrolled in an AP course, which has decreased by 4% from the previous year.
Results of AP Exams:
During the 2012-2013 school year, 1,918 AP exams were taken by District students, a decrease of 166 AP exams. Of the students enrolled in AP courses, 94 percent took the AP exam, the same as the previous year.

Chart C shows that 70 percent of AP students scored a 3 or higher in 2012. The percent of District students scoring 3 or higher was greater than the state and national pass rate. Nationally, the pass rate was 60.8 percent (58.8 percent in 2012) and in South Dakota, the pass rate was 65.1 percent (65.9 percent in 2012). The Sioux Falls School District represents 44.3 percent of the total South Dakota AP exams taken.

AP Program Recognition:
The College Board recognized 290 District AP scholar award winners in 2013:
• 120 receiving the AP Scholar Award (granted to students who receive a score of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams)
• 57 receiving the AP Scholar Award with Honors (granted to students who receive an average score of 3.25 or higher on all AP exams and score of 3 on four or more of these exams)
• 99 receiving the AP Scholar with Distinction (granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams)
• 14 receiving the AP National Scholar Award (granted to students who receive an average score of at least 4 on all AP exams taken and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams)

In addition, the District has 2 students receiving the 2012 AP State Scholar (granted to one male and one female with scores of 3 or higher on the greatest number of AP exams and then the highest average score on all AP exams taken). The 2013 award winners will be announced in January 2014.
District AP Committee Recommendations:
The District AP Committee meets annually to review the program and makes recommendations for continued excellence. The goals of the committee were to continue the promotion of the AP Program for District students and families. The District committee continues to explore new course offerings.

Costs: The FY13 incentive budget for Advanced Placement was $98,958. Administrators received a building allocation based on the number of students enrolled, taking, and passing the AP exam. The incentive budget provides $65 per student scoring a 3 or higher on the AP exam, out of a possible 5 points. The buildings use this incentive budget for required professional development costs for all AP teachers through attendance at AP conferences and institutes, for classroom materials to enhance the course, for student help sessions costs to prepare for the AP exam, for facility rental, and for test proctor costs.

In 2013, the cost of the exam was $87 per test. Students with financial need qualify for taking the AP exam at no cost through guidelines of the College Board and the South Dakota Department of Education. The District subsidizes the fees for the students who have a financial need but do not meet the qualifying guidelines of the College Board and the State.

Additional, District level support is provided to schools on an as needed basis to initiate new programs, to purchase special lab equipment, and to provide staff development.

Committee Participation: The District AP committee is comprised of administrators, AP coordinators, AP teachers, and parents.

Summary: The Advanced Placement Program provides opportunities for students to engage in college preparatory coursework. During the 2012-2013 school year, 2,036 students took a variety of AP courses offered in the traditional classroom or in an online format. Forty percent of all 11-12th grade students enrolled in at least one AP course. Of the 1,918 AP exams given, 1,352 students scored a 3 or higher on their exams, a 70 percent pass rate, exceeding the national and state pass rate on the AP course exam.

A District AP Committee guides the program and develops strategies to increase student participation in AP coursework. The College Board honored 290 District AP Scholar award winners in 2013 for their excellent achievement in the AP Program.

Administrative Recommendation to School Board: Acknowledge results from the District’s 2013 Advanced Placement Report.