Purpose of Report: To provide to the Sioux Falls School Board information on the District’s 2017 Advanced Placement program.

The District saw a sizeable increase in the number of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams at the end of the 2016-17 school year; up 304 from the previous year. Also up is the number of students who scored 3 or higher on those tests, indicating proficiency and allowing the student to earn both high school and college credits at the same time.

Each high school offers nearly 30 Advanced Placement courses for those students who wish to challenge themselves with rigorous, college-level work. Teachers attend trainings by the College Board during the summer to ensure the highest level of instruction.

AP students in the Sioux Falls School District continue to score higher than state and national averages. The pass rate for South Dakota was 70 percent and nationally the pass rate was 60 percent, while Sioux Falls students netted a 71.6% pass rate. The Sioux Falls School District represents 52% of the total AP exams taken in South Dakota.

Administrative Recommendation to School Board: Acknowledge results from the District’s 2017 Advanced Placement Report.
Purpose of Report: To provide to the Sioux Falls School Board information on the District’s 2017 Advanced Placement program.

Priority Area 1: Student Outcomes
Priority Statement 1: SFSD will provide rigorous, effective, and engaging curriculum and instruction for all students to emphasize growth and reduce the achievement gap, with special focus on the following area: College readiness and/or career preparedness.

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. AP 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 2016-2017 school year, students selected AP classes in the areas of English, math, social studies, science, fine arts, and world language. Courses included: composition, literature, history, geography, chemistry, calculus, statistics, biology, physics, environmental science, Spanish language, music theory, macroeconomics, government, psychology, and studio art. In the 2016-17 school year, enrollment in AP courses increased from 2,338 to 2706.

It has been the practice to look at graduating seniors who have taken at least one AP class while in high school. Chart A shows the percentage of 2017 graduating seniors enrolled in at least one AP course over the past four years. The percentage of graduating seniors enrolled in at least one AP course rose from 47.3% to 50.6%.
Results of AP Exams:
During the 2016-17 school year, 2,439 AP exams were taken by District students, an increase of 304 exams. Of the students enrolled in AP courses, 90 percent took the AP exam, an increase of 6% from the previous year. Chart B below shows the number of exams taken in the past 3 years and the number of exams that scored a 3 or higher. During the 2016-17 school year, 2,439 exams were taken and 1,744 exams received a passing score of 3 or higher.
Chart C shows the percentage of students that scored a 3 or higher since 2013. This year 71.6 percent of AP students scored a 3 or higher which is an increase from the previous year. AP students in the Sioux Falls School District continue to score higher than the state and national averages.

Chart D shows the District, state and national pass rates over the past five years. In 2016-17, the pass rate for the state of South Dakota was 70 percent and nationally the pass rate was 60 percent. The Sioux Falls School District represents 52 percent of the total South Dakota AP exams taken.
AP Program Recognition:
The College Board recognized 387 District AP scholar award winners in 2017, up from 353 in 2016:

- 182 receiving the AP Scholar Award (granted to students who receive a score of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams)
- 75 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 scores of 3 on four or more of these exams)
- 130 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)
- 24 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)

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 are to continue the promotion of the AP Program and strive for balance between growing number of students taking the AP exams and their performance on the AP exams.

Costs: The FY17 incentive budget for AP was $113,360. 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. 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 session costs to prepare for the AP exam, for facility rental, and for test proctor costs.

In 2017, the cost of the exam was $92 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. This year, 234 tests qualified for fee reduction. Next year, the cost of AP exams will rise by $1 to $93 per test.

Additionally, District level support is provided to schools on an as needed basis to initiate new courses, 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 2016-2017 school year, enrollment in AP courses increased by 368. Students enrolled in a variety of AP courses offered in the traditional classroom or in an online format. Of the 2,439 AP exams given, 1,746 scored a 3 or higher which is almost a seventy-two percent pass rate. Sioux Falls students continue to score higher than both state and national averages.

A District AP Committee guides the program and develops strategies to increase student participation in AP coursework. The College Board honored 387 District AP Scholar award winners in 2017 for their excellent achievement in the AP Program.