



**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **Iowa Students Increase AP Test Scores, Participation**

*State SAT scores continue to outperform national averages*

**DES MOINES, Iowa** – According to preliminary information from the College Board, more Iowa students are taking the Advanced Placement (AP) tests and scoring well. In addition, the College Board reports that Iowa high school graduates continue to outperform national scores on the SAT college entrance exam. The College Board administers both the SAT and AP programs.

According to a state report released by the College Board, 7,127 Iowa students took at least one AP exam in 2006-2007, up 7.9 percent from last year's number of 6,607. AP courses are college-level studies available to high school students, most often in their junior or senior years. Students can choose among 37 courses and exams across 22 subject areas, with an optional final exam at the completion of the course. Iowa students took a total of 10,776 final exams in 2006-2007, compared to 9,833 the prior year.

In addition to more students taking the exams, more Iowa students are scoring well. The number of exam scores of 3 or higher increased 10.3 percent from 6,859 in 2005-2006 to 7,565 in 2006-2007. A score of 5 is the highest possible score on the AP exam. Approximately 70 percent of the AP tests taken in Iowa had a score of 3 or higher. Nationally, 60 percent of the tests taken had a score of 3 or higher. Many colleges grant credit or advanced placement to students with high AP exam scores.

"For students who are planning to go to college, AP courses generally offer an academic intensity that prepares them for that next step," said Judy Jeffrey, director of the Iowa Department of Education.

"Our goal is to provide Iowa students continued access to more rigorous courses so they succeed in their post-secondary options."

The College Board's full report on 2007 AP courses and testing will be released in 2008.

In addition to AP information, the College Board reports that Iowa high school graduates continue to perform well on the SAT college entrance exam.

There are three sections of the SAT Reasoning Test, critical reading, math and writing. Iowa's mean score in critical reading increased six points over last year, with a score of 608 in 2007 as compared to 602 in 2006. The mean score in math remained the same at 613. The score in writing went down five points, with a score of 586 in 2007 as compared to 591 in 2006. Iowa's scores continued to outperform national averages overall. The national score in critical reading was 502, math was 515 and writing was 494. The highest possible score is 800 in each category.

State SAT participation remained low as compared to the number of Iowa students who take the ACT college entrance exam. This year, 1,305 students took the SAT, which is only 4 percent of Iowa's 2007 graduating seniors. Iowa's low participation in the SAT means that the college entrance exam should not be used as an indicator of overall system performance or student achievement.

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*The Iowa Department of Education works with the State of Iowa Board of Education to provide oversight, supervision and support for the state education system, which includes public elementary and secondary schools, nonpublic schools that receive state accreditation, area education agencies, community colleges and teacher preparation programs. The department is committed to high levels of learning, achievement and performance for all students, so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce.*