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Sept. 7, 2006

## **Number of Advanced Placement exams taken by Texans increases 56 percent since 2002**

AUSTIN – The number of Advanced Placement (AP) exams taken by Texans increased 56 percent in the past four years and the number of Texans taking the tests increased 53 percent during that period, the Texas Education Agency announced today.

High school students who earn high scores on AP exams can earn college credit for courses, saving their families thousands of dollars in tuition costs.

Figures just released from the College Board, which oversees the AP program, show that 122,969 Texas students took the exams in 2006, which is a 9.5 percent increase from 2005 when 112,263 students were tested. It also represents a 53 percent increase from 2002. That year, 80,240 Texas students took AP exams.

Many students take more than one AP exam each year. In 2006, this state's students took 224,168 exams, representing a 9.7 percent increase from 2005 when 204,403 exams were taken. This year's figures represent a 56 percent increase from 2002 when 144,060 tests were taken.

Texas students took 35 different types of AP exams, ranging from subject such as United States History to Italian to Macroeconomics. The tests most frequently taken by Texans were: English Language and Composition; U.S. History; Spanish; World History; and Calculus.

There was a 9.5 percent increase over the past year and a 41.7 percent increase since 2002 in the number of exam scores of three or higher. The grading scale is one to five, with five being the highest possible score. This year, 108,824 exams earned scores of three, four or five. Typically, universities will award college course credit for AP scores of three or more. Through the AP exams, some students earn one to two semesters worth of course credit before they ever officially enter college.

Today, many selective colleges give special consideration to AP and honors classes when making admissions decisions, although the manner in which the information is used varies.

In order to support and recognize AP classes, a state program awards campuses up to \$100 for each student earning a score of three or higher. Those awards are made each summer.

State funds are also available to provide training to teachers and to help reduce the cost of the exams for all students and with additional reductions available for low-income students who take AP tests.

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