

# News Release

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## State’s AP participation and performance improve

MADISON – More students took more tests with better results. This is how Wisconsin’s 2017 graduates participated and performed in the Advanced Placement (AP) program according to the “AP Cohort Data Report: Graduating Class of 2017” from the College Board.

Wisconsin had 21,910 graduates in the class of 2017 who took 66,660 AP exams while in high school. That’s an increase of 638 graduates and 3,694 exams from the prior year’s graduating class. The 2017 cohort represent 36.4 percent of estimated graduates. Their success rate – the percentage of exams scored three or higher on a five-point scale – was 25.5 percent, up 0.7 percent from the 2016 cohort. Nationally for 2017, 1.17 million graduates took 3.98 million AP exams with a success rate of 22.8 percent.

	2017	1-Year Increase
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	21,910	638
Number of Exams	66,660	3,694
Percent Taking an AP Exam	36.4	1.0
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	25.5	0.7

“It’s heartening to see an increasing number of our students leaving high school with proven college and career readiness,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “The Advanced Placement program is one opportunity for our kids to experience the rigor of college-level coursework and, through examination, gain credits or advanced standing that boosts their chances for postsecondary success.”

The AP program is made up of 38 courses, the newest being AP Computer Science Principles. Wisconsin had 125 of its 2017 graduates who took that end-of-course exam with 88.0 percent scoring three or higher. The exam is among a dozen offered in the popular science, technology, mathematics, and engineering (STEM) fields. The state’s 2017 graduates took 23,420 STEM exams a 7.1 percent increase from the prior year’s graduates.

Students who earn an AP exam score of three or higher on the five-point scale may receive college credit, advanced standing, or both from many colleges and universities. Students from low-income families

(more)

represent 13.6 percent of 2017 state graduates who took an AP exam. Among those students, 10.8 percent earned a score of three or higher on an exam. Wisconsin public school districts are required to pay exam fees for students whose family income meets guidelines for free or reduced-price school meals. The 2017 AP report says that states that contribute to exam fees for low-income students have narrowed equity gaps. Ten years ago in Wisconsin, 5.4 percent of low-income graduates took an AP exam and 3.6 percent earned a score of three or higher on an exam. Five years ago, 11.0 percent of economically disadvantaged graduates took AP exams with 8.4 percent earning a three or higher on an exam.

“We know that equity in access and opportunity is an issue for students of color, students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and those who are learning English,” Evers said. “While we are making progress in closing equity gaps, our goal is for all students to have access to the resources and rigor they need to be successful. And, we’re not there yet.”

The College Board named 25 Wisconsin public school districts to its Eighth Annual Honor Roll. Based on three years of data, the honor roll recognizes districts that are committed to increasing access to AP for underrepresented students while simultaneously maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning AP exam scores of three or higher.

<b>8th Annual AP Honor Roll</b>	
Public School Districts	
Cadott Community	Oconomowoc Area
Chippewa Falls Area	Platteville
DeForest Area	Prescott
Eau Claire Area*	Random Lake
Evansville Community	Rice Lake Area
Fennimore Community	River Falls
Holmen*	Saint Croix Central*
Kohler*	Slinger*
Lake Mills Area*	Somerset
Lomira	Waterloo
Menomonee Falls	Waunakee Community*
Muskego-Norway*	Wausau*
Northland Pines	

\*District has achieved the honor for multiple years.

Wisconsin’s 2017 graduates who were successful on their AP exams are estimated to save nearly \$39.5 million in college costs. The calculation assumes three credits for each AP course scored three or higher and an average cost for in-state tuition and fees of \$298.73 per credit hour.

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**NOTES:** The College Board’s “AP Cohort Data Report: Graduating Class of 2017” provides information for public school graduates only. Breakdowns by racial and ethnic groups or by schools and districts are not available from this report. This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2018-19.pdf>.

# AP Cohort Data

Public School Graduating Class of 2017\*

## Advanced Placement Participation

Public School Class of 2017

<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	14,482	18,061	21,272	21,910
Percent Taking an AP Exam	22.6	28.8	35.4	36.4
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	15.7	20.1	24.8	25.5
<b>Nation</b>				
Graduates Taking an AP Exam	691,437	950,652	1,135,655	1,174,554
Percent Taking an AP Exam	23.9	30.2	36.2	37.7
Percent Earning Scores of 3-5	14.6	18.2	21.9	22.8

## Advanced Placement Participation by Low-Income Students\*\*

Wisconsin Public School Students

<b>Year</b>	<b>Graduates Taking an AP Exam</b>	<b>% Low-Income Graduates Taking an AP Exam</b>	<b>% Low-Income Graduates Scoring 3 or Higher</b>
2007	14,482	5.4	3.6
2012	18,061	11.0	8.4
2016	21,272	13.7	10.5
2017	21,910	13.6	10.8

\*\* The College Board identifies low-income students as those qualifying for an exam fee waiver based on free or reduced-price school meal income guidelines. (Data based on 2014-15 NCES estimates.)

## 10 Most Popular Advanced Placement Exams

Wisconsin Public School Class of 2017

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of Exams</b>	<b>Percent Scoring 3 or Higher</b>
Psychology	9,303	75.3
English Language and Composition	7,073	63.5
U.S. History	6,099	57.8
English Literature and Composition	5,861	61.5
Calculus AB	5,344	61.2
Biology	3,926	73.5
Statistics	3,827	63.3
U.S. Government and Politics	3,779	61.0
Chemistry	2,622	55.0
Physics 1: Algebra-Based	2,392	48.3

## AP STEM Participation among Wisconsin Public School Graduates

<b>Science</b>	<b>Number of Exams Taken</b>			<b>% Scoring 3 or Higher (2017)</b>
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	
Biology	3,003	3,764	3,926	73.5
Chemistry	2,148	2,458	2,622	55.0
Environmental Science	904	1,297	1,486	64.8
Physics 1: Algebra-Based^	-	2,198	2,392	48.3
Physics 2: Algebra-Based^	-	581	508	63.0
Physics B^	1,199	41	2	-
Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism	94	128	115	66.1
Physics C: Mechanics	343	459	473	87.1
<b>Mathematics</b>				
Calculus AB	4,315	5,166	5,344	61.2
Calculus BC	1,409	1,860	2,157	79.8
Computer Science A	211	409	443	70.7
Computer Science Principles	-	-	125	88.0
Statistics	2,631	3,502	3,827	63.3

^ Physics 1 and 2 were introduced in May 2015. Computer Science Principles was a new offering in May 2017. Physics B was last administered in May of 2014. Score distributions with fewer than five AP exams are not provided.

\* Public school graduates are a projection supplied by "Knocking at the College Door" (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2016).