



## **NAZARETH AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Victor D. Lesky, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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### **Nazareth Area School District Placed on the College Board's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AP<sup>®</sup> District Honor Roll for Significant Gains in Advanced Placement<sup>®</sup> Access and Student Performance**

#### **367 Public School Districts Across the Nation Are Honored**

Nazareth, PA— Nazareth Area School District is one of fewer than 400 public school districts in the nation being honored by the College Board with a place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AP<sup>®</sup> Honor Roll, for simultaneously increasing access to Advanced Placement coursework while maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP exams. Achieving both of these goals is the ideal scenario for a district's Advanced Placement program, because it indicates that the district is successfully identifying motivated, academically-prepared students who are likely to benefit most from AP coursework. Since 2009, Nazareth Area School District increased the number of students participating in AP from 103 to 143, while increasing the percentage of students earning AP Exam scores of 3 or higher from 83% in 2009 to 84% in 2011. The majority of U.S. colleges and universities grant college credit or advanced placement for a score of 3 or above on AP exams.

Nazareth Area School District Superintendent Victor D. Lesky stated that academic rigor is the key to the future success of all students, and the District's designation as an AP Honor Roll District is an indication that the organization is on the right path in meeting that goal. An emphasis on teaching students **"How to Learn"**, ascertaining the skills of application, problem solving, analysis, and evaluation of the information being presented is integral if we are to provide our students with the experiences needed to meet success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Advanced Placement scores indicated that twenty Nazareth students were named AP Scholars, (8) eight students were named AP Scholars with Honor and (12) twelve students AP Scholars with Distinction. In addition the data collected through the Pennsylvania PSSA results, graduation rate, drop-out rate, post-secondary school acceptance, and a host of other data demonstrate to our students, parents, and residents that we are continuing to provide students with the learning that is necessary to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AP Honor Roll is made up of only those public school districts that are simultaneously expanding opportunity and improving performance. The list includes 367 school districts across 43 states and Canada. Pennsylvania led all states with 34 public school districts named to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AP Honor Roll, followed by Massachusetts and New York, both with 30.

“Participation in college-level AP courses can level the playing field for underserved students, give them the confidence needed to succeed in college, and raise standards and performance in key subjects like science and math,” said College Board President Gaston Caperton. “The AP Honor Roll districts are defying expectations by expanding access while enabling their students to maintain or improve their AP Exam scores.”

Many U.S. school districts have focused on expanding access to AP courses as part of a strategy to improve college readiness. While these efforts have resulted in more students earning scores of 3 or better — these efforts also have resulted in more students earning scores of 1 or 2. Accordingly, there has been a slight decline since 2001 in the percentage of AP students scoring a 3 or better, a decline that can be expected in any program attracting a broader cross-section of students.

Helping more students learn at a higher level *and* earn higher AP scores is an objective of all members of the AP community, from AP teachers to district and school administrators to college professors. Many are experimenting with a variety of initiatives and strategies to determine how to expand access and improve student performance simultaneously.

“This school district has achieved something very remarkable. It managed to open the doors of its AP classrooms to many more students, while also increasing the percentage of students earning high enough AP Exam grades to stand out in the competitive college admission process and qualify for college credit and placement,” said Trevor Packer, the College Board’s senior vice president of Advanced Placement and college readiness.

Inclusion on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AP District Honor Roll is based on the following criteria:

1. Examination of three years of AP data, from 2009 to 2011;
2. Increase in participation in/access to AP by at least 4 percent in large districts, at least 6 percent in medium districts and at least 11 percent in small districts;
3. A steady or increasing percentage of exams taken by African American, Hispanic/Latino and American Indian/Alaska Native students; and
4. Performance levels maintained or improved when comparing the percentage of students in 2011 scoring a 3 or higher to those in 2009, *or* the school has already attained a performance level in which more than 70 percent of the AP students are scoring a 3 or higher.

School districts in which low-income and/or underrepresented minority students (African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native) comprise 30 percent or more of the AP student population have been highlighted on the Achievement List to recognize significant improvements in equity and quality

among the nation's historically underserved student populations. The complete 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual AP District Honor Roll can be found at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

### **About the Advanced Placement Program**

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Through more than 30 college-level courses, each culminating in a rigorous exam, AP provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement or both. Taking AP courses also demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought the most rigorous curriculum available to them. Each AP teacher's syllabus is evaluated and approved by college faculty from some of the nation's leading institutions, and AP Exams are developed and scored by college faculty and experienced AP teachers. AP is accepted by more than 3,800 colleges and universities worldwide for college credit, advanced placement or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores. This includes over 90 percent of four-year institutions in the United States. In 2010, 1.8 million students representing more than 17,000 schools around the world, both public and nonpublic, took 3.2 million AP Exams.

### **About the College Board**

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools. For further information, visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

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