

**ARKANSAS ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR THE EDUCATION OF
GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN**

**REPORT
JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020**

***ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
2020***



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

ANNUAL REPORT

ARKANSAS ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE EDUCATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

**Haley Jones
Chairperson**

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Johnny Key, Secretary
Arkansas Department of Education**

OFFICE OF EDUCATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

**Stacy Smith, Assistant Commissioner
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Connie Storey, Public School Program Advisor**

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2019-2020
GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR
GIFTED/TALENTED EDUCATION

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GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR GIFTED EDUCATION

July 2020

The Honorable Asa Hutchinson
Governor of the State of Arkansas
State Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Governor Hutchinson:

Arkansas continues to rank high among national state leaders in Gifted Education. The Council is pleased to share good news about Arkansas strides in Gifted Education. We offer our recommendations and thoughts to ensure continued growth in serving our academically strong students who will be in the forefront of leadership and who will grow the economy and businesses of Arkansas.

Act 56 Selection of Outstanding Gifted Programs: The Council recognized the following districts as Outstanding Gifted Programs in 2020:

School Districts less than 1,000 students: Hackett
School Districts 1,000-3,000 students: Malvern
School Districts greater than 3,000 students: Springdale

Advanced Placement: The State of Arkansas continues to be a national leader in the growth of Advanced Placement college level courses. AP in Arkansas serves a nationally recognized diverse population of students statewide. Arkansas is one of the few states that pays the AP exam fees for all or part of the costs of public school students taking the Advanced Placement exams.

Summer Enrichment Programs (AEGIS programs) ACT 814 provides an appropriation for Academic Enrichment for the Gifted in Summer, allowing for many schools and other organizations around the state to take advantage of offering summer programs. Although funds were appropriate to more organizations for special summer offerings to youth across Arkansas, this summer due to COVID-19, AEGIS programs did not occur.

The Arkansas Governor's School (AGS) was held virtually this past summer. The transition to virtual went very well and the program was hugely successful. The Advisory Council had its July meeting via Zoom and received an update from AGS leadership. The Council was very impressed with the good work that was taking place.

The Advisory Council requests your continued support of Gifted Education as you examine the following recommendations:

- 1. Gifted Services in Charter Schools and Districts with Charter-Like Waivers (Act 1240 of 2015):** Remove the option of a waiver of services to gifted and talented students (6-42-101 et seq.) or a waiver of the ADE Rules for Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards (18) or of Pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement classes. As the number of

students enrolled in Open Enrollment Charter Schools continues to grow along with the students in districts seeking charter-like waivers (Act 1240), the monitoring of the services to gifted students described in the charter agreements should be reviewed by the Office of Gifted and Talented to ensure students are being served as described in a school's approved charter. Services to gifted students should be monitored by trained, licensed GT personnel in the Office of Gifted and Talented to ensure equitable services. The Council notes that only four Open Enrollment Charter Schools have chosen not to waive the Standards for Gifted Program Approval. As more students enroll in Open Enrollment Charter Schools and attend schools in districts with charter-like waivers, the Council thinks it is important for the ADE's Office of Gifted and Talented to be involved in the accountability process of evaluating gifted services to ensure that the unique educational needs of gifted students are met.

2. **ACT 56 Funding Increase:** The award provided for the winners of the ACT 56 Outstanding Gifted Programs in § 6-42-104 (6)(A) and (B) be increased from the current maximum amount of \$3,000 per award to \$5,000 per award. The amount of the award has not been raised since its inception more than twenty years ago. The amount of the award should be increased to promote services for gifted students that go beyond minimum standards.

Thank you for supporting Gifted Education and for allowing the Council to provide you with recommendations for further enhancement of Gifted Education services for all students of Arkansas.

Haley Jones
Chair, 2019-2020
Governor's Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education

STATUS REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2019-2020

Recommendations of the Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children 2019-2020

1. **Gifted Services in Charter Schools and Districts with Charter-Like Waivers (Act 1240 of 2015)**

Recommendation: Remove the option of a waiver of services to gifted and talented students (6-42-101 et seq.) or a waiver of the ADE Rules for Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards or of Advanced Placement classes.

Rationale: As the number of students enrolled in Open Enrollment Charter Schools continues to grow along with the students in districts seeking charter-like waivers (Act 1240), the monitoring of the services to gifted students described in the charter agreements should be reviewed by the Office of Gifted and Talented to ensure students are being served as described in the school's approved charter. Services to gifted students should be monitored by trained, licensed GT personnel in the Office of Gifted and Talented to ensure equitable services.

The Council notes that only four Open Enrollment Charter Schools have chosen not to waive the Standards for Gifted Program Approval. As more students enroll in Open Enrollment Charter Schools and attend schools in districts with charter-like waivers, the Council thinks it is important for the ADE's Office of Gifted and Talented to be involved in the accountability process of evaluating gifted services to ensure that the unique educational needs of gifted students are met.

Status: Not fulfilled

2. **Maintain funding for Academic Enrichment for Gifted/Talented in Summer (AEGIS) Grants**

Recommendation: The AEGIS grant program funding of \$150,000 per year should be maintained to provide quality enrichment programs for gifted students in the state.

Rationale: As AEGIS programs have a maximum of \$150,000, the number of programs that can be funded is very limited.

The AEGIS programs which existed in the state but were not funded after 2001 had a budget of almost a million dollars at the height of the program, serving students in 30

programs. Data about the number of programs and students served in 2019 are in the appendices.

Status: **Fulfilled**

3. ACT 56 Funding Increase

Recommendation: The award provided for the winners of the ACT 56 Outstanding Gifted Programs in § 6-42-104 (6)(A) and (B) should be increased from the current maximum amount of \$3,000 per award to \$5,000 per award.

Rationale: The amount of the award has not been raised since its inception more than twenty years ago.

The amount of the award should be increased to promote services for gifted students that go beyond minimum standards.

Status: **Not fulfilled**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2020-2021

Recommendations of the Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children 2020-2021

Priority 1. Gifted Services in Charter Schools and Districts with Charter-Like Waivers (Act 1240 of 2015)

Recommendation: Remove the option of a waiver of services to gifted and talented students (6-42-101 et seq.) or a waiver of the DESE Rules for Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards or of Advanced Placement classes.

Rationale: As the number of students enrolled in Open Enrollment Charter Schools continues to grow along with the students in districts seeking charter-like waivers (Act 1240), the monitoring of the services to gifted students described in the charter agreements should be reviewed by the Office of Gifted and Talented to ensure students are being served as described in the school's approved charter. Services to gifted students should be monitored by trained, licensed GT personnel in the Office of Gifted and Talented to ensure equitable services.

The Council notes that 21 of 24 Open Enrollment Charters operating during 2020-2021 school year have approved waivers related to gifted services. If approximately 5% of students enrolled in these schools are in need of gifted services, then the educational needs of 940 students may be unmet. As more students enroll in Open Enrollment Charter Schools and attend schools in districts with charter-like waivers, the Council thinks it is important for DESE's Office of Gifted and Talented to be involved in supporting the schools in providing services to gifted students and in the accountability process of evaluating gifted services to ensure that the unique educational and social and emotional needs of gifted students are met.

Priority 2. ACT 56 Funding Increase

Recommendation: The award provided for the winners of the ACT 56 Outstanding Gifted Programs in § 6-42-104 (6)(A) and (B) should be increased from the current maximum amount of \$3,000 per award to \$5,000 per award.

Rationale: The amount of the award has not been raised since its inception more than twenty years ago.

The amount of the award should be increased to incentivize providing gifted services that exceed minimum standards.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

OVERVIEW AND HISTORY OF GIFTED EDUCATION IN ARKANSAS

Responding to the concern for educational programming for gifted and talented students, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 106 of 1979. This legislation established the Office for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children, to include an administrator to direct the state program and funds were appropriated to provide financial assistance to school districts operating programs for gifted and talented students.

Guidelines were developed to provide information to assist districts in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs for gifted and talented students. The document, Education of Gifted and Talented Students: Guidelines for Local Education Agencies, was approved by the State Board of Education in 1981.

Since that time, a number of pieces of legislation enacted have had a profound effect on gifted education.

Act 445 of 1983, the Quality Education Act, established minimum standards for accreditation of public schools and authorized the State Board to name a committee to recommend regulations, criteria, and minimum standards. The Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools, which were adopted by the State Board of Education February 22, 1984, included a provision that all districts must provide a program for gifted and talented students.

Act 34 of 1983, First Extraordinary Session, the School Finance Act, provided funding for districts that were developing or operating programs for gifted and talented students. The Department of Education was directed to set aside annually, beginning in 1984-85, funds for program development, not to exceed \$6 million. Districts which were operating approved programs were eligible to receive funds based on an "add on" weight of .25 for each student identified as gifted and talented (funding was based on no more than five percent of the district's average daily membership).

The original guidelines developed to assist districts were then refined and updated and became the Rules and Regulations for Gifted Education in Arkansas. The document, Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards, was approved by the State Board in 1987, revised in 1999 and again in 2009.

Act 917 of 1995 changed the funding process to local school districts regarding gifted and talented students. The new law stipulated an expenditure requirement replacing the funding provision that had previously existed. This expenditure requirement reads: Local school districts shall expend from state and local revenues not less than the following amounts for

gifted and talented programs, in accordance with rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education – the previous year’s average daily membership participating in gifted and talented programs, up to five percent (5%) of the previous year’s average daily membership, multiplied by fifteen hundredths (.15) times the base local revenue per student. The following definition shall guide districts in providing services and opportunities for students identified as gifted and talented in Arkansas:

Gifted and talented children and youth are those of high potential or ability whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and/or services.

Possession of these talents and gifts, or the potential for their development, will be evidenced through an interaction of above average intellectual ability, task commitment and/or motivation, and creative ability.

Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards, 2009, outline standards that every school district in Arkansas must meet in order to provide an approved gifted program for students in their districts. These are minimum, not optimum, standards and enable school districts to establish equitable criteria for identification of gifted and talented students, establish programs which will lead to appropriate educational opportunities for these students, and establish procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the provisions of these educational opportunities. Districts are encouraged to go beyond the standards in providing educational opportunities for their gifted and talented students. Standards include the areas of community involvement, staff development, personnel, identification, program options, curriculum, and evaluation. A copy of these standards is available on the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website on the following page:

https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201223145241_2009_GT_Revised_Program_Approval_Standards.pdf. Evidence verifying compliance with the standards should be kept on file at the district and available for review by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education when the district is monitored. Districts submit an annual program approval application to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education detailing how the district will serve gifted students. In 2012-13, this application changed from an electronic application that was printed and mailed to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to an online form. The submission of policies and procedures for schools being monitored was embedded in their online program approval application.

At that time, each district was monitored by staff members of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Gifted and Talented, every three years.

Beginning in 2015-2016, districts began receiving Technical Assistance Visits (TAVs) rather than monitoring visits. Visits were designed to help districts create a plan to correct any compliance issues with Gifted and Talented (GT) Standards to allow for the approval of GT programs. In 2017-18 the online Gifted and Talented Program Approval Application was revised to address

only the annual requirements for GT services as established in GT Standards. The last year of visiting districts in cycles was 2017-18. Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, Technical Assistance Visits to districts are based primarily on established risk and need. However, a sample of programs are visited based on random selection to ensure all districts remain compliant. Onsite visits had been reduced from full days to half days in previous years, but in order to provide better technical assistance, full day visits to districts have been reinstated. GT policies and evidence of compliance with GT Standards are reviewed during on-site visits. If a district is not in compliance with GT Standards, a plan is developed to bring the district into compliance.

Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) courses are often utilized to serve gifted students at the secondary level. Rules are in place to help ensure that high schools offer at least one AP course in each core content area:

https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201102110218_FINAL_Rules_Governing_Grading_and_Course_Credit_1.pdf. These rules also specify that teachers must receive specific training to teach AP or Pre-AP, and students must complete the entire course and exam to receive weighted credit. Details about funding available for teacher training and for materials and equipment grants for AP courses are also contained in these rules. Schools receive incentive funds to utilize for improving their AP Program for each student score of three or higher on AP exams. Please see attachments for more information about the success Arkansas students are experiencing in AP.

The **Arkansas Governor's School**, a four-week or six-week residential program for gifted and talented students in the summer before their senior year, was established in 1980 and has operated each summer thereafter. Students are nominated for the Arkansas Governor's School (AGS) through their public, private, or home schools and are selected by a committee appointed by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. Selection is based on merit, measured by high intellectual potential, outstanding ability in an academic or artistic area, creativity, task commitment, and social/emotional maturity. Efforts are made to ensure a representative distribution from all school districts in the state, balanced proportions of male and female students, and an ethnic composition reflective of the state's demographic patterns. Members of the Governor's Advisory Council participate in the student and faculty selection processes.

Students are selected for content area classes in one of eight fields: choral music, drama, English/language arts, instrumental music, mathematics, natural science, social science, or visual arts. They also attend classes in general conceptual development and personal and social development. In addition, guest speakers, significant films, concerts, and dramatic productions provide experiences beyond the AGS classroom curriculum. The AGS curriculum does not replicate that of high school or college. Students are exposed to topics outside the traditional curriculum and are encouraged to become a member of a "community of learners."

The **Arkansas Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children** was established with Act 106 of 1979. The council consists of nine members, appointed by the Governor, who are interested in the education of gifted and talented children.

Act 56 of 1983 authorized the Advisory Council to select annually up to three programs for gifted and talented students for recognition as outstanding programs. The Council may make awards of not more than \$3,000 to each of the recognized programs. Blind screening is used and districts are judged against those of similar size. Criteria for recognition include how a district's program has exceeded minimum standards, innovative and creative aspects, and appropriateness of the program for the size of the district.

Act 814 of 2015 appropriated funds for grants for Academic Enrichment for the Gifted and Talented in Summer Programs (AEGIS). AEGIS grants may be awarded to public or private agencies for the establishment of annual summer residential or day programs.

Appendix B

ARKANSAS GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL

Arkansas Governor's School, inaugurated in 1980, celebrated its 40th year during the 2019 summer session. Approximately 15,350 students have been a part of this unique learning experience. In 2019, 400 students representing 94 high schools were accepted to attend AGS for four weeks at Arkansas Tech University. Thirty-three of these students were the only student attending from their high schools and 11 high schools had only two students attending.

The AGS curriculum was designed to (1) focus on contemporary and futuristic topics and issues and (2) provoke curiosity and inquiry from AGS students. AGS was divided into three areas of study: Area I (Visual Art, Choral Music, Drama, Instrumental Music, English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science, and Cybersecurity), Area II (Conceptual Development), and Area III (Personal and Social Development). As the host site, Arkansas Tech's curriculum adhered to the rules governing AGS while also introducing a central thematic thread: technology. The incorporation of the central theme promoted integrated learning and discussion across Area I, II and III. Technological questions affect all areas. This central theme offered a relevant topic of reflection for contemporary students.

Arkansas Tech University will host the 2020 AGS from July 5th – August 1st.

Appendix C

STATE SUPPORT FOR ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Pre-AP and AP Teacher Training

Summer 2019 Advanced Placement Summer Institute Training: \$721,450 was awarded to fund Advanced Placement and Pre-Advanced Placement teacher training held at Arkansas State University; the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and the University of Arkansas at Little

Rock.	Pre-AP	AP	Total	
	40	120	160	ASTATE
	34	186	220	UAF
	155	500	655	UALR
	229	806	1,035	

Twenty-two Pre-AP Readiness Trainings were held at Education Service Cooperatives. The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education provided grants totaling \$43,549.88 to support these Pre-AP Trainings.

For the 2020-2021 school year, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Weighted Credit and AP Training Approval Committee approved a number of options to satisfy training requirements for AP and Pre-AP teachers in accordance with flexibility allowed by legislation passed in the 2019 session and DESE rules governing Grading and Course Credit.

Equipment and Materials Grants to AP Teachers

Grants totaling \$34,102.71 were awarded to 56 teachers of Advanced Placement courses to buy items needed for their AP classes.

AP Incentive Money for Scores of 3, 4, or 5

Arkansas high schools received \$50 for each qualifying score of 3, 4, or 5 earned by a student on an AP Exam as incentive money for AP programs. Schools received a total of \$810,850.00 to support their AP programs.

Appendix D

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM DATA

2019 Arkansas Highlights - AP[®] Participation and Performance:

- The number of Arkansas students taking AP exams in 2019 was 26,684, representing a 0.4% decrease from 2018 (26,815).
- The number of AP exams taken in 2019 was 46,247, a decrease of 0.7% from the previous year (46,626).
- There was a 3.8% increase in the number of exams with scores of 3 or higher (16,844 exams) in 2019 compared with the increase in 2018 of 1.2% (16,229 exams).
- 7,747 Arkansas students used fee waivers for their exams in 2019.
- The most popular AP exams in Arkansas were English Language (7,908), US History (6,462), English Literature (5,756), World History (4,510), Biology (2,594), Psychology (2,414), Calculus AB (1,984), and Statistics (1,734).

AP: 2019 AP Participation and Performance - Arkansas

Overall Participation

Total	Student Ct	% Change	
Total	26,684	-0.4%	100.0%

Overall Performance

Total	Exams Taken	% Change	Exams With score of 3, 4 or 5	% Change
Total	46,247	-0.7%	16,844	3.8%

Participation By Gender

Gender	Student Ct	% Change	
Female	15,771	-1.2%	59.1%
Male	10,913	0.7%	40.9%

Performance by Gender

Gender	Exams Taken	% Change	Exams With score of 3, 4 or 5	% Change
Female	27,091	-1.3%	9,097	2.1%
Male	19,156	0.1%	7,747	5.9%

Participation by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Student Ct	% Change	
American Indian	188	-6.9%	0.7%
Asian	978	2.4%	3.7%
Black	3,334	-1.7%	12.5%
Hispanic or Latino	3,662	6.6%	13.7%
Pacific Islander	74	10.4%	0.3%
White	16,665	-0.9%	62.5%
Two or more races	1,271	-1.1%	4.8%
Other	0	Null	0.0%
No Response	512	-21.2%	1.9%

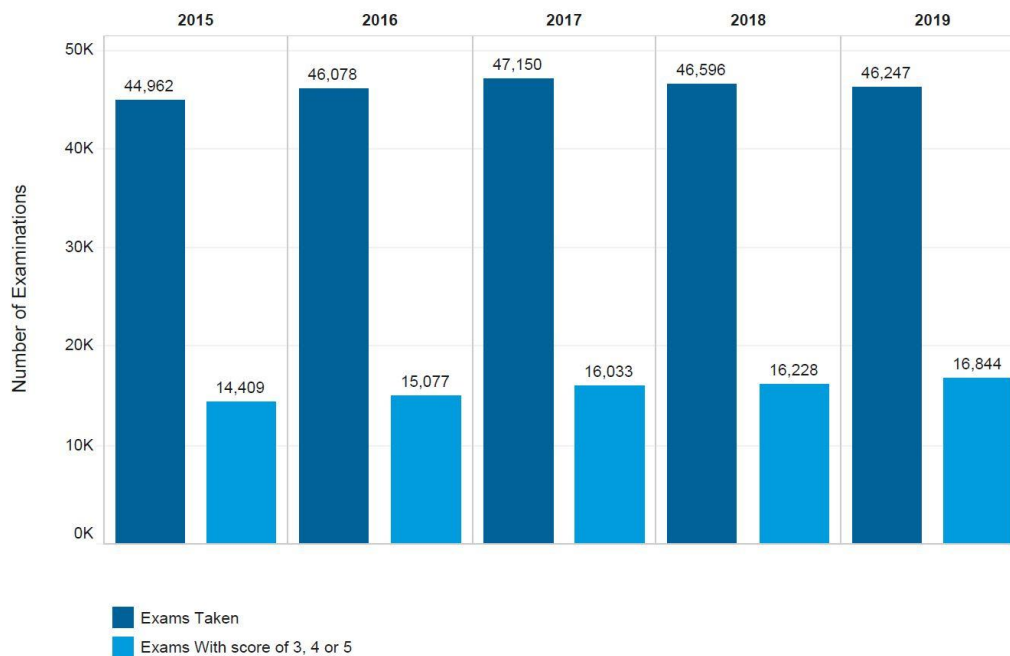
Performance by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Exams Taken	% Change	Exams With score of 3, 4 or 5	% Change
American Indian	278	-10.9%	79	-2.5%
Asian	2,422	3.0%	1,463	7.6%
Black	5,553	-0.9%	676	8.0%
Hispanic or Latino	6,137	6.3%	1,993	9.9%
Pacific Islander	99	3.1%	12	33.3%
White	28,864	-1.5%	11,624	2.5%
Two or more races	2,208	-2.3%	848	0.5%
Other	0			
No Response	686	-24.0%	149	-4.5%

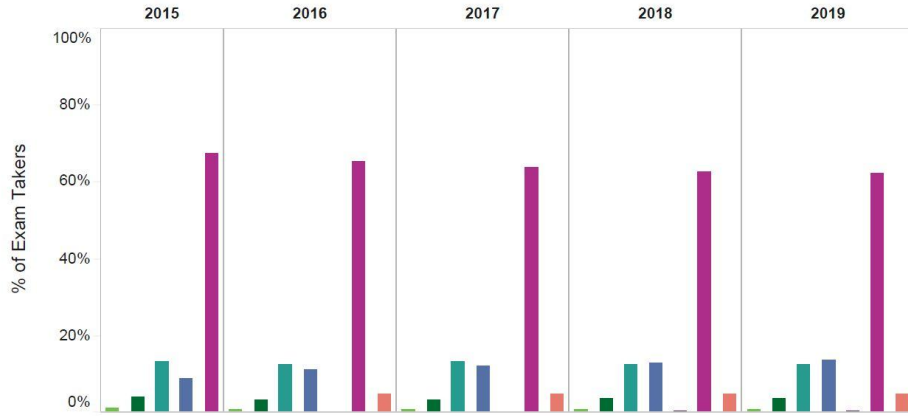
Fee Reduction Usage

Students receiving Fee Reductions	7,747	29.0%
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AP: Number of Exams and Number of Exams with Scores of 3, 4 or 5

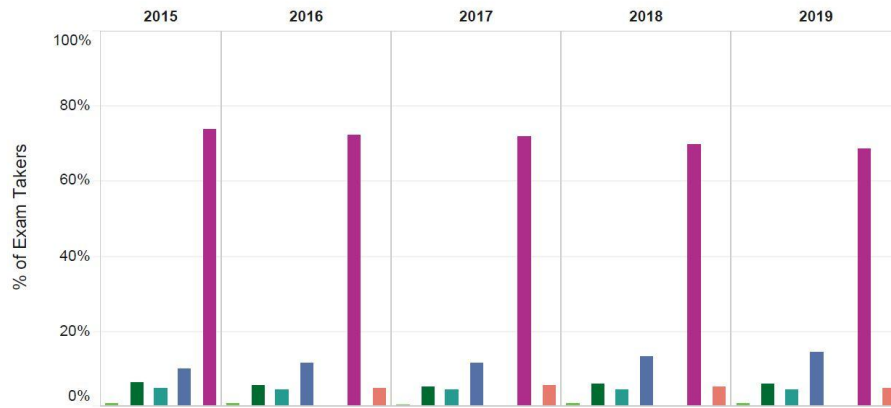


AP: Participation by Race/Ethnicity - Students Taking One or More Exam



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
American Indian	239	186	185	202	188
Asian	1,009	886	878	955	978
Black	3,439	3,371	3,624	3,390	3,334
Hispanic or Latino	2,309	2,969	3,274	3,436	3,662
Pacific Islander	45	41	67	74	74
White	17,372	17,382	17,384	16,814	16,665
Two or more races		1,279	1,340	1,285	1,271
Other	389	9	2	0	0
No Response	1,021	439	432	650	512
Overall	25,778	26,566	27,160	26,799	26,684

AP Performance by Race/Ethnicity - Students with Scores of 3, 4 or 5



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
American Indian	80	59	46	60	57
Asian	554	491	491	578	608
Black	409	388	441	417	451
Hispanic or Latino	877	1,037	1,104	1,289	1,441
Pacific Islander	13	8	8	8	10
White	6,413	6,605	6,919	6,814	6,953
Two or more races		443	521	495	476
Other	130	5	0	0	0
No Response	234	89	102	122	115
Overall	8,697	9,130	9,632	9,783	10,111

Note: Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the collection and reporting of race/ethnicity was updated. Please use caution when making comparisons between these new race/ethnicity data and data from prior years. See notes page for details.

ARKANSAS ADVANCED INITIATIVE for MATH and SCIENCE (AR AIMS) AP Training and Incentive Program

Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math and Science, Inc. is an affiliate of the National Math and Science Initiative. The program invites schools to apply for participation in the program to strengthen the teaching of AP® mathematics, science, and English courses and to build enrollment and increase the number of students taking and earning qualifying scores on AP® exams in these subjects.

2018-19 Summary in Brief

- To date, 15 schools were added for Cohort 11: Bauxite, Beebe, Booneville, Brinkley, Fayetteville, Newport, North Little Rock High, North Little Rock COE, North Little Rock 7-8, North Little Rock 6th, Greene County Tech, Rose Bud, Sheridan, South Side Bee Branch, and Vilonia,
- This year there are 50 schools in Arkansas receiving “pay-for-service” in Active Status.
- The 13 new Active Status Schools, the 35 returning Active Status schools and the remaining 38 “still participating” Maintenance Status schools total 83 AR AIMS partners across the state---or 35% of high schools offering AP classes
- Online prep session programs in MSE AP and PAP content areas continued. All of the prep sessions are archived on the AR AIMS website and available for use. AR AIMS offers both live lessons and recorded and both hour long and mini-focus lessons for students and teachers.
- During the 2018-19 school year, AR AIMS trained over 621 teachers across the state.
- AR AIMS conducted the 5th year of one-week Summer Boot Camp on the UA Little Rock campus, the 4th year in UA-Fayetteville and the 2nd at ASU. Over 250 students across the state were served.
 - With the new Walton grant funding, AR AIMS is adding 2 Saturday AP/PAP PREP sessions in Fayetteville and will create that opportunity for Delta schools as well.
 - There will be 5 days for students held at the Great Rivers Cooperative in Helena-West Helena
- In 2018-19, AR AIMS piloted a Middle School Partnership Option for 2 Feeder Middle Schools. This year 2 more schools will be added. 23,395 students took AP Exams in EMS in AR in 2019. **48.5%(11344)** of those exams were taken by students at participating AR AIMS Schools.
- For all students in AR, 7339 students earned qualifying scores in EMS, and **55% (4067)** of those scores were earned at participating AR AIMS schools.
- In the 58 participating AR AIMS schools, 35.6% of students earned qualifying scores on EMS AP Exams. In non AIMS Schools, 27.2 % of students earned qualifying scores.
- The 7 cohort 5 schools have seen a 170% increase in Qualifying Scores in 6 years in the program.
- The 8 schools in cohort 6 have seen a 90% increase in the percent of students with qualifying scores in 5 years in the program.
- The 5 cohort 7 schools have seen a 52% increase in the percent of qualifying scores in 4 years in the program.
- The 7 schools in cohort 8 have seen a 62% increase in the number of qualifying scores in 3 years in the program.
- The 10 schools in cohort 9 have seen a 31% increase in the percent of qualifying scores in 2 years in the program.
- The 6 schools in cohort 10 have seen a 34% increase in the number of qualifying scores after only 1 year.

Appendix F

LEAD HIGHER INITIATIVE - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SCHOOLS

The Lead Higher Initiative, started by the nonprofit organization Equal Opportunity Schools, seeks to enable secondary schools to fully reflect their diversity at the highest academic levels and elevate our national conversation about low-income students and students of color beyond achieving proficiency to academic excellence.

Lead Higher began working with the Bentonville and Jonesboro school districts in the Fall of 2017. The Searcy School District was added in the Fall of 2018 and the Fayetteville School District began working with the initiative in the 2019-2020 school year. Each participating school received \$15,000 from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to assist with supporting the goals of the initiative.

The work with Lead Higher includes:

- surveying high school students and teachers
- aggregation of data for student schedules, course selections, demographics and survey answers as well as teacher surveys and recommendations
- teaching staff to analyze data and recruit students to enroll in more advanced courses
- on-site visits by Equal Opportunity Schools representatives to provide professional development to administrators and teachers
- sharing with other Arkansas schools the data processes, experience, and philosophies involved in “closing the opportunity gap”

Appendix G

INTERVENTION BLOCK GRANTS

The Office of Gifted & Talented and Advanced Placement managed the five Intervention Block Grants that support programs that involve many identified gifted and talented (GT) students in the state. The programs include Destination Imagination, Creativity in Arkansas, the State Science Fair, Arkansas History Day, and the Arkansas Governor’s Quiz Bowl Association.

Appendix H

DUKE TALENT IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM (TIP)

The 38th Annual 7th Grade Talent Search sponsored by Duke University in Durham, North Carolina recognized students with high mathematical, verbal, or general intellectual ability from a 16-state geographic region. Seventh graders take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and the ACT assessment. Arkansas students meeting at least one of the following criteria are invited to a State Recognition Ceremony:

ACT	ACT English	≥ 22	ACT Math	≥ 22
	ACT Reading	≥ 23	ACT Science	≥ 22
SAT	SAT Math	≥ 540		
	SAT Evidence Based Reading and Writing > 550			

The following scores qualify a student for recognition at the Grand Recognition Ceremony at Duke University:

ACT	ACT English	≥ 31	ACT Math	≥ 29
	ACT Reading	≥ 31	ACT Science Reasoning	≥ 28
SAT	SAT Math	≥ 680		
	SAT Evidence Based Reading and Writing > 670			

Students identified through the TIP talent search are encouraged to participate in various educational programs offered by local, state, and national agencies.

In Arkansas in the 2019 7th Grade Talent Search, 463 students out of the 1,311 who were tested qualified for the State Recognition Ceremony which was hosted by The Jodie Mahony Center for Gifted Education at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Appendix I

ACT 56 AWARDS

Act 56 authorized the Advisory Council to select annually up to three programs for gifted and talented students for recognition as outstanding programs. The Council may make awards of not more than \$3,000 to the recognized programs.

The award recipients for the 2019-2020 school year were the Hackett School District (for districts with fewer than 1,000 students); the Malvern School District (for districts of more than 1,000, but fewer than 3,000 students); and the Springdale School District (for school districts with more than 3000 students). The Rose Bud, Berryville, and Fayetteville School Districts received Honorable Mention in their categories.

Applications are made available through a Commissioner's Memo posted on the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education's Website. Criteria for recognition include ways in which a district's program has exceeded minimum standards, innovative and creative aspects of the program, and appropriateness of the program for the size of the district.

Blind screening is used, and districts are judged against those of similar size.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT FOR GIFTED & TALENTED IN SUMMER (AEGIS) PROGRAMS

2019 AEGIS Programs

Act 814 of the 2015 legislative session appropriated funds for Academic Enrichment for the Gifted and Talented in Summer Programs (AEGIS). AEGIS grants may be awarded to public or private agencies for the establishment of annual summer residential or day programs. Grants from the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education totaling \$150,000 funded seven programs to provide enrichment for Arkansas students in summer 2019.

PROGRAM DATA:

Four of the programs were one-week residential programs, with one offering two separate weeks. Of the three commuter programs, two were one week and one was two-weeks. Programs focused on subject areas of Social Studies, Science, and Theatre & Performing/Visual Arts. The various programs serve students in grades 7-12. The programs were free for the students who attended and varied from five to thirteen days in length. Each AEGIS program was visited on-site by OGTAP staff. All of the programs were enriching and students were engaged.

The following programs were approved for 2019:

- Kites, Cranes and Kimonos, DeltaARTS, June 3-7, 2019. For students entering grades 7-9 in the 2019-20 school year. West Memphis, AR
- C.A.V.E.S. (Creative Adventures and Valuable Experiences through Spelunking), June 9-15, 2019. For students entering grades 10-12 in the 2019-20 school year. Near Yellville, AR
- SummerStage, TheatreSquared Studio, June 15-22, 2019. For students entering grades 10-12 in the 2019-20 school year. Fayetteville, AR
- Biomedical Sciences Summer Institute, Camp I June 16-21, 2019 & Camp II July 14-19, 2019. For students entering 10th grade in the 2019-20 school year. ASMSA, Hot Springs, AR
- MT Stage: The Hamilton Experience, June 17-21, 2019. For students entering grades 8-10 in the 2019-20 school year. UALR, Little Rock, AR
- Arkansas and the World: Model United Nations, July 14-19, 2019. For students entering grades 10-12 in the 2019-20 school year. UCA, Conway, AR
- CLIQUE: An Original Pop-Rock Musical on Bullying, Community School of the Arts, July 15 -27, 2019. For students entering 8-10 grades in the 2019-20 school year. Fort Smith, AR

In light of COVID-19 and the guidance given from the Department of Health related to summer programs, AEGIS programs were cancelled for the summer of 2020.