



# Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) Program

## Huntington Union Free School District VAP Program

### Program Overview

Huntington's participation rates on Advanced Placement exams have increased over the past three years for a majority of our school population," states the district's grant proposal. "However, the increases have not materialized for our economically disadvantaged and racial minority students. It is our belief that with targeted interventions aimed at our middle school students and alternatives to in-class AP courses, we may be able to increase our participation rates for all of our students equally."

"We are on course to administer approximately 200 more Advanced Placement exams this coming May as compared to last May," Superintendent James W. Polansky said. "While we will continue encouraging students to challenge themselves by engaging in AP coursework, initiatives associated with this grant will also help to provide access to AP courses for students who find difficulty in scheduling them, as well as provide more comprehensive enrichment for students prior to their enrolling in AP courses. The goal is to provide enhanced opportunities for students to succeed in these courses and facilitate college readiness for all."

The goals of Huntington's VAP program are as follows:

- Utilize a virtual learning platform to increase the AP course participation of economically disadvantaged and racial minority students.
- Enhance the ability of students to participate in the VAP program through pre-AP learning activities tailored to meet their specific educational needs in the areas of reading, mathematics, English and science.
- Introduce students to online learning practices as early as sixth grade in order to foster their independence, initiative and drive to succeed.
- Integrate science, technology, engineering and math activities into the scope of the new program in order to increase student interest and opportunities for participation in online AP courses through the district's Odysseyware and/or Aventa Learning platform.
- Provide participating students with the tools deemed necessary, including hardware and mentors, "so they will have the greatest chance of success in the VAP program," according to a narrative of the proposal submitted for the state grant.

### Program Activities

To help facilitate the new initiative the district plans to introduce SpringBoard to students in grades 6-11 this spring through either an extended school day format or through the Saturday Academy.

"SpringBoard is the foundational component for the College Board's college readiness system, offering a proven Pre-AP program that increases participation and prepares a greater diversity of students for success in AP, college and beyond, without remediation," according to the College Board website. "Based on College Board standards for college success and aligned to the Common Core state

standards, SpringBoard offers the only integrated college readiness solution that includes a rigorous curriculum, formative assessments and sustainable professional development."

Huntington envisions assigning a mentor-teacher to each student taking an online course through the district's virtual AP program. Mentors would monitor student progress and needs through daily contact with those enrolled in online courses.

Mentor-teachers would also monitor the classroom activities and progress of students in the VAP program as well as serving as liaisons between students, guidance counselors and virtual instructors. Mentors would proctor examinations on school grounds and also collect student data as required by the State Education Department.

### **Program Contact**

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