



Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) Program

Nassau BOCES VAP Program

Program Overview

The proposed project is a Nassau BOCES-led Consortium that will support thirteen high needs school districts on Long Island to develop, conduct, and support virtual learning Advanced Placement® courses and a college-going culture through professional development and collaboration. Additionally, it will improve student access to virtual learning Advanced Placement courses through the purchasing of hardware, software, and courseware licenses to facilitate student access to online course material in school and outside of the school day. At the end of the proposed project, at least eight new online Advanced Placement courses will be added to the New York State Advanced Placement Repository by this consortium. Courses to be added are those not currently offered in the majority of the consortium districts, with several that are also not currently available in the National Repository of Online Courses (NROC). Further, the project will provide evidence-based counseling resources in all thirteen districts to improve student and parent knowledge of the educational requirements for success in Advanced Placement, postsecondary education and the 21st Century global economy and workforce.

Program Activities

The proposed project will extensively utilize training resources provided by The College Board in order to increase the number of Long Island High School teachers with expertise in teaching Advanced Placement courses and to deepen teacher content knowledge. Content of professional development activities include effective classroom, instructional and pedagogical strategies to improve student understanding of rigorous subject matter content.

Eight courses have been selected to be developed as blended/online courses based on several criteria. They all have multiple teachers that have been successful in helping their students attain Advanced Placement credit in higher proportions than national averages. This will allow already-successful teachers of the same face to face courses to collaborate with each other on the development of a blended course in the first year, followed by online courses in the second school year comprising the project period in Calculus BC, Italian, Music Theory and Studio Art. The proposed blended science courses including Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics B and Physics C will meet face to face for 90 minutes each week to comply with the College Board hands-on laboratory requirements. The remainder of the course will be offered fully online by September 2014.

The proposed project will purchase 20 courses from Apex as well as NROC online courses so that more students can enroll in AP without districts having to hire another teacher.

Nassau BOCES is currently in the process of embarking upon a fully funded project called “BO-TIE” that will connect each of the 56 school districts onto a single fiber optic network. Once completed, this effort will deliver, through technology, various cooperative approaches toward cost savings and increased functionality. More recently, this effort has focused upon four non-instructional shared services functions. One of the shared services that emerged as an ideal candidate for consolidation is Internet Services

since school districts and the Nassau County BOCES will share a common infrastructure in order to reduce expenditures and dramatically increase Internet bandwidth.

Nassau BOCES has begun dialogue with the local cable provider, Optimum LightPath, to explore the potential of extending their existing wireless service for this purpose. Unfortunately, their current network does not provide adequate coverage and the build out costs are projected at \$2.3 million to attain our goal of providing this service. It is with this challenge that we seek assistance.

The PSAT is currently used in ten of the thirteen school districts. However, fewer than 50 percent of students are tested in four of the ten districts and NONE of the districts administer the exam before 10th grade. The proposed project will administer the exam in 9th grade to 300 students in each district during each year of the proposed project, alerting guidance counselors earlier to the likely success of these students in advanced Regents and AP courses.

One consortium district noted that their students who enroll in AP courses do not sit for the exams because of the costly nature of the test. They did not even realize that the College Board and New York State permit fee waivers based on students' family incomes. As a result of communication facilitated through the grant writing process, the district will be testing all of their AP students.

The project will create eight selected teacher teams whereby two or more highly effective teachers of the same course collaborate to develop blended/online courses to place in the New York State Virtual AP Repository. A learning management system links teachers to their colleagues in the 13 consortium districts to share resources and best practices.

Repository

At the end of the proposed project, at least eight new online Advanced Placement courses will be added to the New York State Advanced Placement Repository by this consortium. It is noted that 20 teachers of eight face-to-face Advanced Placement courses will be selected to transfer course delivery to a blended format by September 2013, with full online courses expected to be added to the statewide repository by August 2014. Placement of newly developed courses in the New York State Advanced Placement Repository will disseminate the project widely throughout the state.

Professional Development

The proposed project will provide intensive professional development to teachers whose students are already extremely successful in attaining Advanced Placement credit. In fact, all teachers selected for project participation are those whose students attain AP credit at higher rates than College Board averages for their tests. Long Island BOCES professional developers will be able to turnkey train other Long Island teachers on how to convert face to face courses to blended and/or online learning environments. All 110 teachers of Advanced Placement courses and their approximately 2,400 students will benefit greatly from project activities. The project is expected to increase AP course participation through online course delivery by 20 percent by the end of the project.

Guidance counselors in every school district will also receive professional development to guide higher aspirations among students enrolled in the 13 consortium school districts through their attendance at College Board workshops and conferences.

All BOCES professional development staff will hold Masters Degrees in Educational Technology and have at least five years of experience working with teachers to successfully integrate technology into teaching and learning. Resumes are contained in the proposal appendix for professional developers.

Program Contact

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