



# Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) Program

## South Huntington School District VAP Program

### Program Overview

The South Huntington School District's Virtual Advanced Placement Program is a comprehensive initiative to increase AP access and success for low-income students attending Walt Whitman High School, the district's only high school, and those middle school students who will feed into the high school.

In selecting our targets for the Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) program, we identified courses that had a disproportionately low enrollment of disadvantaged students. One particular course/subject with a very low enrollment of disadvantaged students is AP World History. Currently only 9% of the students enrolled in the course are disadvantaged, well below our district-wide disadvantaged student population of 36%. AP United States History, while not quite as low, still has enrollment of 23% disadvantaged students. Thus, our goal in requesting the current funding is to increase enrollment of our disadvantaged students by at least 10% (to a total of 19%) in AP World History and AP United States History. In addition, we seek to create the necessary supports to achieve a target passing rate of 80% (consistent with our current district average of 82%) for disadvantaged students in both of these redesigned AP courses.

The SHSD proposed VAP program will improve the quality of existing high school AP classes through improved, technology-rich resources and expand participation of low-income students at the high school through virtual online and blended learning experiences. We will also build a stronger pipeline of "AP-ready" students through a rigorous summer institute for the middle (grades 7 & 8) and high school (grades 9 and 10) students.

### Program Activities

- The College Board will provide face-to-face workshop training to the high school AP teachers who will pilot the course.
- The high school will expand its activities to promote a college-going culture by hosting a series of College Ready and AP Awareness Nights in the spring, summer and fall. The purpose of the sessions will be to educate parents, community business partners, students and staff about the importance of, and benefits of, participation in advanced placement courses and internships as a component of college planning.
- The project will enhance student academic supports by expanding the district's summer school session through a 2-week (grade 7 – 10) pre-AP/AP institute.
- Teachers, administrators, and counselors who will work directly with the students participating in the newly added VAP courses will receive job-embedded AP and pre-AP professional development in social studies. Rigorous content sessions will be conducted by TEQ (Tequipment, Inc.) Instructional and Curriculum Technology Specialists using SAFARI Montage. The College Board's SpringBoard professional development and use of curriculum in English and mathematics will be used in the pre-AP institute to provide students with necessary skills to

succeed in pre-AP and AP courses. In addition, using the College Board curriculum will improve the grade 7 through 12 vertical alignment of the curriculum and develop teachers' capacity in designing curriculum to prepare students for success in rigorous courses. Although English and mathematics will not be initially offered as part of the online AP courses, the district is planning to expand the catalog of courses using the VAP model as more teachers are trained.

- Pre-AP and AP social studies teachers will receive mentoring from master AP teachers from around the country.

The middle school feeder program will introduce social studies students in the program to blended learning experiences, opportunities to be engaged in online learning, college and career workshops and a chance to participate in a pre-AP institute that will develop the skills necessary to succeed in college level classes.

A pre-AP/AP institute will be held for two weeks each summer in the South Huntington School District. One class each will be offered in grades 7-10 to provide targeted instruction. Students will also be provided with opportunities to learn how best to navigate online courses, research skills and critical reading and writing opportunities. Furthermore, the program will bring in guest speakers from colleges and universities to motivate and inform students about the importance of college and career readiness skills and how AP courses can help them to better prepare them for the college experience. The pre-AP and AP institute will use the College Board's College Readiness System's foundational course SpringBoard to prepare low-income students for participation in advanced placement courses. SpringBoard® is the College Board's official pre-AP curriculum for middle and high schools. The program will be available to middle school students and high school students in grades 9 and 10.

The South Huntington High School Virtual Advanced Placement (VAP) program and resources acquired for use by teachers and students in the program will make learning materials available to the targeted population throughout the day, evenings, weekends, and summer and holiday school recess periods. Since it is an online system of learning, it can be accessed through mobile technologies (iPads/iPhones, Android devices, and laptops) and utilized by participants, irrespective of their location (home, school, and even on the school bus).

## **Professional Development**

Professional development includes providing AP teachers with a TEQ assigned classroom embedded Instructional Technology Specialist and Curriculum Specialist. Teachers will also attend the College Board workshop and SpringBoard training.

Teachers will participate in professional development provided by the College Board and TEQ to support them in the design and development of the content and instructional methodologies to be included in the virtual online learning courses. As a result of the program, low-income students will have access to virtual learning Advanced Placement courses and teachers will be actively involved in the selection and development of advanced learning infrastructures (hardware, software, courseware, licenses, administering tests, etc.).

## **Program Contact**

Jared T. Bloom, Ph.D., Supervisor of Assessment & Technology, [jbloom@shufsd.org](mailto:jbloom@shufsd.org)