



Curriculum Committee Report  
Spring 2011

Committee Members

Krista Badani- Channing Elementary School

Ann Johnson – Larkin High School

Pat Kressin – Kimball Middle School

Melissa Lane – Larkin High School – co-chair

Mary Van Slyck – Canton Middle School – co-chair

Julie Winterhalder – Bartlett Elementary School

School District U-46 Liaison

Greg Walker - Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education

## Curriculum Report 2011

The committee's work this year included some follow up to last year's report and the beginnings of learning about grading systems and how they work at the middle and high school level. Greg Walker, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education, has been very helpful in bringing the group up to date on the status of AP offerings in the 2010-2011 school year and introducing us to the kind of new student information system that U-46 is considering. In fact, Infinite Campus was approved by the Board of Education on March 21, and will be used for scheduling in the spring of 2012.

In January, two of our members attended the first meeting of the middle and high school district committee that is looking at how students are graded and what is the purpose and meaning of grades. The district is basing their work on a book called "*Elements of Grading*" by Douglas Reeves. Mr. Walker got all of the committee members the books to read and the Curriculum Committee is being represented on the district grading systems committee by Melissa Lane and Pat Kressin.

This excerpt from "Elements of Grading" (page 1) highlights some key points being discussed.

Whether you are a teacher or administrator, parent or student, policymaker or academic researcher, there are four essential questions to answer on the subject of grading:

1. How can we make grading systems accurate? What we ascribe to a student must be not only a matter of judgment but the consequence of evidence and reason.
2. How can we make grading systems fair? 'What we describe as proficient performance must truly be a function of performance, and not gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.
3. How can we make grading systems specific? Telling a student, he or she is "average" or a "C" does little to help students, parents, and teachers collaborate for improved learning. Students must receive detailed information on their performance so that they use the feedback to improve.
4. How can we make grading systems timely? Even if grades are accurate, fair, and specific, students cannot use that feedback to improve performance unless the grades are provided in a timely manner. In this book, we will consider grading practices that meet all of these criteria, and provide practical ways for teachers to save time while providing effective feedback for students.

**Table 1.1: Elements of Effective Feedback**

<b>Elements of Effective Feedback</b>	<b>Techniques for Effective Feedback</b>
<b>Accurate</b>	Different observers, including other teachers, student peers, and the students themselves, understand the criteria used by the teacher to provide feedback.  Teachers do not just make factually accurate statements to students; they ask students questions.
<b>Fair</b>	Feedback is not influenced by the gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or other characteristics of the students.  Teachers do not seek to compensate for biases in other tests by displaying reverse bias or awarding higher grades for lower performances by disadvantaged students.
<b>Specific</b>	Boundaries are distinguished from judgment calls.  Feedback on boundaries is consistent, with variations in expressions of student performance expected within those boundaries.
<b>Timely</b>	Feedback is delivered incrementally, at precisely the time when students can use it.

(page 30 Elements of Grading, Doug Reeves, 2011)

Grading systems are the focus of the discussions and every person in the group had a different take on what grading system fulfills these goals. That every teacher in attendance saw grading in a different light was the first important thing we have learned. We have called this a study about grading systems and it is clear that right now there is no consistent system. For example, does an "A" from Teacher #1 mean the same thing as an "A" from Teacher #2 within the same high school? Taken one step further does an "A" at School X mean the same thing as an "A" at School Y, or the same thing as an "A" in a different school district? There are many teachers doing whatever their best judgment and prior experience dictates. This may or may not be based on best practice. That is not a system. We are glad the district is working toward a system that meets the criteria in the *"Elements of Grading"*.

Referring back to the page one insert shown above, Effective Feedback consists of four major points. Feed back is the key word here. In the book, research shows that there are many factors outside the school and the teachers' control. It is easy to point at those factors such as socioeconomic status or parental involvement as things that are the issue in student success, but schools will never be able to control those factors. There is one factor schools do control that is shown to count more towards academic success than those outside factors and that is FEEDBACK. Grades are feedback, comments written on a term paper are feedback, a smile and a metaphorical pat on the back are feedback.

In sports we understand feedback. You win. You lose. The coach chews you out. You do extra runs up the hill. It is all very clear. In academic settings feedback is not so clear. Whether you won or lost may be in the data that shows up next year. Our students want to know tomorrow, if not today, how they did on the test? What did they learn? What more do they need to know?

As parents and CAC members, we are pleased to be a part of the discussion on feedback for students. This aligns with family and community engagement. Appropriate feedback can power student achievement.

Some aspects of feedback at the District level are the [Destination 2015](http://www.u-46.org/spps/sitepage.cfm?catid=340) benchmarks. (<http://www.u-46.org/spps/sitepage.cfm?catid=340>)

Using the data dashboard, a new data analysis tool available to School District U-46, (<http://www.u-46.org/cnt/docs/DataDashBOEoverview.pdf>) , data will be available at a district, school, classroom, and student level.

### RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that information regarding individual students be given to parents with the report card about how their child is progressing toward Destination 2015 goals. Students and parents should receive information about whether their students are approaching, meeting, or exceeding Destination 2015 benchmarks. Since various standardized assessments occur throughout the year, the progress towards benchmarks should be included in whichever report card is closest in time to the assessment results. Schools should not have a picture of how a child is doing in readiness that is not shared with the parents of that child. We are partners in wanting a successful adulthood for each student.

Last year in our report, we expressed a strong interest in how Advanced Placement classes were doing. Greg Walker provided us with an excellent overview. His material is found in Appendix A at the close of this report.

The committee expects to continue meeting with the middle and high school grading committee and looks forward to helping put a truly successful feedback/ grading system in place.

# CAC Curriculum Committee

2010 Update on AP

## A Rigorous Curriculum is the Best Solution to help All Students Achieve and prepare for College Success

All students who are taught rigorous high school curriculum are more likely to graduate from college.

- The rigor of a high school curriculum is the greatest predictor of degree completion.
- Math courses beyond Algebra 2 more than doubles the odds for a bachelor's degree.
- African American and Latino students' college degree completion rates are more positively affected than any other group by rigor of high school curriculum.

### **FACT**

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**The rigor of the curriculum** is the most significant predictor of academic success and post secondary education completion.

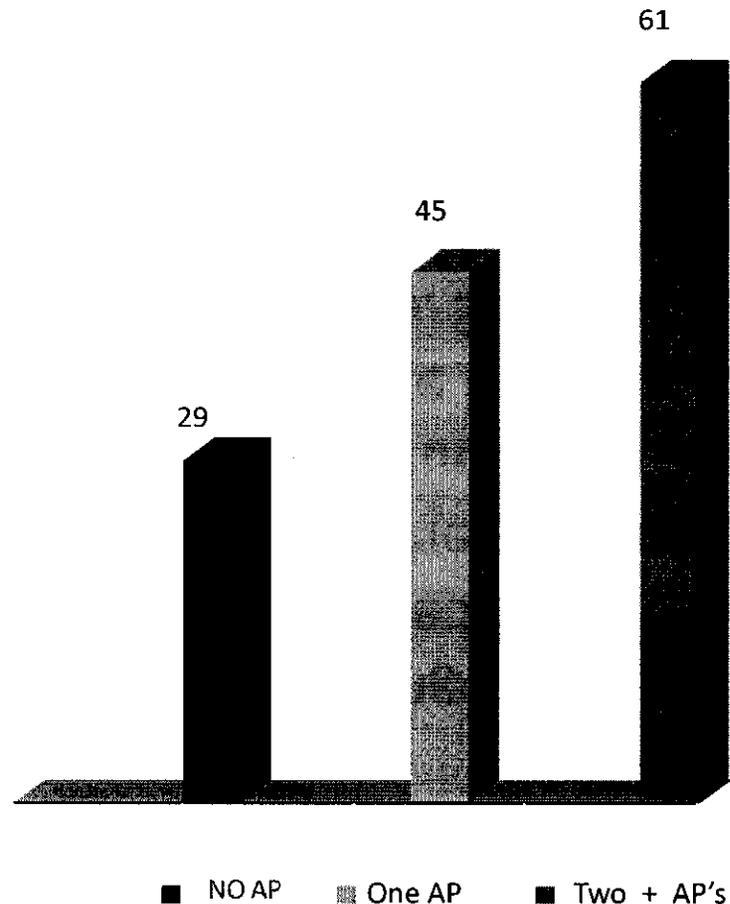
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Source: Adelman, Clifford. (2006). "The Toolbox Revisited – Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College." Washington, DC: US Department of Education.

# AP and College Success™

Students who take AP courses and exams are much more likely than their peers to complete a bachelor's degree in four years or less.

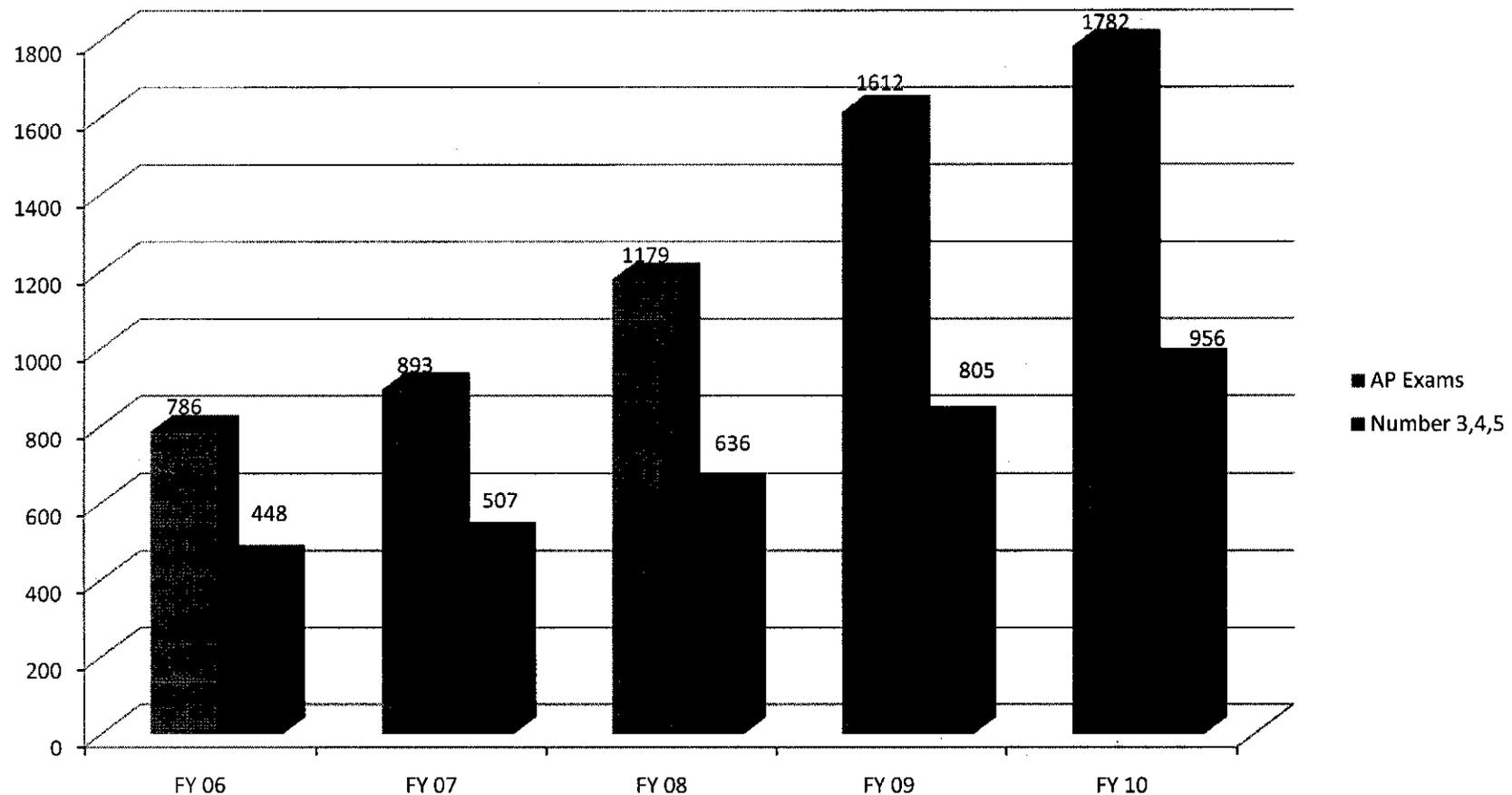
**Source:** Camara, Wayne (2003). College Persistence, Graduation, and Remediation. *College Board Research Notes (RN-19)*. New York, NY: College Board.



# College Board's AP Equity Policy Statement:

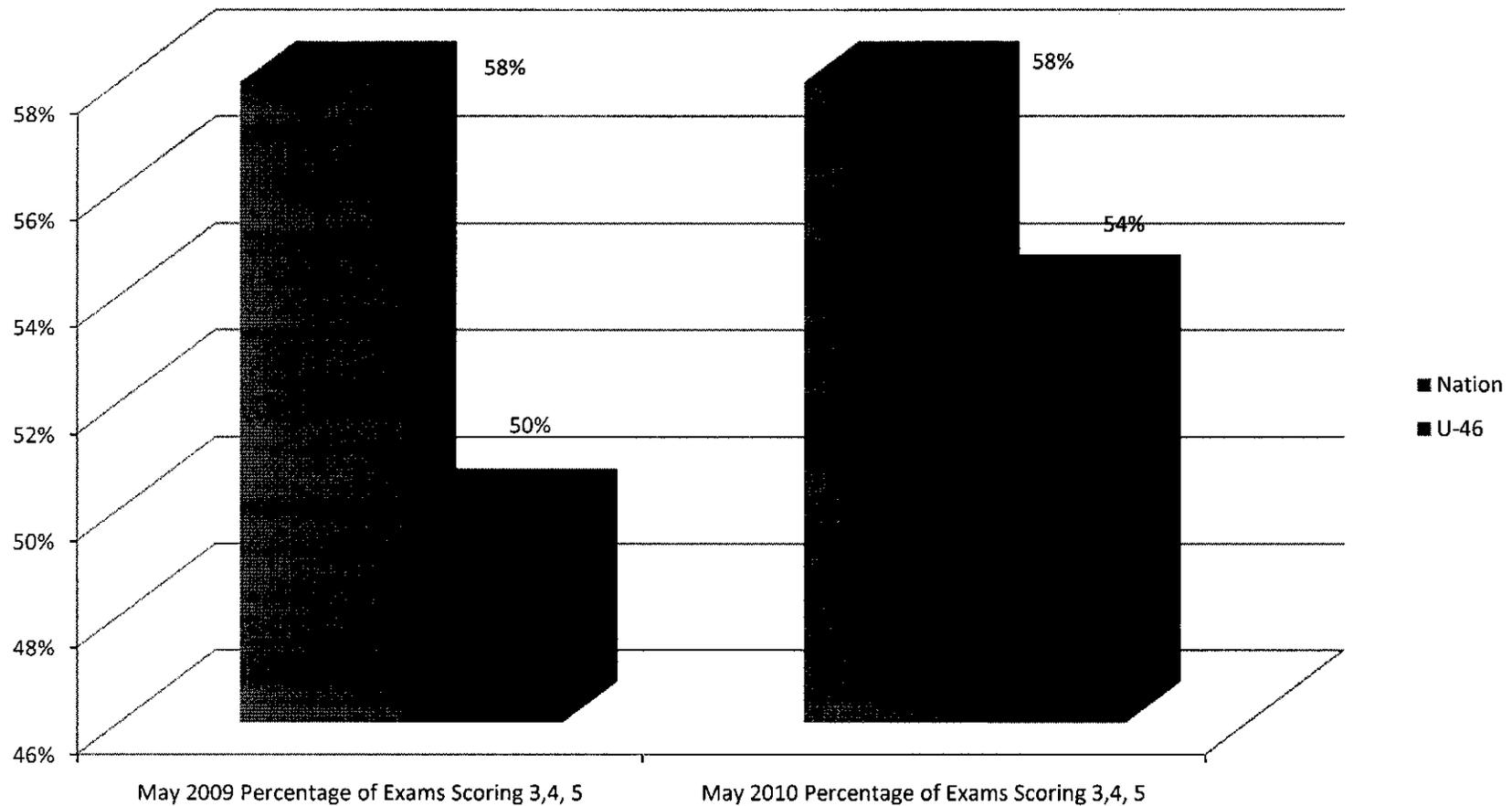
“All students who are willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be considered for admission to AP courses. The Board encourages the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP courses for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the AP Program. Schools should make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population.”

# Number of Examinations and the Number of AP Examination with Grades of 3,4,5

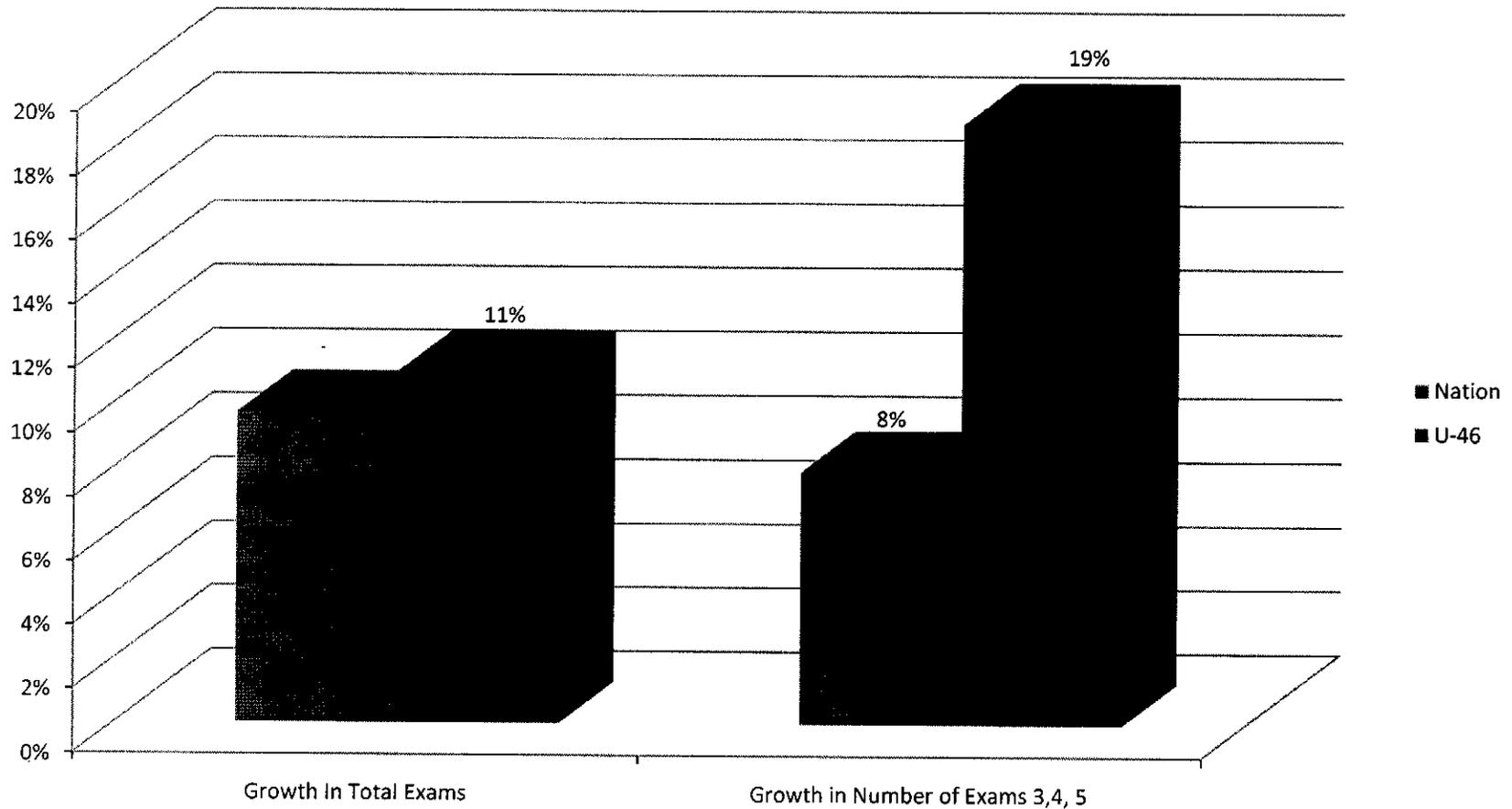


34 -- in  
Dec 2015

# Percentage of AP Exams Scoring 3-5 May 2009 to May 2010



# AP Growth 2009 to 2010



**AP Course Matrix  
2010 - 2011**

AP Course	Berrien	Elgin	Franklin	South Elgin	Stromboli
Art History		x	x		
Biology	x	x	x	x	x
Calculus AB	x		x	x	
Calculus BC	x				
Chemistry	x	x		x	
Chinese Language and Culture					
Computer Science A					
Macroeconomics					
Microeconomics					
English Language	x	x	x	x	x
English Literature	x	x	x	x	x
Environmental Science	x	x		x	x
European History	x	x	x	x	x
French Language					
German Language					
Comp Government & Politics					x
U.S. Government & Politics	x		x		
Human Geography					
Japanese Language and Culture					x
Latin: Vergil					
Music Theory					
Physics B					
Physics C	x			x	
Psychology	x	x	x	x	x
Spanish Language			x		x
Spanish Literature					
Statistics	x	x		x	x
Studio Art					
U.S. Gov. Politics		x		x	
U.S. History	x	x	x	x	x
World History	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Total AP Offerings</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>

# Behind the Numbers

School	Examinations	Scores Below	Percentage
BHS	481	290	60%
EHS	390	268	69%
LHS	171	81	47%
SEHS	416	183	44%
SHS	318	130	41%
<b>District</b>	<b>1776</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>54%</b>

# Behind the Numbers

Top Exams in U-46			
Exam	Number of Exams	Number of 3-5	Percentage of 3-5
English Language & Composition	323	208	64%
AP US History	314	108	34%
World History	244	137	56%
English Literature & Composition	163	97	60%





# Instructional Planning Report - Aggregated for Districts (2010)

Print / Download Options

Data Updated Nov 3, 2010. Report Run Nov 9, 2010

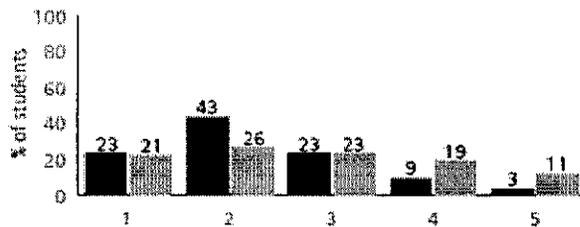
This subject-specific report compares your students' performance on specific topics in this AP Exam with the performance of all students on these same topics, helping teachers target areas for increased attention and focus in the curriculum. Other uses of the report, such as teacher evaluation or institutional ranking, are not warranted. Students who tested on late-testing dates are not included in this report.

## Illinois School District U-46 (D104598) - United States History

**Your Group** Total Students: 315

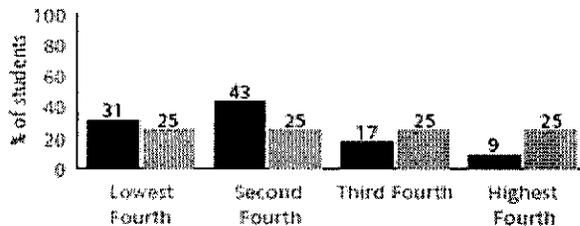
**Global** Total Students: 378,042

### Overall Score Distributions



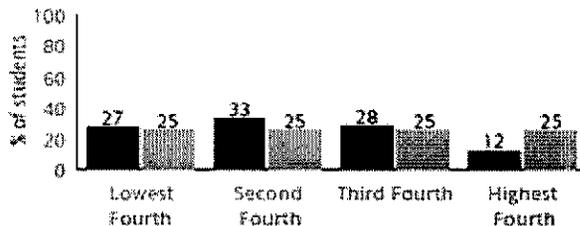
Overall Score Distributions	1	2	3	4	5
Number of Students in Your Group	72	135	72	28	8
% Students in Your Group	22.9	42.9	22.9	8.9	2.5
% Students Globally	21.4	25.9	22.9	18.8	11.0

### Multiple-Choice Section



Multiple-Choice Section	Lowest Fourth	Second Fourth	Third Fourth	Highest Fourth
Number of Students in Your Group	97	137	54	27
% Students in Your Group	30.8	43.5	17.1	8.6
% Students Globally	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0

### Free-Response Section



Free-Response Section	Lowest Fourth	Second Fourth	Third Fourth	Highest Fourth
Number of Students in Your Group	86	104	88	37
% Students in Your Group	27.3	33.0	27.9	11.7
% Students Globally	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0

**Interpreting this report** These charts compare your students with the global population on the multiple-choice and free-response sections of this exam. The total population of students who took this exam (global group) is evenly divided into fourths, based on their performance on the section. These fourths do NOT correspond with the final AP score of 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. The percentages of your students that fall into each fourth are represented by the blue bars. For example, the right-most blue bar shows the percentage of your students who fall into the highest fourth. If your students' score distribution is comparable to the global population, then your students will group evenly (approximately) across the fourths. Grouping of your students in the higher fourths indicates higher performance than the total population; grouping of students in the lower fourths indicates performance below the total population.

# AP<sup>®</sup> Instructional Planning Report - Aggregated for Districts (2010)

Print / Download Options

Data Updated Nov 3, 2010. Report Run Nov 9, 2010

Illinois School District U-46 (D104598) - United States History

## Performance on Multiple-Choice Section (Maximum Possible Score = 90)

Content Area	Number of Questions	Global Mean	Group Mean	Number of Students in Your Group			
				Lowest Fourth	Second Fourth	Third Fourth	Highest Fourth
PRE 1865	34	17.1	14.8	102	113	66	34
POST 1865	46	19.0	15.1	113	120	53	29
COLONIAL TO 1789	15	7.1	5.9	106	116	58	35
1789 TO 1865	19	10.0	8.8	109	88	87	31
1865 TO 1914	17	7.2	5.5	148	80	61	26
1914 TO PRESENT	29	11.8	9.7	101	119	62	33
POLITICAL	28	11.8	9.9	102	104	85	24
ECONOMIC/SOCIAL	32	14.9	12.5	118	112	62	23
DIPLOMATIC/CULTURAL	19	8.6	6.8	124	100	67	24
<b>Multiple-Choice Summary</b>		<b>40.6</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>27</b>

## Performance on Free-Response Section (Maximum Possible Score = 90)

Question/Problem	Max Possible Score	Global Mean	Group Mean	Number of Students in Your Group			
				Lowest Fourth	Second Fourth	Third Fourth	Highest Fourth
PURITANS (DBQ)	9	3.4	3.2	81	126	76	32
STANDARD ESSAY GROUP I	9	3.0	2.7	59	101	123	32
REVOLUTIONARY WAR				17	25	26	19
COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR				56	87	51	34
STANDARD ESSAY GROUP II	9	3.0	2.9	34	104	137	40
WOMEN IN PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT				20	54	50	25
POST-WAR POPULATION MOVEMENTS				64	45	24	33
<b>Free-Response Summary</b>		<b>32.1</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>37</b>

## Indicates that the distribution is not displayed because more than half of the total AP global group earned the same score.

### Interpreting this report

The following columns appear in each table: Number of Questions (Multiple Choice table only), Max Possible (Free Response table only), Global Mean and Group Mean. The Global Mean column provides all AP students' average scores on specific content areas; the Group Mean column provides this information for your students. The right side of each table, Number of Students in Group, shows the number of your students that fell into the fourths. Fourth's are derived from dividing the total student population equally into four parts based on their performance in each content area. The numbers in the Number of Questions column for the multiple-choice content areas are simply the maximum possible scores.

Some AP Exams have free-response questions that allow students to choose between topics; mean scores are not provided for those questions/problems of the exam. This is because the populations of AP students choosing each question when choice is permitted can be quite different.

# AP Credit Policy

- If a college or university has provided the College Board with a link to their credit policy it would be found at the website below.
- If a college or university has not provided this information a person would need search or contact the institution directly.
- AP Credit Policy Website:  
<http://collegesearch.collegeboard.com/apcreditpolicy/index.jsp>