

Goal 2: Increase the Academic Achievement of All High School Students

Overview

Far too many of the nation's children attend schools that year after year fail to provide students with a quality education. National attention and support focused on these persistently low-achieving schools in each state—the bottom 5 percent of all schools or approximately 5,000 schools nationwide—can help ensure students are getting the education they deserve. These schools, which are in urban, rural, and suburban communities, have extremely low achievement rates, have shown no improvement over multiple years, and have unacceptably low graduation rates.

Across the country almost half of students of color drop out of school. For example, there are as many as 2,000 high schools, about 12 percent nationally, where fewer than 60 percent of entering freshmen actually graduate.

Using the *FY 2007–2012 Strategic Plan* data as collected and reported from FY 2007 through FY 2010, the data show that increasing numbers of students are participating in Advanced Placement classes, which is one measure of efforts to encourage students to reach higher levels of attainment and be ready for college. However, this represents just one slice of a big issue. Incremental reforms have failed to turn around the nation's lowest-achieving schools. Among schools that were in restructuring status in 2004–05, only 19 percent had moved out of restructuring status by 2006–07.

Disparities in school discipline are equally as stark. For example, African-American students with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be expelled or suspended as are their White counterparts. And these inequalities extend to higher education, with gaps in college participation by ethnic groups.

Emerging research on turnaround successes suggests that low-achieving schools that dramatically improve student results rely on common strategies, including building a positive culture of high expectations; ensuring strong leadership and staff have the commitment and skills to increase student achievement; supporting effective instructional teams through focused and intensive professional development; strengthening the instructional program, extending learning time, and engaging families and communities; and changing governance to provide flexibility for needed reforms.

The Department seeks to provide support to enhance education efforts that:

- In early education, improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through third grade;
- enhance the education system's ability to continually improve through better and more widespread use of data systems, research and evaluation, transparency, innovation, and technology;
- ensure effective educational opportunities for all students regardless of race, national origin, sex, disability, and socioeconomic status; and
- increase competence in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics for all to prepare the next generation of scientists, technicians, and engineers.

Goal 2: Details

NOTE: Goal 2 Measures were discontinued in FY 2010. Programs supporting this goal were either not funded or have shown consistent progress.

Measures for Objective 2.1: Increase the proportion of high school students taking a rigorous curriculum

	Results							
	FY 2007		FY 2008		FY 2009		FY 2010	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
2.1.A. Percentage of Low-Income Students Who Qualify for Academic Competitiveness Grants ¹	*	35	42	40	49	41	Discontinued	
2.1.B. Number of Advanced Placement Classes Available Nationwide	*	Not Collected	N/A	Not Collected	N/A	Not Collected	Discontinued	
Number of Advanced Placement Tests Taken by Public School Students ^{**2}								
2.1.C. Total	1,953,000	2,133,594	2,168,000	2,321,311	2,406,000	2,495,252	Discontinued	
2.1.D. Low-Income	230,352	286,028	328,932	308,072	378,272	387,986	Discontinued	
2.1.E. Minorities (Black, Hispanic, Native American) [†]	376,000	413,847	421,000	471,898	544,716	538,249	Discontinued	
2.1.F. Number of Teachers Trained Through Advanced Placement Incentive Grants to Teach Advanced Placement Classes	*	Not Collected	N/A	Not Collected	N/A	Not Collected	Discontinued	

N/A: No Data Available. PY = Prior Year.

* New measure in 2007. The 2007 actual served as the baseline.

** New measure in 2005. The 2005 actual served as the baseline.

† Advanced Placement measures use the definitional term Black.

Sources:

¹ Pell Grant End of Year Report; Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)/National SMART Grant Programs End of Year Report; Pell Grant Merged Applicant and Recipient File.

² The College Board, Freeze File Report. Data are reported annually.

Measure 2.1.A.: Percentage of Low-Income Students Who Qualify for Academic Competitiveness Grants

Analysis of Progress: The FY 2009 target was not met. The percentage of low income students qualifying for Academic Competitiveness Grants (ACGs) remained about the same in 2008–09 as in 2007–08.

Data Quality and Timeliness: The applicant data are from the student applications processed by the central processing system; recipient information is from the common origination and disbursement system.

Target Context: The target for 2009 was not met. Targets were developed as follows: the numerator was determined through a review of Financial Student Aid records and the denominator was developed from high school graduation records for the 2004–05 and 2005–06 school years, with the estimates narrowed for low-income students by use of the 2003–04 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study and state estimates of the proportion of students taking rigorous curricula. The target is a challenging goal for the program—a 20 percent increase annually in the proportion of qualified students given ACG grants, potentially leading to doubling the proportion of students by FY 2011.

Report Explanation: The measure calculates the percentage of Pell Grant recipients determined to be eligible for ACGs who actually receive the grants in the current year. The measure for 2009 considered Pell Grant recipients as eligible for ACGs who were (1) United States citizens; (2) first- and second-year undergraduate students; (3) less than 21.5 years of age; (4) enrolled on a full-time basis; and (5) attending two- and four-year postsecondary institutions.

This number of ACG-eligible Pell Grant recipients was then compared to the number of actual ACG recipients in 2009. Specifically, 438,491 ACG recipients represented 41 percent of 1,068,245 estimated ACG-eligible Pell Grant recipients.

The program is scheduled to close in FY 2011. In addition, the data for FY 2008 was recalculated using this same methodology, resulting in a correction to previously reported data for 2008. This recalculation was performed because it was determined that the currently used data sources are more accurate data sources than the sources for last year's data.

Additional Information: The program's Web site can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/ac-smart.html>.

Measure 2.1.B.: Number of Advanced Placement (AP) Classes Available Nationwide

Analysis of Progress: Data for this measure were not collected for FY 2007, FY 2008, or FY 2009. The measure indicates the number of AP classes available nationwide, for which no calculation is possible in that individual classes are not identified for each school participating in the AP program.

Data Quality and Timeliness: The Ledger of Authorized Advanced Placement Courses was initiated in 2007 and tracks only the number of courses offered, not the number of classes.

Measures 2.1.C., 2.1.D., and 2.1.E.: Number of Advanced Placement Tests Taken by Public School Students (Total, Low-Income, and Minorities)

Analysis of Progress: FY 2009 targets for 2.1.C and 2.1.D were exceeded. The target for 2.1.E was not met. Targets were originally established by the Department's program office and in the *FY 2007–2012 Strategic Plan*. Data are supplied by the College Board. The Department exceeded its targets for FY 2008 and FY 2009 for the total number of AP tests taken by public school students. It did not meet its target for low-income students for FY 2008, but did exceed it for FY 2009. For minority students, the Department exceeded its target for FY 2008, but did not meet the target for FY 2009. The Department continues to see growth in the overall numbers of AP courses and tests taken by public school students, especially low-income and minority students. Low-income is defined as those students who meet the requirements for free or reduced-price lunches.

Data Quality and Timeliness: Data are reported annually. Data are analyzed by the College Board and by the Department. Baseline data were used to set future targets.

Measure 2.1.F.: Number of Teachers Trained Through Advanced Placement Incentive Grants to Teach Advanced Placement Classes

Analysis of Progress: No data have been collected for this measure.

Data Quality and Timeliness: Originally, these data were not collected because of a delay in proposed rulemaking. Funds were not appropriated for the Advanced Placement Incentive program as authorized by the *America COMPETES Act*.

Measures for Objective 2.2: Promote advanced proficiency in mathematics and science for all students

	Results							
	FY 2007		FY 2008		FY 2009		FY 2010	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Number of Advanced Placement Tests in Mathematics and Science Taken Nationwide by Public School Students: ¹								
2.2.A. Total	631,000	644,550	681,000	692,210	736,000	734,425	Discontinued	
2.2.B. Low-Income	65,000	66,337	70,000	73,710	76,000	91,927	Discontinued	
2.2.C. Minorities (Black, Hispanic, Native American)*	80,000	86,061	86,000	98,718	94,171	111,532	Discontinued	
2.2.D. Number of Teachers Trained Through Advanced Placement Incentive Grants to Teach Advanced Placement Classes in Mathematics and Science	Estab. BL	Not Collected	N/A	Not Collected	N/A	Not Collected	Discontinued	

BL = Baseline. PY = Prior Year. N/A = No Data Available.

*Advanced Placement measures use the definitional term Black.

Sources:

¹The College Board, Freeze File Report. Data are reported annually.

Measures 2.2.A., 2.2.B., and 2.2.C.: Number of Advanced Placement Tests in Mathematics and Science Taken Nationwide by Public School Students (Total, Low-Income, and Minorities)

Analysis of Progress: FY 2009 targets for 2.2.B and 2.2.C were exceeded. The FY 2009 target for 2.2.A was not met, but progress was shown. Targets are established by the program office and by the Department’s *FY 2007–2012 Strategic Plan*. The Department exceeded its 2008 target for the total number of AP tests in mathematics and science taken by public school students. For low-income students, the Department exceeded its targets for FY 2008 and FY 2009. For minority students, it exceeded its FY 2008 and FY 2009 targets. The number of AP tests in mathematics and science taken nationwide continues to increase, especially for low-income students and minority students. Low-income students are defined as those students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

Data Quality and Timeliness: Data are reported annually.

Measure 2.2.D.: Number of Teachers Trained Through Advanced Placement Incentive Grants to Teach Advanced Placement Classes in Mathematics and Science

Analysis of Progress: Data on this measure were not collected.

Data Quality and Timeliness: Data for this measure were not collected because there were no funds appropriated for the Advanced Placement Incentive program authorized under the *America COMPETES Act*.

Measure for Objective 2.3: Increase proficiency in critical foreign languages

	Results							
	FY 2007		FY 2008		FY 2009		FY 2010	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
2.3.A. Combined Total of Advanced Placement ¹ and International Baccalaureate ² Tests in Critical Foreign Languages Passed by Public School Students	Estab. BL	3,557	4,091	4,033	4,638	4,642	Discontinued	

BL = Baseline.

Sources:

¹The College Board, Freeze File Report. Data are reported annually.

²International Baccalaureate North America, Examination Review and Data Summary. Data are reported annually.

Measure 2.3.A.: Increase Proficiency in Critical Foreign Languages

Analysis of Progress: The target for FY 2008 was not met, but the target for FY 2009 was exceeded.

Data Quality and Timeliness: Data are for critical foreign language examinations administered by the College Board. Data from the International Baccalaureate Organization are not available in FY 2008 or FY 2009.