

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY
INFORMATIONAL REPORT PRESENTATION ON**

**ADVANCED PLACEMENT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES FOR REGULAR
STATUS**

June 24, 2024

Background Information

In SY22-23, College Board piloted AP African American Studies (APAA) in 60 schools across the United States as part of a planned two-year pilot. They expanded their pilot in SY23-24 to over seven hundred schools nationwide. Included in this second year of pilot were three Harford County Public Schools high schools, Aberdeen High School, Bel Air High School, and Joppatowne High School. Participation in this pilot program was approved for pilot by the HCPS General Curriculum Committee on December 15, 2022, for Joppatowne High School and one additional school, which was determined to be Bel Air High School. The expansion of the pilot program to include Bel Air and Aberdeen High Schools was approved by the HCPS General Curriculum Committee on March 13, 2023.

In SY23-24, HCPS ran four sections of APAA in our three pilot schools with a total enrollment of approximately 70 students. During this pilot year, the HCPS Office of Social Sciences regularly monitored the implementation of APAA through periodic classroom visits, facilitated collaborative planning sessions for the three teachers in the pilot group five times during the school year, and the implementation of a survey of students in February 2024 to measure students' perceptions of the course and their experiences during the year. Additionally, schools were permitted to offer APAA for SY24-25 during course selection time in order to measure interest in the course if it is approved for regular status. At the time of this report, six of our ten brick-and-mortar schools have reported interest in running the course for SY24-25 for approximately 200 students.

Survey results from students were overwhelmingly positive. Students indicated they felt the course had strengthened their ability to think critically, analyze information through multiple perspectives, increase their empathy for others, and better prepared them for college and career, among other metrics (see below for details). Eighty-seven percent of students in the pilot program indicated they would recommend APAA to other students. Pilot teachers also provided qualitative narrative feedback, which was all positive.

Statement	Percentage of students in the pilot who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement
APAA has strengthened my ability to think critically	85%
APAA has strengthened my ability to analyze information through multiple perspectives	90%
APAA has deepened my understanding of the world around me	92%
APAA has broadened my perspective	93%
APAA has increased my empathy for others	93%

APAA has better prepared me for college and career	83%
APAA has strengthened my reading skills	78%
APAA has strengthened my writing skills	80%
APAA has strengthened my problem-solving skills	76%
APAA has made me more employable	75%

AP African American Studies is a full-year evidence-based introduction to African American studies. This interdisciplinary course includes the study of literature, arts and humanities, political science, geography, and science to explore the contributions and experiences of African Americans. The course was designed by College Board by gathering input from 100+ college faculty through small-group discussions, survey feedback, and analysis of college syllabi. As of March 15, 2024, 355 college and universities had signed on to offer college credit for students who successfully completed the course with a satisfactory exam score.

The course is designed in four units as follows:

1. Origins of the African Diaspora (ca. 900 BCE to 16th Century)
2. Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance (16th Century to 1865)
3. The Practice of Freedom (1865 to 1940s)
4. Movements and Debates (1940s to 2000s)

Discussion:

This presentation provides an overview of the background, history, and development of this course by College Board and the successful implementation of the course in pilot by HCPS.

Superintendent’s Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Schools recommends the Board of Education approve AP African American Studies for regular status as a Social Science elective for the 2024-2025 school year.