TO: Illinois State Board of Education
FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
      Lynne Haeffele Curry, Director

Agenda Topic: 2002 Statewide Achievement Data: SAT and Advanced Placement (AP) Exams – Illinois Public School Students

Materials: College Board Data Tables

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Purpose of Agenda Item

To review the recently released student achievement data acquired from College Board testing programs in the Spring of 2002 and to delineate policy issues related to the data analysis.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

- Board members will gain knowledge of and comfort levels with the achievement data from the SAT and AP examinations.
- The Board will identify and discuss policy implications of the data.

Background Information

The College Board administers a series of voluntary national tests in which Illinois students may participate. The first is the SAT I, a college-entrance examination used by many private and out-of-state colleges for admissions purposes. About 9% of Illinois’ 2002 public school graduating seniors took the SAT I at some point in their high school careers. The results from the class of 2002 are reported in the accompanying materials. The second set of tests are the Advanced Placement exams in various subjects. High performance on these widely accepted tests can often translate into college proficiency credits and the ability to take more upper-level classes earlier in a student’s college career.
SAT I Results – Illinois Public School Students

Of all Illinois SAT I test takers, 68% were from public schools. SAT I results are reported for verbal and mathematics skills on an 800 point scale.

Some highlights of the Illinois 2002 SAT I data for public schools include:

- Illinois public high school students who take the SAT college entrance examination continue to far outperform their peers throughout the nation. Illinois’ average verbal score of 578 is 77 points higher than the national average. Illinois’ average math score of 605 is 93 points higher than the national average.
- Illinois’ average verbal scores are up 2 points from 2001 and up 15 points from 1997.
- Illinois’ average math scores are up 8 points from 2001 and up 20 points from 1997.
- The average verbal scores of minority students rose from 522 in 1993 to 554 in 2002. The average math scores of minority students rose from 550 in 1993 to 594 in 2002.

Advanced Placement Results – Illinois Public School Students

Of all Illinois AP test takers, 80% were from public schools. AP test scores are reported on a scale of 1 to 5, with scores of 4 or 5 being considered credit-bearing in most higher education institutions.

Some highlights of the Illinois 2002 AP data for public schools include:

- 363 Illinois public schools had at least one student taking an AP examination, and 278 public schools had at least ten students taking an AP examination.
- Scores of 4 or 5 were achieved by 46% of Illinois public school students, compared to 34% for the nation.
- White and Asian students make up the vast majority of AP test takers in the state, accounting for 85% of students participating. Black and Hispanic student participation was 4% and 6%, respectively.

Implications for Policy, Budget, and Communications

Policy Implications

These voluntary tests administered by the College Board provide a supplemental data set to the state-administered Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE), which includes the ACT examination along with other components.

The fact that Illinois students choosing to take the SAT I far outperform the national average clearly shows that this group of students is meeting high achievement standards, and are in fact setting the pace for the state and the nation.
The rising number of students choosing to participate in the Advanced Placement testing is a trend that has continued for several years. The ability to attain early college credit is likely a strong incentive for students to take college-level coursework in high school. Special consideration should be given to increasing the numbers of Black and Hispanic students with access to AP coursework and testing.

**Budget Implications**
The State Board provides incentives for schools to increase participation on AP exams through a competitive federal grant program. In 2001, the State Board provided fee support for over 2000 students, and in 2002, for over 3500 students. The State Board may want to consider continuing and expanding these subsidies, a welcome service for families who find the testing costs prohibitive.

The Illinois Virtual High School (IVHS) has become a venue through which many students, especially those in rural schools, can access AP coursework. Potential expansion of IVHS/AP opportunities will become part of future budget discussions.

**Next Steps**

Continue AP support programs under the current federal grant.

Staff will pursue additional funding/program improvements as directed by the Board and the State Superintendent.
SAT® I Summary
Public School Graduating Seniors

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<th>Test</th>
<th>Illinois Average Score</th>
<th>% State Participation</th>
<th>National Average Score</th>
<th>% National Participation</th>
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<td>605</td>
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<td>512</td>
<td>38%</td>
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AP Summary
Public School Only

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<td>15%</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2002, the five most popular AP subject examinations in Illinois public schools (with the percentage of total AP examination shown in parentheses) were as follows:

- #1 History: United States (15%)
- #2 English Literature and Composition (11%)
- #3 Mathematics: Calculus AB (10%)
- #4 English Language and Composition (8%)
- #5 History: European (6%)

For additional information, the following link will take you to The College Board’s Illinois Report for 2002 College-Bound Seniors (A Profile of SAT Program Test Takers).