
Go AP!

Strategies for Building and Sustaining AP Culture

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 CollegeBoard
Forum 2018

Who Are We?



AP Language class



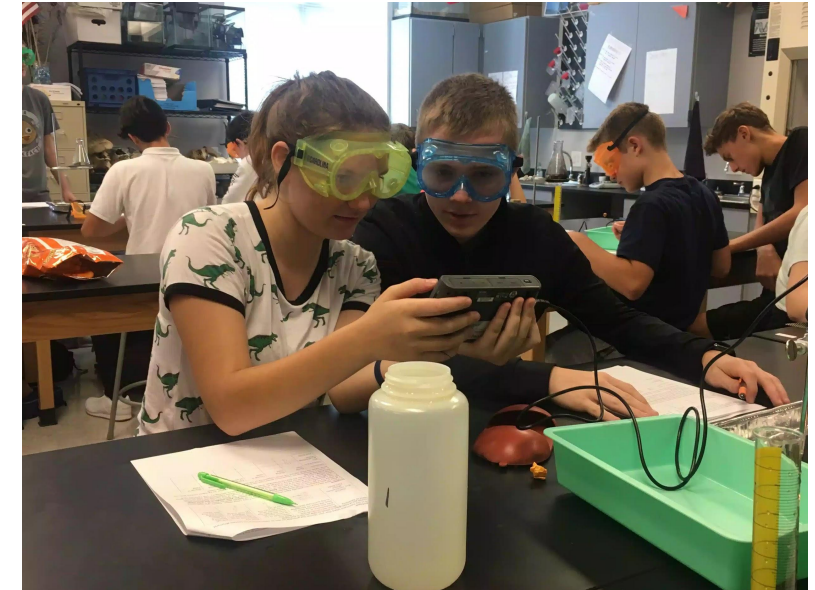
Our first National Merit Finalist - 2018

York Preparatory Academy

- Public K - 12 charter school in Rock Hill, SC
- Opened in the fall of 2010
- 43 acre campus with 4 buildings
- Current enrollment: 1645 students

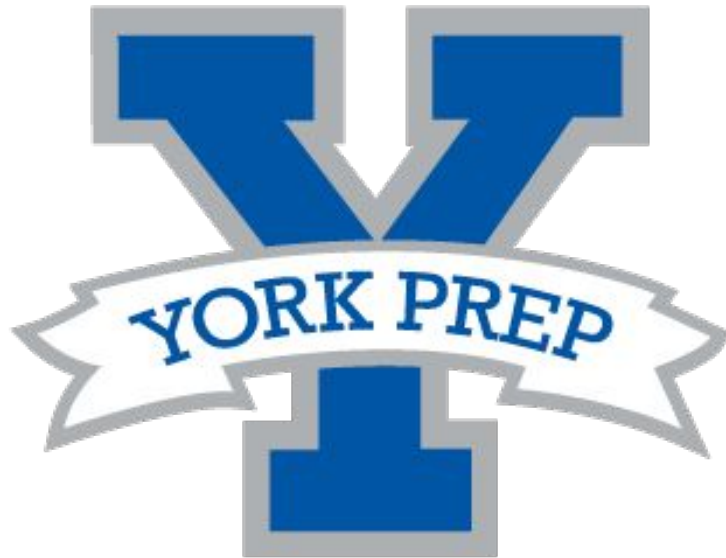


Senior Walk through campus



Honors Biology

Our Background



A Little History:

- YPA began as a Public K-8 Charter School in 2010
- First graduating class in 2015 - 51 Graduates
- First AP course: AP US History in 2013-2014 with 6 students
 - 46 total 11th graders (No 12th grade class yet) (13%)
 - Struggle to recruit students
 - Faculty fear of AP open enrollment
 - Will we be able to grow and sustain a program?
 - New partnership with local community college for Dual Enrollment same year - AP vs. DE: competing programs?

Tackle Issues

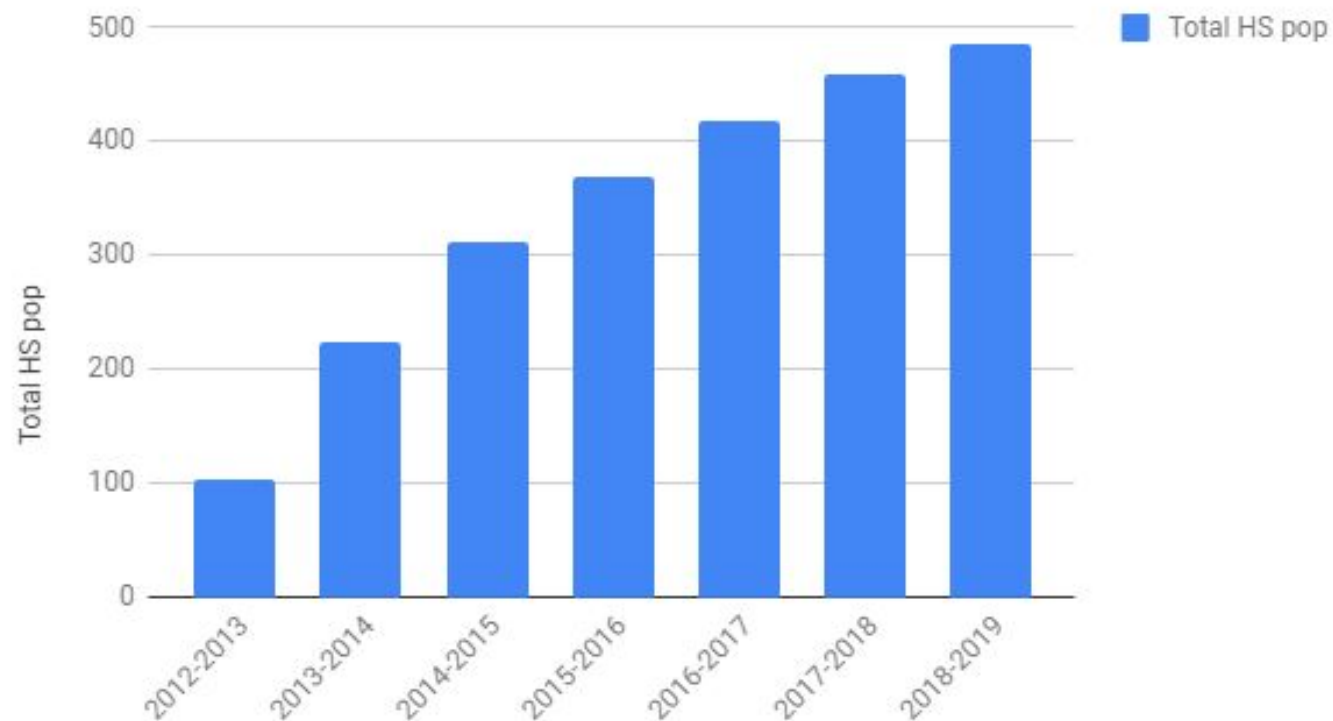
- Director of School Counseling: background in higher education admissions and academic advising - dedicated to college exposure
- New hire: NBCT English teacher with 6 years of AP experience and passion for AP

YPA total enrollment

- 2011-2012: first class of 9th graders
- 2014-2015: first graduating class, 51 seniors
- Charter caps each grade level at 130 students

CHART OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT

Total HS population



AP and Dual Enrollment



2013-2014:

- our first class of juniors
- 6 AP students
- 11 dual enrollment students (no overlap)
 - DE: partnership with local 2 year community college
 - School paid tuition and books for enrolled students
 - Encouraged enrollment, but not sustainable long-term model (not cost-effective)



AP Fear:

The Student Perspective

We had to address the FEAR + ASSUMPTIONS

- Many of the students attending YPA in the beginning assumed they weren't smart enough
- Transferred to a charter school - many running from disciplinary issues, bullying, or trying to find a better academic fit

FEAR

- They had a fear of not doing well, being able to handle and keep up with the workload and failing
- Fear of the unknown - they had no role models to lead the way

ASSUMPTIONS

- Assumed it would be impossible
- Assumed teachers would be too tough

AP Fear:

The Faculty Perspective

We had to address the FEAR + ASSUMPTIONS

- Began with a very small high school faculty: 1 teacher for English, Science, History and Math and an Art and PE teacher
- Few teachers had previous AP teaching experience
 - Unfavorable comparisons between students from “there” to here
- Many of the students they were teaching in the beginning were low achieving and not very motivated

FEAR

- Fear of students failing, not being able to handle the work
- Fear of the unknown - they had no role models to lead the way
- Fear of the AP scores negatively impacting their evaluations

ASSUMPTIONS

- Assumed it would be impossible
- Assumed curriculum would be too tough for the students

How did we create a positive change in perspective?

Our sources of growth

Beginning to build an AP culture - Slowly but Surely

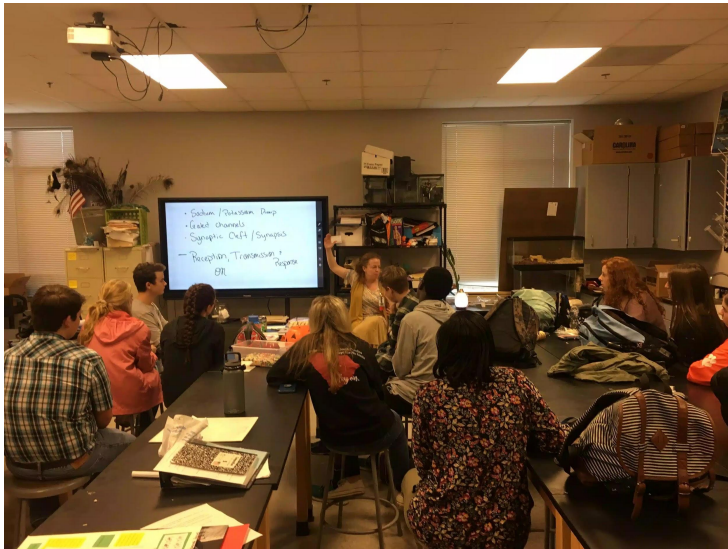
- Go AP! program: Created excitement, enthusiasm, potential
- Recruitment: AP Potential reports, teacher recommendations
- Encouragement through Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) meetings
- Building on the success of a few, lead to the excitement of many
- Change in teacher attitudes and student results

Recruitment efforts



- Recruitment and encouragement through AP Potential reports
 - Began offering the PSAT to 8 - 11th grade in 2015
 - AP Potential is an excellent tool to utilize for recruitment
 - Highlights students abilities and builds up their confidence
- EEDA State Law in South Carolina requires Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) meetings to be conducted with a certified school counselor, student and the student's parent, guardian, or designee every year for grades 8 - 12
 - Time consuming but great opportunity to highlight the AP program and encourage students to consider AP classes

Go AP! Program



- Go AP! program: marketing and recruitment
 - morning announcements, subject teacher encouragement, hall posters, classroom invitations from AP teachers
- Double-blocked, yearlong courses
 - reduces stress on students and faculty; more time to cover and process material
- What does it mean to be an AP student?
 - Work ethic vs. natural intelligence
 - valuing the process over the outcome
- What does it mean to be an AP teacher?
 - Discipline-oriented but focused on growth
 - Commitment to the content and to the students
- Strong support from administration

Go AP! Program

***lunch recruitment sessions with an AP teacher to understand the course focus and expectations**



Session goals:

- Increase student awareness and build excitement for AP course offerings
- Reduce fear about the program and expectations
- Introduce students to content and teacher in a low-stakes environment
- Begin to develop a sense of community

Go AP! program



Session Outcomes:

- Awareness increased due to recruitment and marketing efforts
- Interest developed through the Go AP! program
 - from our first year with one class and 6 students (and no real recruitment effort), we grew to three classes with 23 students, almost quadrupling our AP student population
- Added value through former AP students talked to the potential students and give them a realistic overview of what to expect
- Reduced fear because all of these factors worked together to ease student anxiety about what it means to take an AP class

AP growth

Slow and steady enrollment growth!

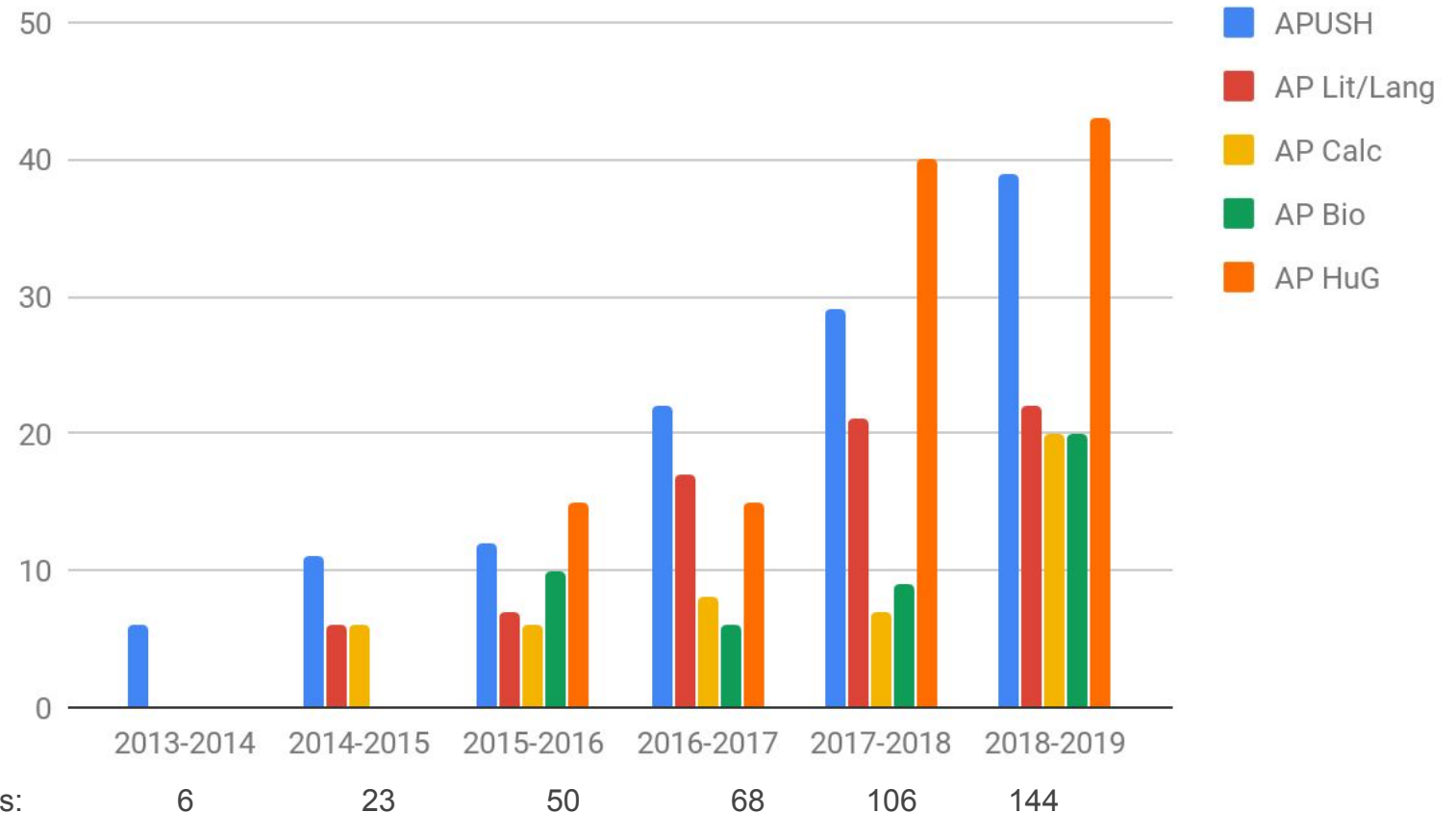
Current Data

About 25% are taking an AP course (144 exams to be given in 2019)

21% or 47 students out of 229 Juniors and Seniors are dual enrolled



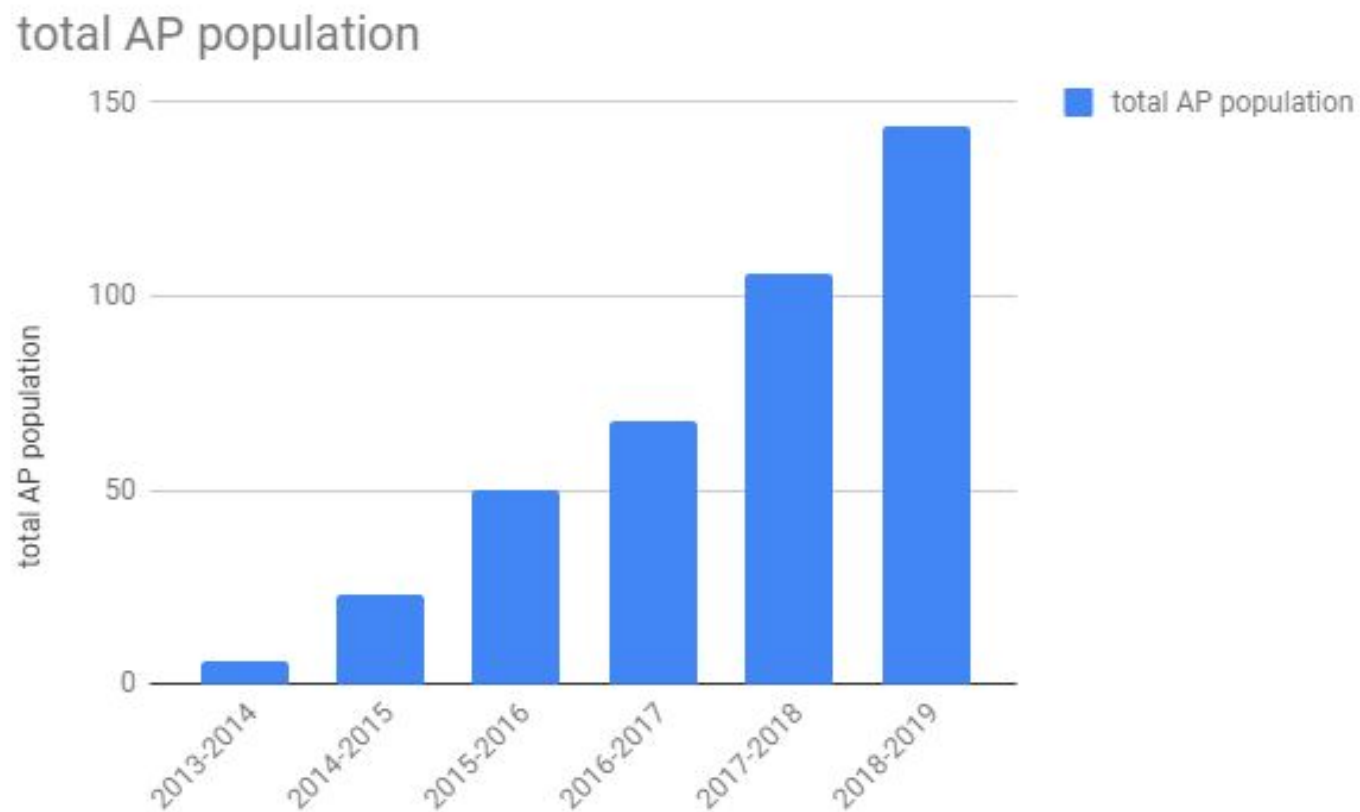
APUSH, AP Lit/Lang, AP Calc, AP Bio and AP HuG



AP Total Enrollment

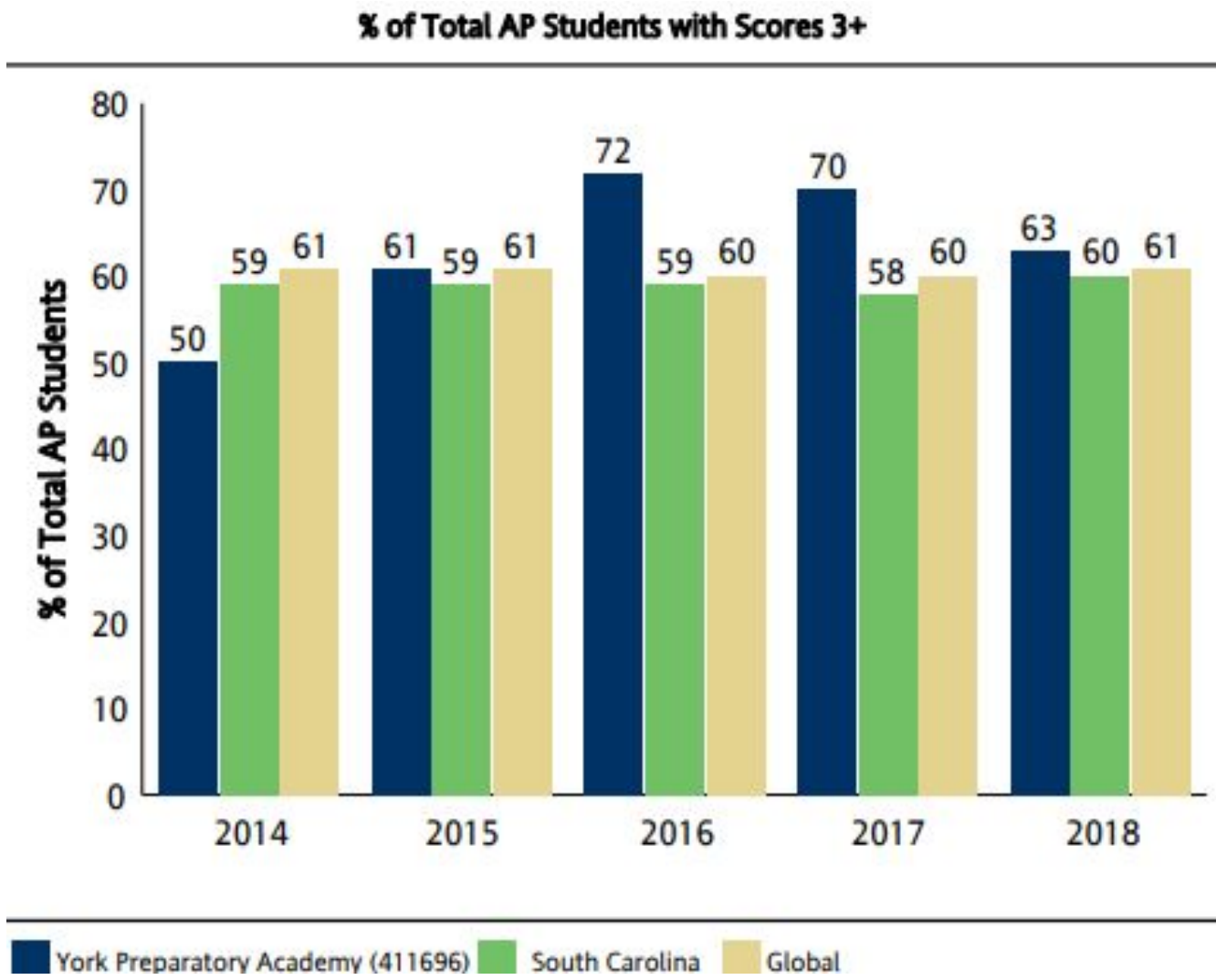
- 2013-2014: first AP course offered
- 2014-2015: three courses offered
- 2015-2016: five AP courses offered

CHART OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT



Student Success

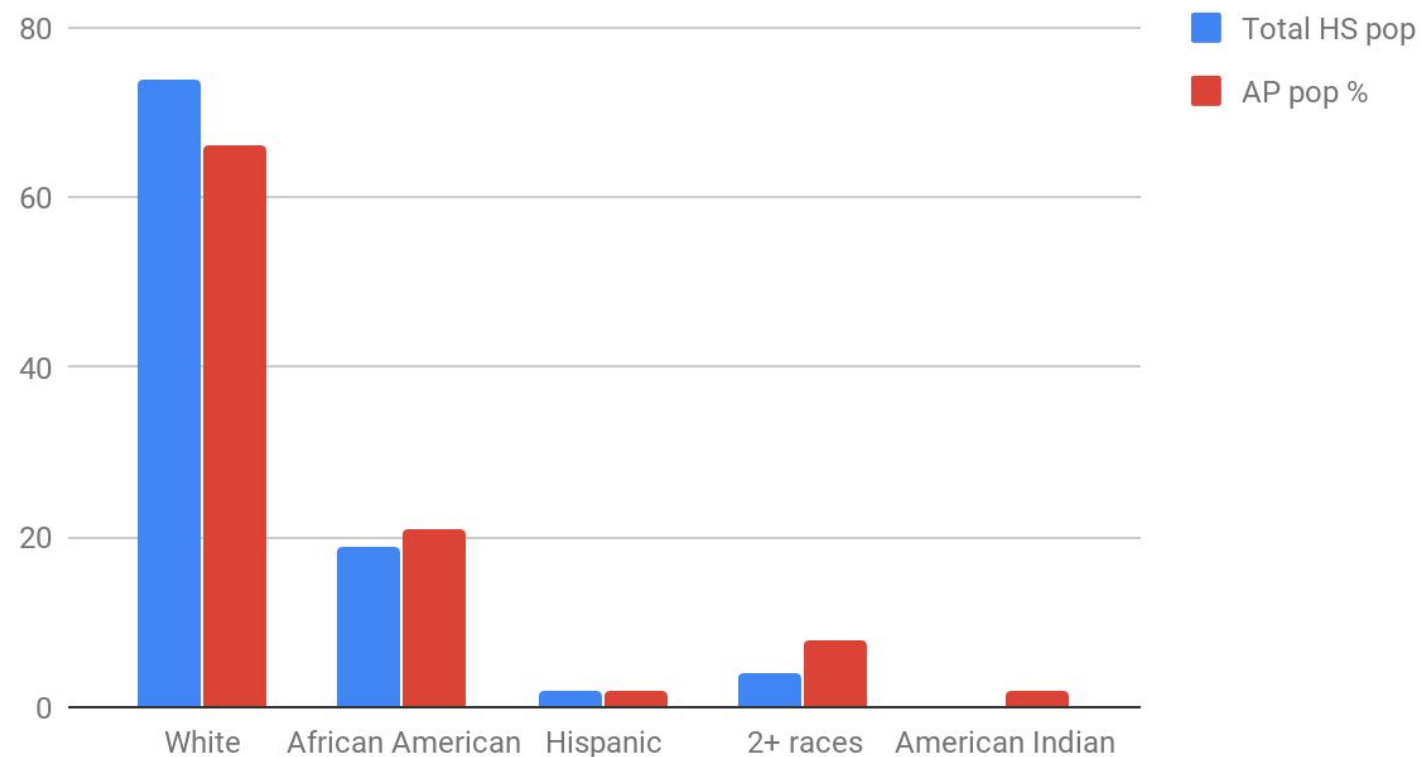
2014: 6 AP exams total
2015: 23 exams
2016: 50 exams
2017: 68 exams
2018: 106 exams
2019: 144 exams to be given*



Equity and Access

- Demonstrates our open door policy and efforts to mirror school population in AP classrooms

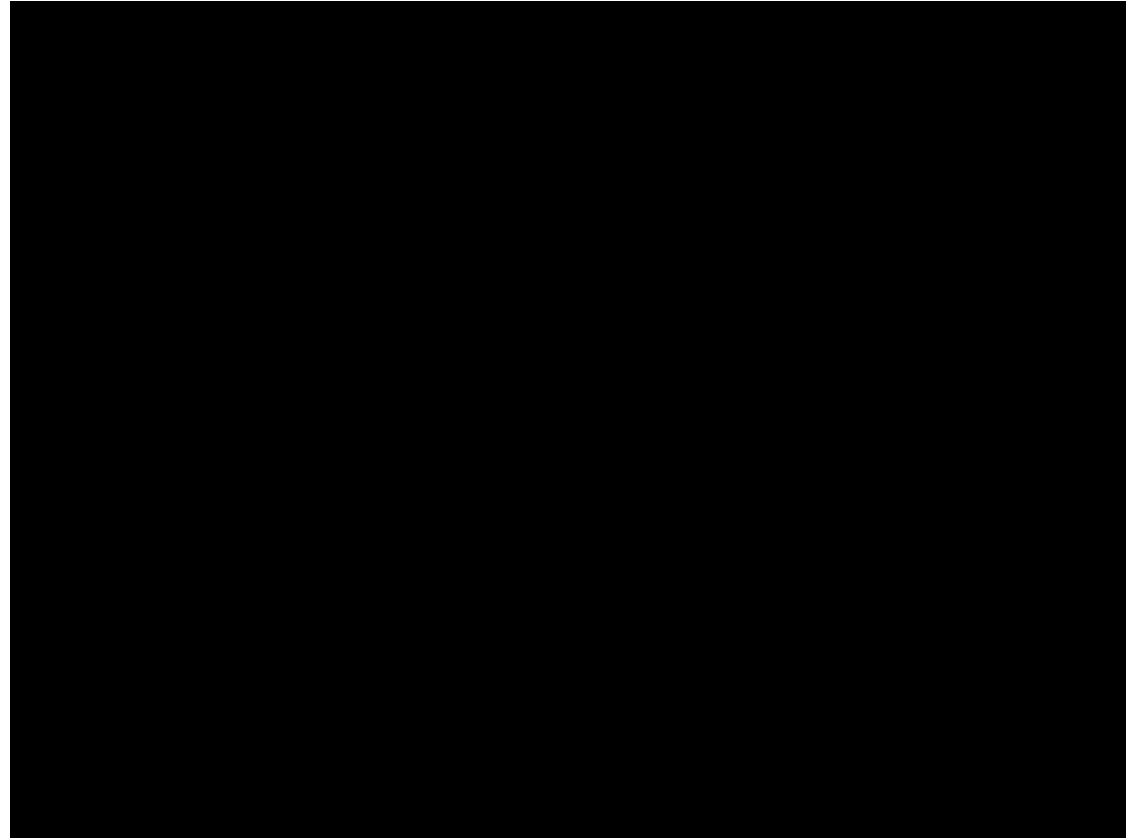
Total HS pop and AP pop %



Teacher Perspective

“To what do you attribute the growth and success of the students in our AP program?”

Mr. Ray Tyler, AP US History teacher



Student perspective

“How did YPA’s programs support your success as a student?”

Miller Hoffman, YPA alumnus and Clemson student



What is the Future of AP at YPA?

- Adding AP electives: Psychology & Computer Science Principles in the next two years
 - Continuing to expand the concept of what an AP student is: beyond core academic classes
- AP survival lunch meetings, mindfulness, time management, college exploration - what's beyond South Carolina, self exploration - personal interest inventories and values
- Our campus offers the opportunity to transition between middle school and high school
 - Visit 8th grade classes in early spring with AP students, build excitement, knowledge and encouragement - you can do it!!

Thank You.

If you would like a copy of the presentation, please contact:

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