



# Alamo Heights Independent School District

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## Guidelines for College Board Pre-Advanced Placement/Advanced Placement Courses Grades 9-12 2015-16

The AHISD Strategic Plan Strategy 6, Action Plan 6 called for the creation of an open enrollment policy for advanced courses 6-12, and this policy began with the 2010-2011 school year. Below are guidelines designed to ensure the success of our students in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, on AP exams, and in engaging, personally challenging, and relevant experiences that inspire learning for life.

### Structure

In grades 6-12, there will be two academic offerings in the core curriculum (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) as follows below.

High School
Grade Level Course
PreAP and AP Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PreAP/AP sections</li><li>• PreAP/AP sections for Identified GT students**</li></ul>

Some courses may still have prerequisites, such as Pre-Algebra is required to take Algebra I.

\*\*Offering a separate section for GT students is consistent with the recommendations of *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, which stipulates that, as part of the array of services offered by a district, GT students should have the opportunity to work together with their GT peer group during the school day and throughout the year (19 TAC §89.3(3)).

### Maintenance and Exit

**Contract.** All students and their parents must enter into a contract to be admitted to a PreAP/AP class. This contract will stipulate the challenges, academic rigor, and demands required to be successful in an advanced course. *Note: A detailed explanation of the difference between grade level classes and advanced/PreAP/AP classes may be found in the course description booklets for AHHS.*

**Dropping a PreAP Course.** After school begins, a student enrolled in a PreAP/AP/GT course must stay in the course until the completion of the **10<sup>th</sup> day** of school. Students may drop an advanced course within the 3 class days following the official distribution of **the grades for the first 6 weeks progress report** of the year. Students not exiting during this time must remain in the class until the end of the semester. At the end of the semester, students exiting the course must submit a drop form to the guidance office within 3 class days of the official distribution of the first semester. *Note:* The official drop dates for the first six weeks and for the semester will be published on the campus calendar. In extenuating circumstances, determined by the principal - in consultation with the teacher, counselor, and parent - the student may drop prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of classes.

When a student drops a PreAP/AP course, the grade level teacher will take the grade from that course, multiply it by 1.1, and use the result as the entering grade in the grade level course. This will standardize how departments handle schedule changes.

Regarding “making up for learning missed while not in the grade level course,” students are expected to catch up with the requisite learning to be successful in the new grade level course. Teachers can

have students get this done without any impact a student's grade. Assigning and grading make-up work in the new grade level course becomes too cumbersome to standardize in an equitable way across grade levels and content areas.

**Moving from Grade Level to PreAP/AP.** Students in a grade level course who wish to transfer into a PreAP/AP course must do so within the first 10 days of school. Assignments covered by the PreAP/AP course prior to the transfer must be made up in a timely fashion to ensure GPA equity with peers.

**Grade Maintenance.** A student enrolled in a PreAP/AP/GT course must maintain **at least 65** at the end of the first 6-week grading period to remain in the PreAP/AP/GT course. If at least a 65 is not maintained at that point, the guidance office will process a schedule change for the student into a grade-level section, and if below 65, the student may not re-enter until the fall semester of the next school year. Students must demonstrate success and maintain a semester average  $\geq 70$  to remain in the PreAP/AP/GT course.

**Quality Points.** Starting in the fall of 2010-2011 for high school students, quality points for PreAP/AP open enrollment and PreAP/AP GT courses shall be determined by using a multiplier of 1.1 for grades  $\geq 70$ . **PreAP/AP GT and open enrollment PreAP/AP courses use the same multiplier of 1.1 because the grading standards, workload, challenge and academic rigor in each of these courses are commensurate with each other.** Quality points for courses taken in 2009-2010 and earlier will not be changed.

### **Counseling**

After course selection in the spring of each year, counselors will provide each core department with a list of next year's course selections to facilitate better counseling of particular students who signed up for Advanced/PreAP/AP courses to ensure student success. Grade level teachers, then, will review the list of who signed up for Advanced/PreAP/AP courses for any red flags that may need one on one counseling about their choice, such as a student who barely meets expectations in a grade level course yet signed for an advanced course.

### **AP Exams and Preparation**

The taking of formal AP tests is highly recommended. Each teacher must create a culture of expectation for taking the exam. Both GT and non-GT sections of PreAP/AP courses cover the same curriculum in preparation for success on AP exams. All students in AP courses, GT and non-GT sections, are expected to take the AP exam- when available- and teachers and students strive for excellence on AP exams. To monitor the maintenance of high quality instruction, teachers and administrators will analyze AP exams scores and compare them with course grades. In general, the course grade should be predictive/reflective of the test score.

Teachers of a PreAP/AP/GT offer tutoring and re-teach support for students outside of class in the manner specified by the teacher (e.g., during office hours, before school, after school, at lunch, by appointment, etc.).

### **Gifted and Talented (GT)**

**Statement of Purpose.** Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience or environment (from the *Texas State Plan*

*for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*).

**GT and non-GT Sections.** GT sections of PreAP/AP course are expected to be different in the way content is covered, in the processes that are used, and in the products that are created. GT will be taught using techniques that are considered best practices for GT students. Although the curriculum and general grading standards will be very similar to non-GT courses, the instruction and work will be differentiated to meet the learning needs of GT students. Different, however, should not simply mean “more work” or “outrageously challenging,” but it refers to *different* types of assignments, products, processes, pacing, etc. Non-GT sections of PreAP/AP maintain a high level of intellectual challenge and academic rigor.

**Screening.** In grades 6-12, students who desire to be identified as GT must still meet the district-defined criteria in each core curriculum area (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) for which they wish to take an advanced/PreAP/AP GT section.