



Fall River Public Schools

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NEWS RELEASE

College Board names Fall River Public Schools to Advanced Placement® Achievement List

*B.M.C. Durfee High School gains in college-level courses earn national recognition;
one of only 20 school districts in Massachusetts honored for AP improvement*

FALL RIVER, MA – The College Board today named the **Fall River Public Schools** to its first Advanced Placement® Achievement List in recognition of significant increases in AP participation and performance at **B.M.C. Durfee High School**. Fall River is one of only 20 public school districts in Massachusetts and 388 nationwide selected for the honor.

The AP Achievement List commends school districts that have increased the percentage of students participating in AP between 2008 and 2010, while also maintaining or increasing the percentage of “qualifying scores” of 3 or higher. According to national research, students who pass at least one AP exam are three times more likely to graduate from college than those who do not. The College Board also recognized districts with an AP student population composed of at least 50 percent underrepresented minority or low-income students.

“Participation in college-level AP courses can level the playing field for underserved students, give them the confidence needed to succeed in college, and raise standards and performance in key subjects like science and math,” said College Board President Gaston Caperton. “The AP Achievement List districts are defying expectations by expanding access while enabling their students to maintain or improve their AP Exam scores.”

“Durfee High School is proving once again that when we raise the bar, and provide top-notch instruction and support, our students can achieve excellence,” said Fall River Superintendent Meg Mayo-Brown. “I commend the Durfee faculty for setting high standards and applaud our students for their accomplishments in the classroom.”

Durfee Principal Paul Marshall said, “To prepare our students to be competitive in the workforce tomorrow, we have to set high expectations today. At Durfee, we’re proud to create opportunities for more students to enroll and excel in AP courses, to help put them on the road to academic and professional success after high school.”

Durfee’s AP expansion is supported by a grant from the **Mass Math + Science Initiative** (MMSI), the largest statewide high school math and science education program in the Commonwealth. Through MMSI, Durfee has *doubled participation* and *tripled passing scores* on college-level AP courses in math, science and English.

- Prior to joining MMSI, Durfee had 165 enrollments in math, science and English AP classes. Last year, AP enrollment increased to 272, and this year, to 325 – nearly double the AP enrollment in September 2008.
- After just one year in the program, the number of qualifying scores on AP exams among Durfee students more than tripled – from 30 to 98.
- The program also has narrowed socio-economic achievement gaps in AP performance, with qualifying scores among Durfee students from low-income families more than tripling in one year.

Morton Orlov II, President of the Mass Math + Science Initiative, said, “We join the College Board in congratulating Fall River educators and families for their commitment to excellence. At B.M.C. Durfee High School, teachers, students, parents, and community partners are working together to ensure that graduates are prepared for college and career success.”

Led by Mass Insight Education, MMSI is improving student participation and performance in college-level AP courses in 45 Massachusetts public high schools. In its first three years, MMSI has increased AP enrollments in participating schools from about 4,000 to more than 8,000 today. Among the first 21 high schools in the program, MMSI has nearly doubled the number of passing scores on AP math, science and English exams.

The other Massachusetts school districts named to the College Board AP Achievement List are: Arlington, Dover/Sherborn, Dracut, East Longmeadow, Groton Dunstable, Harvard, Lawrence, Lowell, Masconomet, Mashpee, Nauset, Needham, North Middlesex, Northborough Southborough, Northampton, Pittsfield, Revere, Shrewsbury, and Silver Lake. The full AP Achievement List can be found at www.collegeboard.org.

For more information about Fall River Public Schools, visit www.fallriverschools.org and follow @frpsinfo on Twitter. For more information about the Mass Math + Science Initiative, visit www.massinsight.org/mmsi and follow @massmathscience on Twitter.

About the Advanced Placement Program

The College Board’s Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Through more than 30 college-level courses, each culminating in a rigorous exam, AP provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement or both. Taking AP courses also demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought the most rigorous curriculum available to them. Each AP teacher’s syllabus is evaluated and approved by college faculty from some of the nation’s leading institutions, and AP Exams are developed and scored by college faculty and experienced AP teachers. AP is accepted by more than 3,800 colleges and universities worldwide for college credit, advanced placement or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores. This includes over 90 percent of four-year institutions in the United States. In 2010, 1.8 million students representing more than 17,000 schools around the world, both public and nonpublic, took 3.2 million AP Exams.

About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of more than 5,900 of the world’s leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators and schools. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.