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Gwinnett County Public Schools Named a College Board Advanced Placement[®] District of the Year

**District Recognized for Increasing Access and Performance, Particularly for Traditionally
Underrepresented Minority Students**

SUWANEE, GA — Gwinnett County Public Schools in Georgia has been named a College Board Advanced Placement[®] District of the Year for being the national leader among large school districts — defined as 50,000 or more students — in expanding access to Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]) courses while simultaneously improving AP Exam performance. Gwinnett County Public Schools’ students, teachers, district and school administrators, and College Board leadership celebrated these achievements with an event at Duluth High School, February 21, 2017.

Gwinnett County Public Schools was one of 433 school districts across the U.S. and Canada that achieved placement on the annual AP District Honor Roll. From this list, three AP Districts of the Year — one for each category of district population size: small, medium, and large — were selected based on an analysis of three academic years of AP data.

“We are excited that the work of our students and teachers has been recognized by College Board,” says CEO/Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks. “We are very pleased with the gains we have seen in Advanced Placement testing, in terms of both participation and performance. In Gwinnett County Public Schools we take pride in our efforts to challenge students to higher levels of achievement and our work with AP is evidence of this success. There are a lot of school districts out there and to be named ‘District of the Year’ is quite an achievement. This is an honor that should be celebrated in every single one of our clusters as this recognizes the hard work and achievement of students and teachers throughout the district.”

“This award shows that Gwinnett County Public Schools are challenging many students to achieve at the highest levels,” said Trevor Packer, head of the College Board’s AP Program. “The teachers and administrators in this district are clearly committed to ensuring that a more diverse population of students

attains the benefits of AP—that they gain confidence, learn how to craft and defend arguments, earn college credit, and are ready to succeed in college. Congratulations to all the educators, parents, and students whose dedication and hard work are behind this well-deserved recognition.”

From 2014 to 2016, Gwinnett County Public Schools:

- Simultaneously and continuously increased the number of students taking AP classes while improving successful outcomes (a score of 3 or higher) on AP Exams, with 61 percent of all AP students scoring a 3 or higher in 2016;
- Increased student participation in AP by 5 percent annually and the percentage of students scoring a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam by 1 percent annually; and
- Increased the percentage of traditionally underrepresented minority AP students earning a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam by 2 percent annually — an increase of 914 students since 2014. (43 percent or more of the AP students at Gwinnett County Public Schools is American Indian, African American, Hispanic/Latino or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. In addition, 31 percent or more of the AP students in the district qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.)

Increasing access to AP course work while simultaneously increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher is the ideal scenario for a district’s AP program, indicating that the district is successfully preparing a larger array of its students for the rigor of AP and college studies. Participating in AP course work can also lead to college savings for families because the typical student who scores a 3 or higher on two AP Exams has the potential to save, on average, \$1,779 at a public four-year college and over \$6,000 at a private institution.

In addition to celebratory events at the district level, all three winning districts will be honored in Washington, DC during the 2017 AP Annual Conference in July.

In 2016, more than 3,900 colleges and universities around the world received AP scores for college credit, advanced placement, and/or consideration in the admission process, with many colleges and universities in the U.S. offering credit in one or more subjects for qualifying AP scores.

To learn more about AP, please visit exploreap.org.

About Gwinnett County Public Schools

Located just north of Atlanta, Georgia, Gwinnett County Public Schools is Georgia’s largest school district and the 13th largest district in the nation. The district serves more than 179,000 students in its 139 schools and educational facilities. In addition, the school system has more than 11,000 teachers in a workforce that is 23,000 strong. It is one of the largest employers in Georgia and is regularly recognized as an outstanding employer. The school system is a two-time winner of the Broad Prize for Urban Education. Gwinnett students, staff members, and schools earn numerous state, regional, and national awards each year.