

Higher Education Department Announces New Advanced Placement Policy

Policy Will Help New Mexico High School Students Earn College Credits before Graduation and Save Money on College

Albuquerque, NM - Today, the New Mexico Higher Education Department announced a new policy to facilitate more affordable, on-time completion of undergraduate degrees by standardizing Advanced Placement (AP) credit acceptance for all New Mexico colleges and universities. The new policy guarantees specific courses students will receive credit for at any New Mexico college or university when they pass an AP exam with a score of three, four, or five.

“Since day one, we’ve been working to improve New Mexico’s education system and today we’re taking a tremendous step forward,” said Higher Education Secretary Barbara Damron. “More kids than ever are taking and passing AP exams – and now we’re giving them the tools they need to apply their hard work toward completing a college degree and saving their families money in tuition costs.”

Previously, higher education institutions awarded different amounts of credit for different scores on AP exams, and sometimes only elective credit that did not count toward a student’s major. Over the past year, the HED worked with all of New Mexico’s public colleges and universities to form the new policy which creates uniform standards for acceptance of AP scores. The new policy will also improve articulation and transfer, reduce duplication of courses taken, and reduce accumulation of excess credit hours for students.

In 2017, New Mexico students passed 6,028 AP exams. At an average of more than \$200 per credit hour, New Mexico students and families are saving as much as \$4.26 million on college tuition costs by taking AP exams.

Under Governor Martinez, New Mexico has invested more than \$10 million to support AP programs. Additionally, New Mexico now offers more training for AP teachers, and is expanding access to online AP courses so more rural and underserved students can access the program. New Mexico also provides waivers for students from low-income families that lower the cost for AP exams to \$3. Last year, nearly 5,000 AP exam takers benefited from this waiver.

Since Governor Martinez took office, more students than ever are taking and passing AP exams. New Mexico students are taking 63 percent more AP exams, and more than twice as many students are taking AP courses than in 2010. Since 2011, college graduation rates have increased dramatically with thousands more students earning college degrees and certificates than ever before.