



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
EUROPE WEST DISTRICT
UNIT 28100 BOX 26
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April 24, 2020

Europe West Constituents,

The Advanced Placement (AP) program is a set of high school courses created by College Board which gives DoDEA students access to rigorous college-level work in the high school setting. Many colleges and universities across the United States award college credits for students who meet scoring requirements on AP exams. In 2019, 573,000 students registered for over 1.1 million AP Exams at 1,360 schools around the world.

In March, College Board announced changes to the 2020 AP Exam administration to meet the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19. They surveyed a sample of 18,000 AP students to see if they still wanted the opportunity to test this year and received a resounding positive response. College Board developed an at-home testing solution and coordinated with hundreds of colleges across the country to ensure post-secondary institutions would still award college credits as they have in the past.

The DoDEA Director personally engaged senior leadership of the College Board on this issue and on the specific concerns that we heard from the field. The College Board officials were well aware and concerned about students in time zones far from home in which most of our DoDEA schools operate.

A critical consideration for the College Board's plan is test security and the integrity of exam administration. In their view, this newly designed test must be taken simultaneously around the world. Since no single time is convenient for all students, specific times were selected to enable the largest number of AP students worldwide to test in daylight hours.

Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, the model they choose resulted in night-time schedules and certainly inconveniences our students disproportionately. The only other alternative would have been to cancel exams in certain time zones entirely. That alternative would have been unacceptable.

Looking at the bigger picture, most of us can agree that having the opportunity to test is better than the alternative. In 2020 for the upcoming exams, DoDEA has registered 5,218 students for 9,134 exams in 32 of our high schools in Europe and the Pacific.

While this is a small percentage of the total number of worldwide students taking AP exams, the impact of nighttime testing did not go unnoticed by College Board. To assist our students, College Board is offering dedicated live online exam prep sessions that will provide an overview of the tasks and the scoring process, at times convenient for students outside the continental United States. These sessions will be designed to help students understand the

types of questions on this year's AP Exams and how they will be scored. Details for these will be provided to students by email shortly.

Additionally, students outside the U.S. with nighttime schedules who are not satisfied with their scores will receive a voucher for a free College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exam, a second opportunity to earn college credit. When students reach U.S. colleges, they will be able to take CLEP exams at test centers on a college campus of their choice through the end of 2020. Children of military personnel in DoDEA schools may be able to take CLEP exams on a date and time convenient to them at existing CLEP test centers on their bases.

With the controversy surrounding the suboptimal time of the tests for some of our students, the Director has decided to waive the requirement to sit for the exam to receive the additional quality point. All students who are enrolled in AP classes, will receive the additional quality point.

As you know, many colleges recognize that your AP scores demonstrate that you already know the material in certain courses they offer. So they'll let you skip those courses. These could be introductory courses required in your major, or core courses that the college requires all its students to take. Letting you skip these courses (so you can go right into advanced courses) is called granting you advanced placement. In some cases, you'll get both credit and advanced placement for a qualifying AP score. You'll earn the credits and be able to skip a course. With that being said, DoDEA is still encouraging students to take the exam so that they can have the opportunity to receive college credit.

I had hoped to present to you a different solution and while far from ideal, I know our students are amazingly resilient and their test results will reflect their hard work and preparation regardless of what time they take it. We sincerely hope students approach this with as little anxiety as possible during this challenging and unprecedented time. The support of our teachers, parents, commands and communities will go a long way make the difference.



Kent Worford
Europe West
Superintendent