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NEWS RELEASE
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**A+CR Celebrates Unprecedented Growth,
Serving the Most Alabama Students in the State’s History**

Building on past successes to expand opportunities for more Alabama students, Alabama has held on to its **#1 national ranking** for percent growth in qualifying scores on Advanced Placement Math, Science and English exams over its nine-year history, from 2008 to 2017.

In 2017, 26,679 Alabama public high school students took **49,860 AP exams and earned 19,460 qualifying scores, three times the number of scores in 2008**. That first year, 8,565 students took 14,634 AP exams earning 7,260 qualifying scores.

These 19,460 qualifying scores have the potential to save Alabama families more than \$47 million in college tuition.

These remarkable results were highlighted September 21st with a statewide celebration at Russellville High School. Russellville was chosen as the host site as a result of their school’s exemplary progress while part of the A+ College Ready program. The school had not offered Advanced Placement courses prior to the program, and in 2017, Russellville students earned 60 qualifying scores.

“Our students developed a mindset that they would be better prepared for life after high school regardless of perception,” said Jason Goodwin, Russellville High School principal. “When I refer to perception, I speak on behalf of an entire school eligible for free lunches, a school system filled with such GREAT diversity that some have said will break Russellville, yet it has made it stronger, a school system whose scores had not shown tremendous growth in the previous 3 years.”

Russellville High School was the first school to receive the designation as an A+ College Ready “School of Excellence” at today’s AP Celebration. A “School of Excellence” meets or exceeds the very ambitious qualifying score goal that A+ College Ready sets for them during their tenure in the program.

Other schools recognized as “Schools of Excellence” were Albert P. Brewer High School, Morgan County Schools; Carroll High School, Ozark City Schools; Prattville High School, Autauga County Schools; and West Point High School, Cullman County Schools.

In addition to “Schools of Excellence,” A+ College Ready recognized three schools as “Schools of Distinction”. These schools also met their ambitious qualifying score goal and in a subsequent year while in the program, reached a second, higher goal. The 2017 A+ College Ready “Schools of Distinction” are Gulf Shores High School, Baldwin County Schools; Leeds High School, Leeds City Schools; and Springville High School, St. Clair County Schools.

Equip. Empower. Expect More.

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Learning from the dramatic increase in student achievement since the program began in 2008, A+ College Ready, in partnership with the Alabama State Department of Education, has expanded its work to impact even more Alabama students. The expanded work is in four areas:

1. The A+ College Ready curriculum and training that was previously for pre-AP/honors/advanced teachers only, has now been expanded to ALL teachers in grades 6 – 10 and precalculus, opening the doors for MORE students to have MORE opportunities for rigorous coursework in the high school years and success beyond high school.
2. A+ College Ready has expanded its support from math, science and English only, to include all social studies courses in grades 6 – 10, AP U.S. History, and AP Government/Politics. In 2017-18 a pilot program supporting AP World History will be added.
3. A+ College Ready, in collaboration with Dr. Jeff Gray at the University of Alabama, has helped support computer science teachers for the last three years in preparation for the 2016-17 launch of College Board’s new course, AP Computer Science Principles. This year 1,167 Alabama students took the inaugural AP Computer Science Principles exam with 743 students earning qualifying scores.
4. A+ College Ready in collaboration with Madison County Schools Superintendent, Matt Massey, announced a partner school re-engagement program pilot that will begin on October 1. This new initiative will allow schools that rolled off the grant program many years ago to re-engage, setting more specific goals involving student access and success in rigorous coursework from 6th – 12th grade.

“Looking back over what was just one year ago, my decision to sign up for AP courses was the best decision I’ve ever made,” said Desi Burrows, senior at Albertville High School. “If I had not made that decision, I probably would not have the options for my future that I currently have. I credit AP for allowing me to grow as a student and for preparing me for college classes.” Desi plans to attend Auburn University and will enter with college credit because of earning qualifying scores on two AP exams.

In 2008, A+ College Ready first launched with a \$13.2 million grant from the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI), and began work to dramatically increase student access and success in AP math, science and English courses in the state of Alabama.

In the 2017-18 school year, the A+ College Ready AP Initiative will support 170 schools in 82 districts. The program elements include support for AP math, science, English, social studies, and computer science teachers and students, including increased time on task for students, intensive teacher training, support from master teachers, and incentives for teachers and students. This college-readiness program serves and supports teachers and students in grades 6-10 with 22 rigorous core courses aligned with Alabama’s College and Career Ready Standards (ACCRS).

The Alabama Legislature and The State Department of Education provide significant funds for the program, building on initial investments from the private sector, including the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI), Alabama Power Foundation, Regions Inc., Boeing and ExxonMobil, along with many other corporations, foundations and individual donors across the state. The Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) is also a key partner.

**Advanced Placement and AP are registered trademarks of the College Board.*

(Correction: In 2017, 26,679 Alabama students took 49,860 exams and earned 19,460 qualifying scores, and in 2008, 8,565 Alabama students took 14,634 AP exams and earned 7,260 qualifying scores. This information was reported incorrectly in the news release sent 9/21/17 but has been updated in the following post.)