

AP Program in a Rural School

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Alamosa High School

Overview

- Setting up an AP program
 - Alamosa Program
 - Struggles
- Benefits of Teaching/Taking AP Courses
 - Teachers
 - Schools
 - Students
- Student Success

Alamosa Demographics

- 16,256 Alamosa County Population
- 26.5% of population below Poverty Level
- \$34,520 Median household income vs. \$58,433 for the state of Colorado
- 46% of Alamosa is Hispanic/Latino; 49% White
- 23.9% Languages other than English spoken in homes
- <http://quickfacts.census.gov>

Alamosa High School

- AP Classes that have been offered:
 - Language and Literature
 - US History, Government, World History
 - Spanish
 - Statistics and Calculus
 - Biology, Chemistry, Physics



The Role of an AP Coordinator

- Informing students & parents of the AP Program & expectations
- Collecting exam fees from students
- Ordering, administering & returning exam materials and remitting payment for exams
- Recruiting and training Exam Proctor(s)
- Procure and setup rooms for the exams
- Submit forms and agreements for CDE Escape grant and other grants as needed

Things to consider when you start offering AP Classes

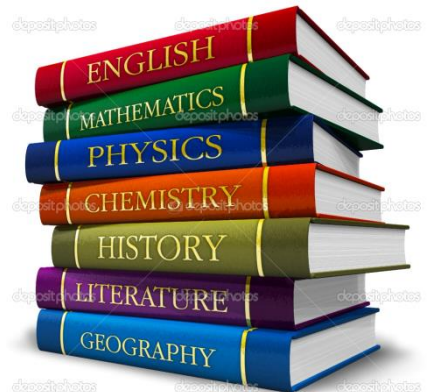
- Start small and add additional classes later
- Resources
- Teachers need more plan time
 - Extra Grading/Lesson planning
 - College board suggests 1.5 hours a day.
- Teacher training
 - AP Summer Institutes and/or one-day workshops

Struggles starting an AP program

- Teachers not being properly prepared the first year they teach AP.
- Resources
 - Text books:
 - AP college board requires a college level text that is no more than 10 years old.
 - Science supplies/laboratory materials

Specific Alamosa Struggles

- Not offering the class every year.
- Budget for books and supplies.
- Students are involved with everything in small school.
- We have a past culture of students not wanting to or thinking they can't challenge themselves
- Some parents question the validity of AP classes
- Intimidated by the course



Benefits of Teaching AP

Teachers:

- Teach content at a higher level.
- The abundance of resources on the college board website.
 - Released exams, approved syllabus, AP community
- Professional development is content based.
- Teachers from rural schools with can apply for the \$1,500 scholarship.

Benefits of Teaching AP

School

- Grants are available that help fund AP programs.
 - Colorado Education Grant
 - CDE ESCAPE grant low income students (\$41 per exam)
 - CDE AP Pilot Incentive Program for rural schools

Students

- Preparing students for college.
- Higher success for those students in college.
- Exposing students to a high level of rigor.

Benefits of Taking AP Courses

- In Alamosa students get help paying for exams.
- College credit when dual enrollment is offered.
- AP teaches study skills and time management skills.
- Students take resources with them when they go to college.
 - Old notes, power points, example problems, Summary sheets, worksheets, & labs.
 - Students also email or call teachers for help in college.

Alamosa Student Success Stories

“ I was so happy I took AP classes in high school. They not only challenged me to be my best everyday in high school and kept me engaged, but they also created a solid foundation that allowed for me to prosper in my college courses. Having a solid foundation of knowledge that was instilled by my high school teachers, I was able to move past the basic knowledge of my college courses and reach further into the depths to discover things that have furthered me in my career goals and set me ahead in all of my courses. AP courses teach determination, tenacity, and self discipline, and they were a must for me in order to succeed at the levels I wanted to at my University.”

-Kole Kelly

“Even though I didn't get the credit for college, AP Biology gave me a broad understanding of a lot of the concepts covered in general bio in college. General bio in college was then a review rather than all new info. I did great in the class!”

- Taylor Escherman

“Taking AP classes in high school helped me in numerous ways, not only did they give me a glimpse of the work load for a college course but they allowed me to get ahead for the future. I didn't have to take some of my gen Ed courses because of the work I did in AP.”

- Shelbee Sims

- “In college one of the things that surprised me most about AP classes was the weight the extra credits carried in terms of my ability to register for classes. Because I had more credits than the average freshman, I was able to enroll in the best film classes. Because I had more credits than the average junior, I got to be one of 12 students in a class with a famous neuroscientist.”

- Sara Sellman

- “AP Classes. It's not the work that was assigned in class that prepared me, it was how the teachers wanted us to complete the work. Professors are always different and each is specific on how to write a paper, answer questions, read novels, or even speak in class. The AP classes were designed to replicate this in an identical manner. It's better to take AP classes during Senior year and occasionally your Junior year because the method for completing task sequences and assignments stays fresh in your mind.”

- Danny Baker

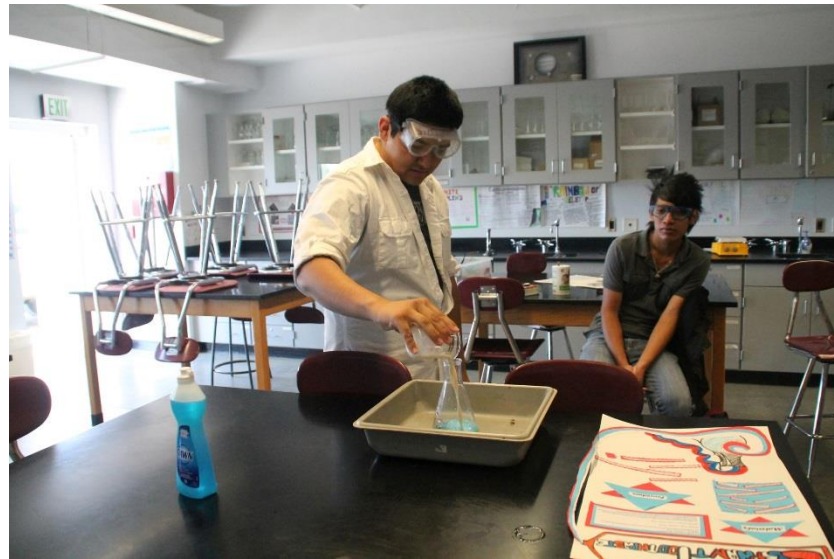
“AP classes were really helpful in giving an understanding of what to expect from college courses. At first I was concerned that they wouldn't really prep us, but I found that the coursework was very similar to freshman level classes.”

- Jake Kunugi



“AP classes gave me an idea of what to expect from a college level course. Whether it was test prep, note taking, studying or labs, I felt comfortable and confident that I would be able to complete the course work when I enrolled.”

- Marc Xavier



“AP classes give you a more equipped knowledge of the material you will be presented with in a college setting. Taking the classes also prepares you for the reality the homework load and speed of a college class, so when you do append the pace is a little less overwhelming and the material is more in-depth than a completely new concept.”

- Nicole Hall

“AP Biology helped me learn biology at a deeper level. Some of the topics can be complex and hard but AP Biology set the perfect foundation which helped me in college to succeed. Learning the topics first in AP Biology and revisiting it again in college general biology class helped me learn a lot.”

- Hinal Rathi

