

SOUTH PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Instructional Services



**M E M O R A N D U M**

**TO:** Members of the Board of Education

**FROM:** Christiane Gervais, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services

**DATE:** December 13, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Approval of College Readiness Block Grant Funding Plan

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**Background**

The 2016-2017 Budget Act has appropriated a College Readiness Block Grant to local education agencies (LEA). LEA apportionments are based on the number of unduplicated students in grades 9-12 with a minimum apportionment of \$75,000 per LEA. Funds must be spent or encumbered by the end of the 2018-19 fiscal year.

The funds must be used to increase or improve services for unduplicated students and should align to the LEA's Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). The plan describing how the funds will be used must be discussed at a regular board meeting and adopted at a subsequent board meeting. As part of the plan the LEA must measure the impact that funds will have on unduplicated students (low income, English Learner, and foster youth) and present the information to the state superintendent before January 1, 2017.

**Discussion**

As discussed at our November 8, 2016 board meeting, our College Readiness Block Grant Funding Plan identifies two priority areas:

**1) Advanced Placement Exam Fees**

*Rationale:* The federal advanced placement test fee program for low income students was a long standing source of funding to support low-income students in paying part of the cost of advanced placement test fees. The program dated back to 1992, when it was authorized by Public Law 102-325 and reauthorized in 1998 by Public Law

105-244 and in 2002 by Public Law 107-110. However, beginning with the 2016–17 fiscal year, the Advanced Placement (AP) Test Fee Program will no longer provide funding to local educational agencies (LEAs) for low-income students' AP exam fees. This change results from the elimination of the Federal AP Test Fee Program.

We want to continue to encourage low income students to take AP courses and exams, especially since the scores on these exams are key indicators of college readiness. Using the college readiness block grant to pay the AP exams fees for low income students for three years will prevent a decrease in the number of students who take the AP courses and exams given the elimination of the Federal AP Test Fee Program.

*Metric:* Our LCAP currently contains a metric related to AP exams and to align to our LCAP, we will use this metric for the college readiness block grant as well: >75% of students who take AP exams will pass with a 3 or higher

## **2) UC/CSU A-G Completion**

*Rationale:* One of the roadblocks to UC/CSU A-G Completion for some of our unduplicated students is earning a 'C' or better in mathematics and/or science courses, especially in their freshman and sophomore years of high school. To help our struggling unduplicated students earn a 'C' or better in math and/or science courses, we will invest in intervention materials, teacher collaboration time, and intervention staffing to best meet the needs of these students.

*Metric:* Our LCAP currently contains a metric related to UC/CSU completion and to align to our LCAP, we will use this metric for the college readiness block grant as well: >70% of all students to meet UC/CSU A-G requirements.

## **Fiscal Impact**

South Pasadena Unified's entitlement of the College Readiness Block Grant is \$75,000.

## **Recommendation**

Christiane Gervais, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services, recommends that the Board of Education approve the College Readiness Block Grant Funding Plan.