

## **FY2009 AP Fee Grant Assistance for Low-Income Students**

The Ohio Department of Education, Office of CTE, received notification in early March, 2009 of receipt of a \$244,766 discretionary grant to waive fees for low-income (free- or reduced-price lunch eligible) students to take Advanced Placement (AP) tests. The grants are designed to increase AP course and test access for students who might otherwise be discouraged by financial requirements. AP offerings are aligned with Ohio Core and STEM initiatives. Test waive funds are also available to Ohio International Baccalaureate (IB) programs within economically disadvantaged schools.

The cost for AP tests is \$86 per test. In 2008, 3,397 exams were completed by low-income students in Ohio. In 2009, the participation is expected to be up 25 percent with 4,371 exams completed by low-income students in the state.

<b>Total Cost Per AP Exam</b>	\$86
1. College Board fee waiver per exam	-\$22
2. Local fee waiver per exam	-\$8
3. State or local contribution per exam	\$0
4. Parent/student contribution per exam	\$0
5. Ohio Department of Education contribution from the Federal Advanced Placement Test Fee Waiver Grant	\$56

The end result is the eligible student does not have to pay anything for the test. The student can take as many tests as s/he has taken courses with the cost of each test waived. Your school will not have to pay anything to The College Board for the students receiving the fee waivers. The College Board will bill the Ohio Department of Education for the \$56.00 directly. Any student who is not eligible will need to pay the full fee of \$86.00 per Advanced Placement exam.

### **How do I to communicate to the College Board the students eligible for test fee waivers?**

You, as the AP Coordinator, indicate on the completed College Board forms that accompany your exams sent for scoring, the number of exams completed by eligible students. It is that simple!

### **How do I determine the eligibility of my students?**

To assist in determining student eligibility for participation, here is the language I used in the USDE grant that was approved:

Low-income students will qualify for AP testing in any one of four ways.

**First**, the student's eligibility will be approved either through the reduced or free lunch program.

The **second** means of determining eligibility is if the family is receiving public assistance and/or if the family residence is a federally subsidized public housing project.

The **third** method for determining eligibility is to use the Bureau of the Census definition. The "low-income individual" refers to a student from a family whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of an amount equal to the poverty level determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.

Figure 4: Eligibility Determination

<u>Size of family Unit</u>	<u>150% of Family Income</u>
1	33,652
2	39,337
3	49,635

The **fourth** method for determining eligibility is made by the Advanced Placement teacher/coordinator. The first criteria is that the teacher/coordinator determines whether or not the student is prepared to complete the exam by taking the appropriate coursework or is otherwise prepared through independent study and/or teacher directed study. Then, the teacher/coordinator will review the financial status of the student/student's family. This method will allow the teacher/coordinator to respond to economic hardships caused by loss of income due to the economic recession.

I am suggesting that if you used the fourth method that you document your reasoning and put it in the student's file.

I hope this helps. If you need any further assistance, please let me know.

Nenna Davis, Consultant  
College Tech Prep and Advanced Placement  
Ohio Department of Education  
25 S. Front Street - MS 609  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614.466.9514, phone  
614.728.8470, fax