



Governor's Proposals on Advanced Placement Courses SB 1504 (Escutia)

Legislative Analyst's Recommendations

Presented To
Senate Education Committee



Profile of 73 Regular High Schools Without AP Courses

	Number of Schools
By Enrollment	
Less than 200	36
200 - 400	18
401 - 600	7
601 - 800	7
801 - 1,000	2
More than 1,000	3
Total	73
By Location	
Rural	46
Suburban	20
Urban	7
Total	73
By Alternatives to AP Courses	
International baccalaureate	3
Honors course offerings:	
4 or more	16
1 - 3	14
None	40 ^a
Total	73

^a Five schools are charter schools.



Advanced Placement Challenge Grant Program

- SB 1504 would establish the Advanced Placement (AP) Challenge Grant Program, as proposed by the Governor. The *2000-01 Budget Bill* includes \$8 million from the General Fund (Proposition 98) for the first year of this program, which would provide three-year grants to not more than 400 high schools for:
 - Training and support of teachers.
 - Instructional materials and equipment.
 - Tutoring and instructional support services for pupils.
- As proposed, the total General Fund cost of the grants over three years would be up to \$18 million.
- The *2000-01 Budget Bill* also includes \$500,000—as proposed by the Governor—for the Secretary for Education to:
 - Fully assess the current availability of AP courses.
 - Develop a strategy for meeting the Governor's stated goal of assuring availability of at least four AP courses at each high school.
- Either the grant program or the study/strategic plan are needed in the 2000-01 fiscal year, but not both.
- ***We recommend funding the study/plan as a necessary first step, and deferring establishment of a grant program pending completion of the study and development of a well-founded plan.***



Questions the Proposed Study/Strategic Plan Should Answer

- ***What is the Current Distribution of AP Courses Among High Schools?*** The state currently lacks the data to comprehensively answer this fundamental question.
- ***Is the Problem Equitable Access to UC and CSU—or Access to AP Courses for Their Own Sake?*** The UC and CSU grant extra grade point average points not only for students completing AP courses, but also honors, international baccalaureate, and college-level courses (available for high school students at community colleges). If equitable access to UC and CSU is the driving concern, the strategy to be developed should draw upon these alternatives to AP courses.
- ***Rural and Urban High Schools—Different Solutions Needed?*** Preliminary information indicates that rural high schools lack AP courses for different reasons than urban high schools. The Governor's grant proposal, however, provides the same solution to each participating school, regardless of schools' differing circumstances.
- ***Long-Term Costs?*** Until it develops better information about the nature and scope of the problem—and develops an appropriate solution—the administration cannot provide a reliable estimate of long-term costs.