

# DHS entering second year of NMSI College Readiness program

DeRidder High School is entering its second year in the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) College Readiness Program to increase Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities for its students. DHS is part of a coalition with Vernon Parish schools through the Department of Defense in partnership with Fort Polk Progress.

The NMSI College Readiness program seeks to improve opportunities and achievement for students by advancing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) and English language arts courses. The program includes a three-year partnership with high schools to increase the number of students taking AP courses and passing the courses with a 3 or above, which are qualifying scores for college credit.

“The partnership with NMSI during the first year has been rewarding for our school,” said Assistant Principal Shawn Baggett. “More students participated in AP courses last school year and received in-depth instruction through the Saturday study sessions. We saw a 150% increase in the number of students passing AP tests with a score of 3 and above from the previous year.”



DHS teachers attended NMSI College Readiness Training this summer in Dallas, TX.

The program provides a continuum of training and support for students and teachers through mentoring, training, study sessions, and

funding for classroom supplies and achievement –based rewards. Teachers attended a four-day training in the summer with two follow-up training sessions during the school year. Students participated in three Saturday study sessions throughout the school year to focus on math, English, and science tests.

The NMSI College Readiness Program focuses on AP exams, which are prime indicators of college-preparedness and success. According to NMSI data, students who master AP courses in high school are three-times more likely to graduate from college. After three years in the program the average increase in qualifying AP scores among NMSI partner schools is more than five times the national average.

NMSI schools receive an annual evaluation for performance analysis and goal-setting to maximize program effectiveness.

DHS saw an increase in the total number of students taking AP courses in the first year of the program with 155 participating taking a total of 230 AP tests. Four new AP courses were added to the DHS schedule, including AP Calculus, AP Computer Science Principles, AP Environmental Science, and AP Physics.

“We are looking forward to implementing the second year of the program at DHS,” concluded Baggett. “We have a record number of students enrolled in AP courses, our teachers are continuing to receive course-specific training, and we are fully engaged in a proven process that provides our students opportunities to succeed both now and in their future endeavors.”



Shawn Baggett (From left), Assistant Principal at DHS, Col. Jarrett A. Thomas, II, Garrison Commander at Fort Polk, Kim Hayes, BPSB Curriculum Director, and Mike Reese, Fort Polk Progress, were on hand at the August School Board meeting to discuss the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) College Readiness Program at DeRidder High School.