Advanced Placement Courses at Spring-Ford

What, and how difficult are they?
Background

- 10-12 Center- 20 AP courses
- 9th Grade Center- First AP course (Human Geography) offered next year
- College Board provides schools with 34 AP courses to choose from
- The purpose is to take a course that mimics a college level class
- The courses conclude with a test that is graded on a 1-5 scale
- Most colleges, with a few exceptions, will take a student’s AP score(s) into account and offer them exemptions for the equivalent course during their freshman year at college
Course Details

- Listed under all of the prerequisites for these courses at our school are requirements such as a 90%-95% of above in the previous respective subject class, a teacher recommendation, and most importantly an interest in the material.

- All courses demand an enormous amount of time both from the teacher’s and student’s perspective.

- Some courses are designed to cover two semesters worth of college material.

- Teachers who choose to teach these courses must attend conferences and workshops on their own time so that they can be well-equipped for the long journey to May the following school year.

- The most obvious issues in all of the AP classes are time constraints, money for materials, and the required interest of everyone involved to work hard all year.
Other Details

- There is a 1.07 weight multiplier for AP classes when calculating GPA.
- In my opinion, the school does an excellent job of having the teachers teach these classes to the level of a freshman college course.
- In last May, the number of students taking AP exams was the highest ever in Spring-Ford’s history (504 Students).

Example:
- Cost for a single AP test in 2014 is $89.00.
- Suppose a student is taking four classes to supplement four freshman level requirements at Montgomery County Community College. 4 x $89.00 = $356.00.
- Cost of books for freshman level courses at Montgomery County Community College is ~ $1,300.00.
- $1,300.00 - $356.00 = $944.00 saved by taking the AP tests for these courses while still in high school.
- Obviously the student needed to get a certain score on each respective test for the college to count it, but the fact is that these courses can save people a lot of money and time in college.
My *Personal Experience*

- **This year**: AP Biology, AP Language and Composition, AP Calculus AB, and AP U.S. Government and Politics

- **Next year**: AP Physics, AP Chemistry, AP Calculus BC, AP French, and AP Literature and Composition

- ~ 3-5 hours of homework each night
- ~ 2 tests a week
- ~ 4-5 quizzes a week
- ~ 2-3 long term assignments a month
- ~ 1-3 essays a month for English
- Along with just the normal homework load, I have to continually review things from earlier in the year

- The AP test is cumulative so every student must be accountable from things learned from the first day of school until their test in May
My Recommendations

- Continue to add AP classes
- Encourage every student to take advantage of open enrollment if they are passionate about an AP class
- Keep sending teachers to workshops
- Urge every student to take at least one AP class in their most interested subject
Thank you for your time!