**FLORIDA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OPPOSES**

**MODIFICATION OF THE AP PSYCHOLOGY COURSE**

August 8, 2023

The Florida Psychological Association (FPA) opposes any effort from the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) to modify AP Psychology’s approved course structure and teaching/delivery in Florida schools. AP Psychology has been taught for the past 25 years with a solid, evidence-based foundation of research and science. This includes the essential sections on gender and sexual orientation as they are embedded in the discovery, understanding, and appreciation of the natural human sexuality/evolutionary spectrum. Misrepresenting years’ worth of human experience and scientific findings sets forth a dangerous precedent that can impact how students relate to, understand, and ultimately treat sexual and gender diverse individuals. As the APA CEO Arthur C. Evans Jr., PhD

stated, “An advanced placement course that ignores the decades of science studying sexual orientation and gender identity would deprive students of knowledge they will need to succeed.”

Recently, in a letter directed to the Florida school superintendents, the FLDOE stated that AP Psychology can be taught in its entirety “in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate.” This course should be taught in full as originally developed. Any censorship of content should not occur. The FLDOE needs to be definitive on the meaning of ‘age and developmentally appropriate.’

FPA asserts that the AP Psychology sections on gender identity and sexual orientation are age and developmentally appropriate as developmental psychologists, the experts in what is age and developmentally appropriate, were key contributors to the course development.

Many colleges look favorably upon students who have completed AP coursework. Florida students should be entitled to the same learning experience as students who take the AP Psychology course in other states. Given that an estimated 30,000 students are registered to take the course, FLDOE must make it clear that it will be taught in its entirety, as originally developed, or students risk not receiving college credit for the course, putting them at a competitive disadvantage to students who have taken the approved AP Psychology course. FPA also cautions students on taking alternative programs that do not include how sex and gender influence socialization and other aspects of development, as colleges may not accept such a restricted course for credit,