



Application to Submit a Case Study:
 Our Journey to Schoolwide AVID (School name, city and state)
 An AVID National Demonstration School

Coordinator	Dana Marie McLane
Coordinator contact information email & phone	dana.mclane@ocps.net
Principal's Name	Dr. Joseph Miller

Our Journey to Schoolwide AVID:

Pioneered by a singular, passionate advocate, named Kelly Strecker, AVID began at Stonewall Jackson Middle School with 5 AVID elective classes, two in 7th grade and three in 8th grade. Just five years later, AVID has grown to 200 students in nine AVID elective classes, three in each grade level, and has permeated the culture of the entire school. However, this feat was not accomplished without some growing pains. Obstacles have included attaining endorsement of the program from administrators, teachers, and parents, acquiring tutors, and recruitment of students. But, from the beginning, it has been the positive outcome, the success of the AVID students themselves, which has been the driving force pushing us to expand and eliciting respect and admiration from the staff, the student body, and community.

Stonewall Jackson Middle School AVID students exhibit leadership qualities and the determination necessary to succeed. Instructors appreciate AVID students' ability to write well, take Cornell notes, organize a binder, speak with confidence, and utilize critical thinking skills. Everyone around them is impressed by these students' sense of community and the ways they support each other. They are a family and they reach out to the world around them. The affect Stonewall Jackson Middle School AVID students have had on their school and community is immeasurable.

Through the years, our site team has grown from one, to five, to twelve....and now we have twenty three staff members consisting of teachers, counselors and administrators

from every grade level, committed to serving on our AVID site team. That first year, only two teams of teachers attended AVID training, but now sixty five percent of our entire staff has been trained by AVID, including all three guidance counselors. In addition, our school conducts ongoing professional developments with all staff in AVID methodologies; including, but not limited to: WICR, philosophical chairs, Socratic seminar, and Cornell notes.

The first year of AVID at Stonewall Jackson Middle School, none of the administration attended Summer Institute. Although they did not attend summer Institute, the principal, Dr. Joseph Miller, and the Assistant Principal, Brian Andrews, studied the materials and both became strong supporters of AVID. The assistant principal, Brian Andrews, took time to meet with every AVID student and get to know each of them and their needs. He was highly supportive in scheduling AVID students appropriately and working side by side with the AVID Coordinator. While some teachers resisted AVID, it was the students who took the challenge to change their minds.

AVID students took a key role in spreading the word about what AVID was and what it wasn't. They took ownership in sharing information about Cornell Notes, AVID, WICR, their personal goals and their organized binders. They started speaking at faculty meetings and PTSA meetings to spread the word. One of the key eye-openers was when the AVID students hosted an AVID Awareness where all staff members came to the AVID classroom during their planning periods. The AVID students created stations in the classroom where teachers could learn about tutorials, organization, motivational/teambuilding activities, and the AVID curriculum in 30 minutes. This experience was one of the first times that our administrators, teachers, counselors and other staff could see what AVID was all about. Who better to teach others about AVID than AVID students? As a result, we received unqualified administrative support and were given the green light to move forward and expand AVID at Jackson.

As AVID expanded, the site team and administrative support grew, as well. The second year of AVID all site team teachers attended summer institute. The program experienced great success in student achievement, parental involvement and the increase in amount of advanced/honors courses available. When AVID began in 2004-2005 there were 1-2 Algebra Honors courses available, mainly to the highest level students in the school. After a few years of AVID, the number of sections of Algebra more than tripled. AVID served as a gateway to expand the level of rigor and opportunity for academic success at SJMS. Another achievement included opening AVID 6th grade classes mid-year of 06-07. This request was from an AVID 8th grade parent who wanted the same opportunity for her 6th grade son. The principal readily granted this request.

Despite the lack of initial training, all of the administrators are now AVID trained, except for a new member of that team, who will be attending training in November. Our principal, Dr. Joseph Miller, is an extremely dedicated member of our site team and a leading advocate of AVID. He is also a promoter for AVID at the district level. As a member of the district's curricular policy group, the K-12 Education League of Excellence Task Force, he helped shape district policies which included enabling high school courses to be offered in middle schools, defining rigor to include AVID programming, and making secondary AVID a district-wide initiative. He has also served as an AVID staff developer at Summer Institute. He supports our program in every way that he can and he genuinely believes in our students' ability to achieve their full potential, which sets the tone across our campus for a love of AVID and AVID students.

AVID is a major part of our school-wide reform movement at our school. Because of all of the training, passion, and student achievement, AVID has become evident school-wide visually as well as practically. In addition to the already numerous flags, pennants, career bulletin boards and posters, WICR posters, and AVID acronym flyers that wallpaper this campus, we are in the process of expanding the visual presence of AVID with school-wide door signs and banners representing the school each faculty member graduated from. Every Stonewall Jackson Middle School student is equipped with a binder, takes Cornell notes, contributes to a writing portfolio, and is taught using WICR strategies. This year, the school provided a binder, dividers, and a planner for every student. Philosophical chairs and Socratic seminars have been implemented school-wide, as well, with an AVID Inquiry Packet developed by the AVID coordinator and distributed to every instructor. This packet provides Cornell notes as well as a double bubble map explaining the procedures and guidelines for each activity as well as providing suggested topics and texts. This packet will be followed with ongoing staff trainings and suggestions of topics and texts for every different subject area.

This year, thirty Stonewall Jackson Middle School staff members attended Orlando Summer Institute including all of the AVID team teachers, except one, who will attend training in November. At Summer Institute, we developed a powerful site team plan and since then we have already re-examined it three times in order to refine and update it. The Stonewall Jackson Middle School AVID Site Team is passionate about doing whatever we can to enable and empower our students to be successful.

We are constantly examining ways to overcome current challenges. Therefore, in accordance with our site team plan, this year we have executed many, various means of recruiting tutors and providing ample Algebra I support for our 8th grade AVID students. This past summer, we were able to offer math summer school to every AVID student who needed it. Those who attended summer school are doing notably better in Algebra I this year. We made the decision to offer Algebra I instead of Algebra Honors and then chose a gifted math teacher, Joe Barnett, to teach the 8th grade Algebra class

for AVID students. Mr. Barnett also just became a 'trainer of trainers' for the AVID Write Path Math Curriculum. Our math coach, Shanta Rashid, who is also a site team member, has developed and distributed math strategy lesson plans to be conducted school-wide during research periods. The computer lab has been opened to struggling math students to utilize SuccessMaker. Our AVID students are strongly encouraged to participate in free after-school tutoring opportunities and to write Algebra questions for their bi-weekly AVID tutorials.

In addition, we have diligently pursued assorted avenues in order to recruit and maintain tutors. Our School Advisory Committee has agreed to allocate a majority of the School Improvement Plan Funds to support AVID. We have developed a connection with Ulla Isaac, Experiential Learning, University of Central Florida, who has been able to provide us with grant money to pay qualified college students \$12 per hour to serve as tutors. We were also able to attain a grant of \$4,500.00 to provide tutor incentives as well as monthly Holmes Scholars guest speakers and parent nights in partnership with Nivischi Edwards, Graduate Research Assistant, University of Central Florida. The AVID coordinator is working with Ms. Edwards to appropriately and efficiently distribute those funds and attends the Holmes Scholars monthly meetings at the University of Central Florida. Dr. Miller was able to find funding in our school budget to provide us with a full time Para, who has been designated to serve as an AVID tutor. All substitute teachers are asked to tutor during their planning period. Linda Patrick, an instructional coach at our school, is utilizing her relationship with the Junior Achievement program at the University of Central Florida to enlist volunteer tutors. An invitation letter, including a schedule of tutorial times, has been sent to numerous college students at the University of Central Florida and Valencia Community College. Efforts by our AVID Site Team to develop new ideas for the recruitment of tutors and to retain our various alliances are inexhaustible.

In the future, we will make every effort to continue to nurture AVID, while being dedicated to preserve the fidelity of the program. We will continue to be a leader among AVID schools, especially in Florida. Opening our doors for site visits, offering training, and providing encouragement to those around us will cause them to embrace and cultivate AVID in their schools. We will advise beginning schools to take "baby steps." We will emphasize the importance of training and administrative support. We will tell them the key is to allow the students to "sell" the program, because they are what it is all about! We will continue to keep in touch with our AVID students and provide support for them as they attend and graduate high school and college. By hosting AVID student reunions we are able to maintain connections with former AVID students and learn about their success in high school. Our first group of AVID students is currently seniors. One particular former AVID student, Lavelle Simmons, is a senior at Boone HS. He was not able to take the AVID elective in high school since they did not offer AVID until this year. Although Lavelle was only exposed to AVID for one year, he continues to use the

strategies and college focus now. He has applied to Florida State University and is also hoping to apply to University of South Florida and Florida International University. He continues to stay in touch with his former AVID elective teachers to report his progress. Our former AVID students will also be invited to return to Stonewall Jackson Middle School to mentor younger AVID students, serve as tutors, and become powerful guest speakers. Rozella is one such example. She was an AVID student at Stonewall Jackson Middle School during 7th and 8th grade. She is now a sophomore AVID student at Colonial High School and for the past two years she has returned to her middle school to serve as an AVID tutor. This student has blossomed tremendously as an AVID student and wants to give back by volunteering her time to inspire younger AVID students.

Our greatest hope is for all of our students to achieve their maximum potential in life. We know that the AVID skills and attitudes that they take with them on this journey will serve them well to this end!