

Schoolwide and Districtwide AVID—Recommendations for Implementation

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AVID’s systemic approach supports schoolwide and districtwide achievement efforts. Districts and schools interested in leveraging AVID’s support structure, curriculum, and training to affect an entire campus and district should be advised that the AVID Essentials must be followed closely during the implementation of the AVID program. With the “basics” of AVID in place, as outlined in the Essentials, schools and districts can begin to move towards school and districtwide impact.

Since the implementation of the program in 1980, AVID has functioned as a schoolwide effort. As AVID’s national office, responsible for the program internationally, the AVID Center continues to view AVID as a system to accelerate large numbers of students and to support schools in their efforts to merge rigor and support. As has always been the case, the AVID academic elective remains at the center of any schoolwide efforts, and it is the AVID Center’s position that sites should offer the elective course to accommodate as many AVID-eligible students as possible. Moreover, the course should be taught by highly qualified AVID instructors from a wide variety of disciplines, and a strong and diverse AVID site team is instrumental, including site principals.

Recommendations for Moving AVID Schoolwide

Independent research and AVID Center’s study and analysis of schoolwide efforts have resulted in key recommendations for AVID to move schoolwide, including:

1. The AVID elective courses must feature well-trained teachers and tutors, enrolling large numbers of AVID students who meet the selection criteria. The school’s AVID site plan reflects a multi-year approach to develop multiple sections of the AVID elective to serve a large portion of the site’s AVID-eligible students.
2. The school’s site team plan reflects a multi-year approach to schoolwide implementation, and the site team meets regularly to review the components of the plan.
3. All AVID Essentials are at “routine” use at the minimum, with the site plan reflecting strategies to move key essentials to the “institutionalization” level.
4. The school features multiple AVID elective teachers chosen from a variety of academic disciplines.

5. The site team plan indicates that the school will expand the use of AVID tutors schoolwide through peer tutoring efforts and broader use of the college tutors.
6. The site plan indicates that the school will have trained, within four years, at least 50% of the teachers, through a combination of Summer Institute and AVID Path trainings.
7. The site has built capacity so that key teacher leaders are fully trained over a number of years at Summer Institutes and are prepared to become AVID staff developers on site
8. The site's administrators, especially the principal, are active members of the site team.

Research Findings on Schoolwide AVID

Watt, Yanez, Cosio and others studied 26 AVID sites in Texas, which implemented AVID as a Comprehensive School Reform effort. In follow-up studies, Watt and others also studied the importance of site leadership in schoolwide AVID efforts. In California AVID was studied by the California Department of Education (Emmett, 1992), an analysis of 22 San Diego Schools that had been implementing AVID for a number of years. The research on AVID (available on the AVID website) indicates the following conclusions about AVID as a schoolwide effort (a partial sampling):

1. AVID is a catalyst for schoolwide reform on those campuses that share AVID strategies with their entire staff. (Watt, et al)
2. AVID addresses and influences school policies that can be barriers for student to access rigorous and advanced curriculum. (Watt, et al)
3. AVID is a pathway to opening access to Advanced Placement classes and increasing the number of college-goers among ethnic minority and low socio-economic students. (Watt, et al)
4. AVID implementation can be adapted to meet the capacity and needs of individual campuses to implement comprehensive school reform. (Watt, et al)
5. Students impacted by AVID include not only AVID students themselves but also students that come in contact with AVID students. AVID students develop leadership skills that lead other groups of students to more productivity. (Watt, et al, and Emmett)
6. Teacher impact is a significant component of schoolwide AVID change. Even teachers NOT on the AVID site team are affected in several ways. (Watt, et al)
7. In AVID schools, teacher accountability is based on information related to differences in school improvement on college preparatory measures. (Emmett)
8. AVID allows changes in school rules, norms, and operations which support the goals of the project, to extend across the school. The culture of the schools

- changes to support greater participation in college preparatory and AP classes and to include all students in rigorous curriculum. (Emmett)
9. When planning for AVID as a schoolwide effort, principals must choose their site team members carefully. (Watt, et al)
 10. Supportive and involved principals lead to successful schoolwide efforts, based on AVID certification studies. (Watt, et al)

Districtwide AVID

AVID Center is currently studying AVID's districtwide efforts nationally, conducting research and evaluation, and working with a collaborative of superintendents to focus on creating college-ready students. The AVID Center believes that, for AVID to have districtwide impact, the superintendent and other executive leaders must lead AVID's implementation across the district. Also, AVID sites must be fully certified and meet in vertical teams with regularity. For unified districts, upper elementary programs implement AVID strategies at the 4th and 5th grades. Finally, districts fully involved in AVID feature policies that promote a college-going culture, grades 4-12.

Additional recommendations for districtwide approaches to AVID include:

1. The district's executive leadership team must be fully engaged in AVID's implementation across the district.
2. A districtwide AVID leadership team has developed a multi-year plan for AVID implementation across the district.
3. All AVID campuses are fully certified and offer adequate AVID sections to meet the needs of all students who qualify.
4. The school district is adopting a policy that provides a college preparatory path for all students.
5. Unified districts have a plan to involve elementary programs in pre-AVID training.
6. The district has a plan to expand AVID to all secondary sites and to develop demonstration sites at every level.

Over the next several years, the AVID Center will engage in research and evaluation efforts to study the factors in successful districtwide AVID efforts. In addition, the AVID Center will begin the process of districtwide certification.