



## Evaluation Brief Middle School AVID Program

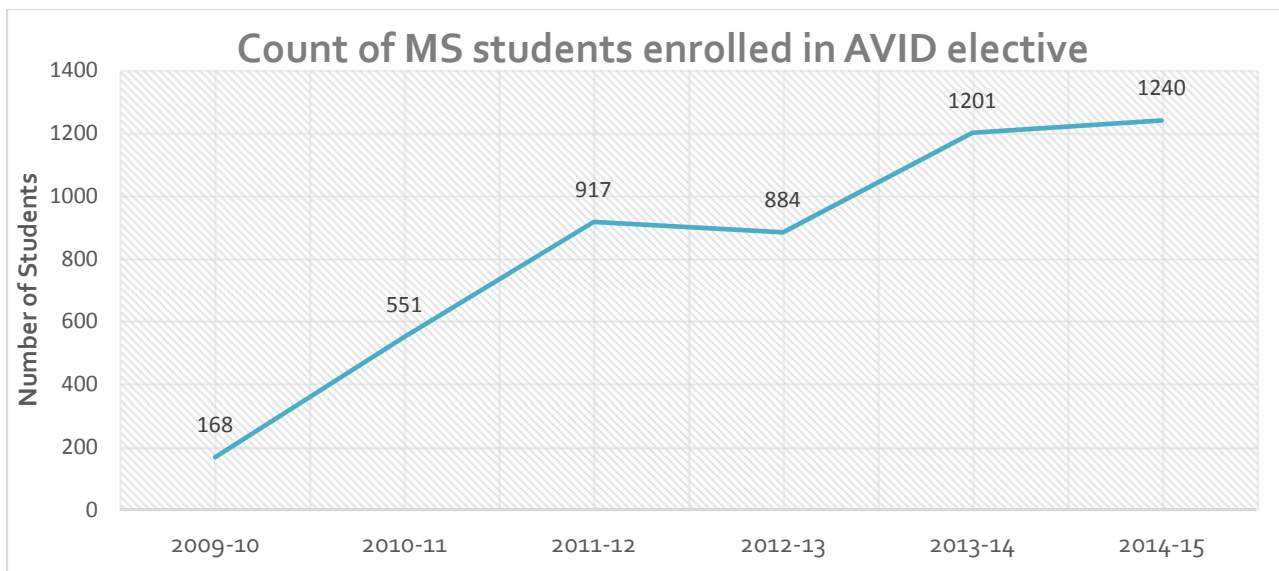
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### Introduction

AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination is a systemic instructional system for students in kindergarten all the way through higher education (K-16)<sup>1</sup>. AVID's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. AVID focuses on students in the academic middle who are potential first generation college-goers and typically underrepresented students including ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged students. Albuquerque Public Schools began offering the AVID elective course during the 2009-10 school year at two high schools and three middle schools. The AVID program started at Highland and Manzano for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and at Hayes, Van Buren and Wilson for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Currently AVID is being offered at 8 APS high schools and 18 middle schools districtwide. AVID has seen a huge increase in enrollment since inception, starting with 168 middle school students in 2009-10 and growing to 1,240 in 2014-15 (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Middle School enrollment in AVID elective**



<sup>1</sup> Although AVID has curriculum prepared for students in grades K-16, APS offers AVID as an elective for 7-12 grade students.

This report examines the effect of AVID on middle school students enrolled in the elective course. A major goal of the AVID middle school program is to enroll students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra. Consequently, this report examines enrollment in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra as well as other academic indicators including: 8<sup>th</sup> grade GPA, attendance rates, and a 9<sup>th</sup> grade off-track indicator. This study compares AVID students and students not enrolled in the AVID elective, but at the same schools, on these indicators. Students included in this study were enrolled at an AVID school in 7<sup>th</sup> grade during the 2011-12 school year. Students were followed from 7<sup>th</sup> grade to their freshman year of high school (2013-14).

During the 2011-12 school year 2,815 students entered 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Cleveland, Garfield, Grant, Hayes, Jackson, Jimmy Carter, John Adams, Kennedy, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Taylor, Van Buren and Wilson Middle Schools. Of this cohort of students, 571 enrolled in the AVID elective for at least one year during 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Nineteen AVID students did not have SBA math scores for 6<sup>th</sup> grade and were dropped from the analysis. Using propensity score matching an equal number of non-AVID students were chosen to use as a comparison group. A total of 1,104 students' data were used in this analysis (552 AVID students and 552 matched non-AVID students).

## Findings

Results from this analysis found a significant relationship between AVID and the various academic indicators studied. Students participating in the AVID elective were more successful than non-AVID students on academic indicators including: enrollment in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra, 8<sup>th</sup> grade GPA, 9<sup>th</sup> grade attendance rates, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade on-track status.

- ***AVID and enrollment in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra***

Course enrollment in eighth grade math was compared for matched non-AVID students and students enrolled in AVID for one or two years. For purposes of this research, students who were enrolled in Algebra I, Algebra I Honors, Geometry, Geometry Honors or Algebra II were categorized as being in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra group.

There was a significant relationship between AVID and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra. Students enrolled for two years of AVID were the most likely to enroll in Algebra during 8<sup>th</sup> grade (32.3%) followed by students enrolled in AVID for 1 year (25.9%). Non-AVID students enrolled in Algebra at the lowest rate (23.6%). Nationally between 39 and 43 percent of students enroll in Algebra or a more advanced course during 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students enrolled for 2 years of middle school AVID are coming close to the reaching the national average.

- ***AVID and 8<sup>th</sup> grade GPA***

Student GPAs for 8<sup>th</sup> grade (2012-13 school year) were compared for students enrolled in AVID and matched non-AVID students. Significant differences were found for AVID students on 8<sup>th</sup> grade GPA. AVID students had significantly higher average 8<sup>th</sup> grade GPAs (mean = 2.74) than non-AVID students (mean = 2.59).

- *AVID and 9<sup>th</sup> grade attendance*

Students enrolled in AVID for at least one year in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade were compared to matched students that had not enrolled in AVID. Student attendance rates for freshman year (2013-14 school year) were then compared for these two groups. Results indicate that the mean attendance rate for AVID and non-AVID students was significantly different. For those students who took an AVID course in middle school, average attendance was 92.4% while students not taking AVID in middle school had an average attendance rate of 90.6%.

- *AVID and 9<sup>th</sup> grade on-track indicator*

For this analysis, an on-track indicator was computed using credits obtained combined with GPA at the end of freshman year (2013-14). In order for a student to be considered on track to graduate they needed to have earned at least six credits overall including one in Math and one in ELA by the end of their freshman year, and have a GPA of at least 2.0. Students enrolled in AVID for one or two years in middle school were compared to students who had not taken an AVID course. Ninth grade on-track status was compared for these three groups.

Results found a significant relationship between AVID and the 9<sup>th</sup> grade on-track indicator. Students enrolled for two years of middle school AVID were 1.8 times more likely to be on-track to graduate at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade than non-AVID students. Students with one year of middle school AVID were 1.2 times more likely to be on-track to graduate than non-AVID students although this difference was non-significant.

## Conclusion

Enrolling in the AVID elective during middle school in APS had both short term and long term positive effects on students. Students enrolling in AVID for 2 years were much more likely to take 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra than non-AVID students. AVID students also had significantly higher 8<sup>th</sup> grade GPA's than non-AVID students. Long-term effects of AVID were still visible when these students enrolled in high school; students who took middle school AVID had significantly higher 9<sup>th</sup> grade attendance. Students who had been enrolled for 2 years of AVID in middle school were more likely to be on-track to graduate at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade than their non-AVID peers.

It is recommended that schools continue to increase enrollment in the AVID middle school program, especially of traditionally underrepresented student populations. Additionally, having students enrolled in AVID for 2 years (both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) will yield stronger gains in student performance. Providing strong supports for AVID students enrolled in 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra is essential. Identification and support for students that have low GPA's and/or attendance may also help to ensure future success of the AVID program.

A comprehensive AVID report is found on the website at <http://www.aps.edu/re/research-deployment-and-accountability>.