ADVANCEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION (AVID)

2006-2007 EVALUATION STUDY

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT (CCSD)
LAS VEGAS, NV

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OVERVIEW OF THE FULL EVALUATION: ORGANIZATION AND COMPONENTS

An evaluation of the AVID program was conducted in the spring of 2007. The evaluation was a collaborative effort between the CCSD Department of Research and School Improvement and graduate students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). Taken together, these two groups comprised the AVID study team.

The purpose of the study was twofold: (1) To evaluate the effectiveness of the AVID program in preparing CCSD students for college, and (2) To describe the implementation of the AVID program in CCSD, looking for areas of strength and those in need of improvement. To meet the objectives of the overall study, a two-part evaluation design was utilized. Part one focused on attitudinal and academic **outcomes** of the students, teachers, and parents involved with the AVID program and utilized primarily quantitative methods. The Department of Research and School Improvement and an outside contractor, Dr. Jennifer Cullen, led the outcome evaluation. Primarily conducted by UNLV members of the study team, part two of the evaluation centered on issues of **implementation** in twelve second and third year AVID schools.

Although the two evaluation components, outcome and implementation, are included in this overall report to assist in creating a more complete understanding of the AVID program in CCSD, each part was conducted as a separate study. Therefore, the outcome and implementation procedures and results are reported as distinct components. The individuals who contributed to the two evaluation components are listed below:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Clark County School District (CCSD) introduced the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program in 2004 as a way to decrease drop-out and increase college enrollment for underachieving high school students. The AVID program is "designed to increase college participation rates, specifically targeting minority and underprivileged populations as a means to create educational parity among ethnic and income groups in the United States" (Pitch, Marchand, Hoffman, & Lewis, 2006). Since 2004, the AVID program has grown to include 22 high schools and 1 middle school, and serves approximately 1,700 CCSD students annually.

To determine the degree to which the AVID program has been successfully incorporated into its participating schools and whether student participants are succeeding academically, an evaluation of the AVID program was conducted in the spring of 2007. The evaluation was a collaborative effort between the CCSD Department of Research and School Improvement (RSI) and graduate students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). **The evaluation consisted of two distinct, yet related components: an outcome evaluation and an implementation evaluation.**

The outcome evaluation component involved nine schools in their third-year of AVID. The purpose of the outcome evaluation study was to determine if AVID leads to increased college preparation and achievement levels among students in the Clark County School District. Additionally, the AVID study team assessed how students, teachers and parents felt about the AVID program and whether parent attitudes influenced AVID student outcomes**. The overall results from the outcome evaluation indicated that AVID was effective in meeting the academic needs of underachieving students in CCSD.** Results from a matched sample of 474 10th, 11th, and 12th grade AVID students and 473 of their non-AVID peers indicated that AVID students outperformed their peers in grade point average and NHSPE math test scores. AVID students also had higher pass rates than their peers on the NHSPE reading assessment, enrolled in more Honors/AP courses, and had higher attendance rates. Further, over 75% of the first cohort of graduating seniors involved with this study (of the 85% for whom data were available) reported intentions to enroll in a two- or four- year college program. Survey results from AVID students and teachers from across the district, and parents of AVID students at the nine 3rd-year schools indicated that the majority of students, teachers, and parents felt that AVID has a positive impact on students.

The implementation study involved twelve second and third year AVID schools and utilized interviews with AVID coordinators and observations of AVID elective courses to describe the successes and challenges to full AVID implementation in CCSD schools. Although AVID has a successful history (see Watt, Yanez, Cossio, 2003; Watt, Powell, Mendiola, & Cossio, 2006; Swanson, 2000), this evaluation focused on whether implementation of AVID in Clark County School District has been strictly theory-driven, or whether it has become more theory-guided, and more flexible, altering certain components from the original implementation guidelines. The study demonstrated that each school site was slightly different in the way that it "does" AVID. For example, the evaluators found that although most classrooms reflected the AVID culture, not all classes had prominently displayed WIC-R strategies or college/university banners. Results showed that strict adherence to the AVID program goals at all sites has not been reached; however, many of the AVID program components are being consistently used. Areas that are still evolving at some schools included student selection for the program, tutorial use, and effective parental involvement. The use of the core AVID strategies (WIC-R),

an emphasis on a college going culture, and school-level buy-in were areas of strength at most schools. The implementation study concluded that most schools currently involved with the AVID program are still in the process of implementing AVID.

Taken together, the results of the implementation and outcome evaluations indicate that although AVID is still new to CCSD and in some cases has not yet been fully integrated in some schools, initial student outcomes are promising. As the program matures and strengthens and more students move through the program, additional data will become available to determine whether this promise will continue to be fulfilled.

INTRODUCTION

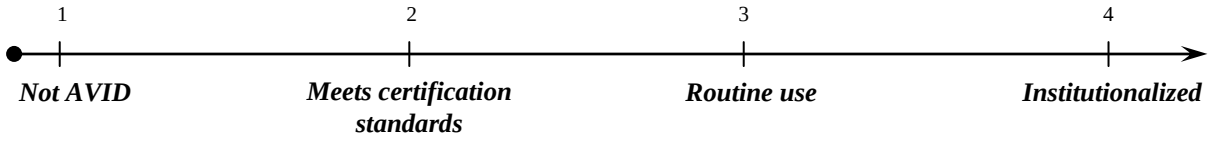
THE AVID PROGRAM

Decreasing dropout rates and enhancing college admissions is a goal of many school districts nationwide. In the United States, 30% of high school students do not go on to pursue post-secondary education (Avidcenter.org, 2006). According to the most recent data available from the Center for Education Statistics, there is a gap in continuing education between minority students and non-minority students, with minorities making up only 30% of students enrolled in degree-granting institutions (Center for Education Statistics, www.nces.ed.gov, 2006). Of these 30% of students, 12.5% are African-American, 10.5% are Hispanic and 6.5% are Asian or Pacific Islanders.

There are many programs that aim to decrease dropout rates and increase college enrollment. One of these programs, the *Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)* program, is "designed to increase college participation rates, specifically targeting minority and underprivileged populations as a means to create educational parity among ethnic and income groups in the United States" (Pitch, Marchand, Hoffman, & Lewis, 2006). As such, AVID is considered an "untracking" program by supporting an ethos for the minority student where success is expected, not anomalous. Students who are potential underachievers are supported, mentored and coached to avoid a premature ending to their high school education while concurrently being directed towards more productive, potentially successful college-bound programs. AVID serves students in 5th through 12th grade. Those who are identified as having college potential, but are at risk of dropping out of high school and in danger of not enrolling in college, are selected as participants by an AVID site team (Swanson, 2000). The site team is made up of an AVID coordinator/teacher, school counselor, elective teacher, school principal, and an administrative designee (Watt, Powell, Mendiola, & Cossio, 2006). Despite being selected as a qualified participant, student involvement in the program is entirely voluntary.

The AVID program structure includes strategies such as placing underrepresented students in the same college preparatory classes as their high-achieving peers and providing a special elective class that meets for one academic period every school day for their entire high-school careers. The AVID elective class utilizes instructional strategies, curriculum, and training that support students for successful completion of their classes. The WIC-R (Writing, Collaboration, Inquiry and Reading) strategies are thought to be paramount for the success of the AVID program and are given special attention in the AVID elective class. The students are taught note- and test-taking skills, collaborative learning strategies and organizational, management and critical reading skills; students are also given additional support for preparing to take college entrance exams and for completing college and scholarship applications (Pitch et al., 2006; Watt et al., 2006). Finally, the AVID elective course provides an important context of social support for these students (Watt, Yanez, & Cossio, 2003). Teachers of the AVID elective course are provided specialized training in these techniques during summer institutes and school site workshops. College tutors trained in AVID instructional strategies are utilized as additional support for the AVID students (AVIDonline.org).

The AVID program is based on Eleven Essential Standards created to ensure effective implementation of the program. The "essentials" have several indicators and are assessed on a continuum reflecting the degree of implementation:



These are the Eleven Essential Standards of an AVID Program:

1. AVID recruits and selects students in the academic middle with academic potential.
2. AVID participants volunteer to take part in the program.
3. Sites are fully committed to implementing AVID.
4. AVID students are enrolled in Honors/AP courses.
5. The AVID elective class follows a strong reading and writing curriculum.
6. Inquiry is consistently used in the AVID classroom.
7. Collaboration is consistently used in the AVID classroom.
8. A sufficient number of trained tutors are regularly available to help students (using AVID strategies) with their advanced classes.
9. The AVID program is monitored through the AVID Data System.
10. The school or district has committed fiscal and organizational support to AVID.
11. There is an active interdisciplinary AVID site team committed to implementing AVID.

According to Swanson (2000), when support is given to students who have college potential and who are usually ignored, change can occur. With rigor and support, AVID helps meet the academic needs of underrepresented students to ensure they are on track to successfully enter college.

AVID IN THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Since 2004, the Clark County School District has implemented AVID at various schools. Currently, the AVID program is implemented in 22 high schools and 1 middle school. The district offers 79 sections of AVID and serves approximately 1, 700 students. Nine schools are currently on their third year of implementation, nine are on their second year, and five are on their first year. The district plans to further expand the AVID program during the 2007-2008 academic year to include additional middle and high schools.

AVID OUTCOME EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE OUTCOME STUDY

The AVID outcome evaluation study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of the AVID program in assisting underrepresented students with college preparation in Clark County School District (CCSD). To guide the evaluation, the following research questions were developed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. *To what degree does AVID lead to increased preparation for college among students in the Clark County School District?*

2. *To what degree does AVID lead to increased student achievement levels readiness among students in the Clark County School District?*

3. *What are parent, teacher, and student attitudes toward the AVID program and to what extent do parent attitudes influence AVID student outcomes?*

REVIEW OF RELATED OUTCOME LITERATURE

Research studies examining the effects of AVID involvement on student outcomes tend to show favorable results. Some of the student outcomes that have been examined include attendance rates, standardized test scores, course enrollment patterns, graduation and completion rates, college enrollment and college success.

Attendance Rates

Students enrolled in AVID programs tend to show an increase in their school attendance. For example, in a longitudinal study of the Texas AVID program, Watt, Powell, and Mendiola (2004) found that compared to their non AVID classmates, AVID students had a 5% higher attendance rate in the 1999-2000 school year and a 3% higher rate in the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 school years. Moreover, AVID high school students had attendance rates 3 to 3.5 points higher than all other high school students in Texas from 1999-2001.

Standardized Test Scores

Previous evaluation studies have reported that AVID participants outperform their peers on many standardized tests. In their assessment of an AVID program in Texas, Watt et al. (2004) found that AVID students performed higher than their classmates and better than the statewide student average on reading and math portions of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).

Data from San Diego city schools revealed that in 2004, AVID students outperformed non-AVID students in reading and math portions of the California High School Exit Exam

(CAHSEE). Moreover, while 76% of African American students in the AVID program passed the reading and math sections of the CAHSEE, just 48% of African American non-AVID students passed these sections, a difference of 28%. Similar results were demonstrated for Latino students. Approximately 77% of Latino students in the AVID program passed the math and reading portions of the CAHSEE but just 48% of Latino students who are not part of AVID passed these sections. Data for the academic year ending in 2005 also revealed a similar pattern (AVIDonline.org cited in Martinez & Klopott, 2005).

Advanced Course Enrollment

Data from across the country shows that students participating in AVID programs are taking more classes as a whole and more honors and advanced placement (AP) classes specifically, than are students who are not involved in an AVID program. For example Watt et al. (2006) found that students in AVID schools and districts enrolled in more advanced courses than students in non-AVID high schools and districts. In fact, advanced course enrollment in the non-AVID schools and districts had decreased. Watts and her colleagues reported that more than 61% of the AVID students enrolled in AP language arts and social studies, 18% in AP math, and 2% in AP science. In yet another example, Pitch et al. (2006) found that AVID students from Clark County School District in southern Nevada took an average of 5.8 more honors/AP course semesters during the 2004-05 and 2005-06 academic years than non-AVID students.

High School Graduation and Completion Rates

Students in AVID programs graduate high school at promising rates. From 1998-2002, AVID students in Texas graduated on an advanced graduation plan at a rate of 93% (Watt et al., 2006). Students who were in the 9th grade during the 1998-99 academic year and participated in the AVID program experienced an increase in graduation and completion rates; in contrast, students not involved in the AVID program experienced a decrease in graduation and completion rates.

College Enrollment and Success

Data on AVID participating students shows that they are college bound by the time they graduate high school. For example, in a study of the Clairemont High School AVID program in San Diego, 98% (178 out of 181 students) of the AVID participating students graduated high school, 89% of them were enrolled in four-year institutions, and the other 11% were enrolled in community colleges (Swanson, 1989). Similar results were found on a statewide study of AVID students in California (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2000). A full 95% of the students who responded to a survey about college reported they were enrolled and approximately 75% were attending four-year colleges. Although it is not uncommon for college students to take semesters off from school in order to pursue other interests, approximately 85% of the AVID high school graduates were continuously enrolled in their college.

Finally, Guthrie and Guthrie (2000) reported that AVID high school graduates were performing favorably while in college. In fact, approximately 50% of AVID students

reported that they had a B average or better and a mean college grade point average (GPA) of 2.94; over 50% of the respondents had a mean college GPA between 3.0-3.9.

Summary

In sum, the evaluation research that has been completed on AVID programs does suggest some important and promising findings**.** Research generally demonstrates positive results (e.g., higher attendance rates, proficiency exams, course taking patterns, grade point average, standardized test scores and college enrollment, work and success). However, these AVID programs and studies provide information that is specific to the characteristics of the local student population examined and are different (e.g., demographically) from that in Clark County School District. **Therefore, the findings from those studies, although generally positive, cannot be generalized to AVID students in Clark County School District.**

Demographic information from the Clark County School District Accountability Report (2005-06) indicates that the district serves a diverse population of students. The district's ethnic minority population is almost 61%. Moreover, 17% of the students enrolled within the district qualify as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and 46% qualify for the free or reduced lunch program (FRL). Graduation data show disproportionate graduation rates among ethnic minority groups. Compared to the almost 68% graduation rate of White students, only 52% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 48% Hispanic and 49% Black/African American students graduated from high school in the 2005-2006 school year (Clark County School District Accountability Report, 2005-2006). **Therefore, it is imperative for the Clark County School District to evaluate the degree to which AVID programs in CCSD schools have impacted participating students.** The remainder of this report will focus on the research design and methodology used to study the impact of AVID on CCSD participating students, provide a detailed account of the study results, and conclude with summary remarks about the use of AVID in the CCSD system.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The data for this outcome study was collected from nine participating AVID high schools within the Clark County School District. The data includes student performance records and academic involvement, self-report survey data from AVID students, self-report survey data from parents of AVID students and self-report survey data from teachers involved with the AVID programs.

Study Procedures

The present outcome evaluation is the first part of a more comprehensive study regarding both the AVID program implementation and outcomes in CCSD. Although some schools were involved with both the implementation and outcome components, the outcome evaluation used only the nine third-year schools' student outcome data. When noted, survey data may include responses not limited to the nine third-year schools.

CCSD central office AVID personnel contacted the AVID teachers at selected sites and sent them information about the study. The AVID teacher survey was posted online and surveys were sent home to AVID parents. Following the initial introduction by the CCSD central office AVID personnel, the AVID research team contacted the AVID site team coordinator at each school to arrange a site visit. During site visits, the AVID research team members conducted a brief interview with previously identified AVID site team members. After the interview, AVID research team members conducted observations in one AVID elective class at each site. All surveys, interviews and observations were voluntary; parents and teachers were asked to sign consent forms prior to participating. Data were also collected on students' attendance rates, AP/Honors enrollment, Nevada High School Proficiency Exam (NHSPE) reading and math scores, NHSPE pass rates, and Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) scores for AVID and non-AVID students. AVID students in 12th grade provided information on their plans after graduation.

Student Sample Selection

The nine AVID high schools were in their third year of the program at the time data was collected in the spring of 2007. Students from Cohorts 1 and 2[1] were selected, resulting in a student sample of 10th, 11th and 12th grade students. A matched-sample of comparison students was also selected from AVID schools. The comparison group includes students who may have been eligible for AVID based on their 8th grade demographics and grades (as outlined in the AVID manual), but who are not presently eligible and have never been a part of the AVID program. The samples were matched according to gender, ethnicity (i.e., White, Black, Asian, Hispanic) and cumulative GPA. By choosing students who attend high schools that presently have the AVID program for the matched sample, confounds such as block scheduling or other similar school programs are minimized.

[1] Cohort 1 is comprised of students who were continuously enrolled in AVID from the 2004-05 to 2006-07 school year. These students started AVID in the 9th/10th grade and are currently in 11th/12th grade. Cohort 2 is comprised of students who were continuously enrolled in AVID from the 2005-06 to 2006-07 school year. These students started AVID in the 9th grade in 2005-06 and are currently in 10th grade.

Creating Matched Samples of AVID and Non-AVID Students. In order to compare AVID students to students who did not participate in AVID, it was first necessary to create a sample that was as similar as possible to the sample of AVID participating students. In CCSD, AVID protocol suggests that students should be invited to the AVID program during their 8th grade year and prior to entering high school. Although this procedure was not necessarily followed at all sites, for sampling purposes, students were selected for this study based on their 8th grade data. Due to this procedure, only AVID participants and their potential comparison students for whom 8th grade data were available were included in this study.[2]

The general logic behind this procedure is to ensure that you are comparing like individuals. In order to create this matched sample, the CCSD AVID Study Team followed a series of steps. First, the team separated 20% of the non-AVID sample of students. Then a hierarchical cluster analysis was performed in SPSS version 15.0 to determine the number of like groups in the sample. Next a K-Means cluster analysis was performed specifying a priori a 2-cluster solution using gender, ethnicity and cumulative GPA (from the second semester of school) for the year the student was in the 8th grade. The team then matched students within grade and school using gender, ethnicity and cumulative GPA in a one-to-one matching procedure. On occasion, it was necessary to move outside of the clusters in order to find an appropriate match. There were some remaining AVID cases with no non-AVID match so it was necessary to return to the main data file in order to locate an appropriately matched case. Once a complete matched dataset was created, t-tests were run to look for any statistically significant differences between the AVID and non-AVID cases (see Table 1.11 for descriptive data of the AVID and non-AVID student samples according to gender and ethnicity). The results did not reveal any statistically significant differences so the AVID study team concluded that the two groups were sufficiently similar to warrant comparisons and continued on to the evaluation component of the study.

RESULTS

Teacher Survey Data

Teacher data on the AVID program was collected via a web-based survey using a program called Zoomerang. The survey asked teachers to report on their level of participation in the AVID program, experience with the program and overall attitudes about the program. 175 Teachers and counselors at the fifteen schools (9 third year AVID schools and 6 second year AVID schools) participating in the overall study and who had attended the AVID summer institute training at some point were invited to participate in the staff survey. Many of these teachers may have left the program or moved schools, so the results reflect the teachers' current status, thus yielding more school locations than the original fifteen. These results are presented as descriptive information only and designed to provide a general sense of the attitudes of a sample of teachers and counselors who have been trained in the AVID program.

[2] This criterion naturally excluded any students who transferred into CCSD or who did not attend a CCSD middle school. Some AVID students were not included in this sample due to the lack of data available for matching.

Seventy-five teachers from 23 different schools filled out the web-based survey (response rate of 43%). Of those, 55 teachers (73.3%) from 16 different schools were actively involved in their school's AVID program at the time they filled out the survey[3]. Here's what we know about the teachers who are actively involved in the AVID program at their school during the 2006-07 academic year:

- 60% are between the ages of 26 and 45
- 74.5% have earned a Masters degree or higher
- They have been teaching/counseling for an average of 13 years (*median* = 9.85)
- They have been with their current school for an average of 6 years (*median* = 3.5)
- They have been involved with AVID for about 2 years

Teachers were asked to mark whether they agree or disagree with several statements using a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "*strongly disagree*" to 4 = "*strongly agree*." Only 4 of the 75 teachers who filled out the survey had been involved with an AVID program outside of CCSD; The responses from the 20 teachers who were not currently involved with AVID based their responses on their experiences with AVID in CCSD. As seen in Table 1.1, teachers who are currently involved with AVID and those who were previously involved with AVID have positive attitudes about the successfulness of the program.

[3] Although only AVID teachers from 15 schools were invited to participate, teachers moved to other schools that had the AVID program.

Table 1.1. Teacher Attitudes and Experiences with the AVID Program

Teacher Survey Items	N	Mean	SD
I personally like AVID.	74	3.42	.74
I believe AVID is a better way to prepare students for college.	74	3.36	.59
I feel fortunate to be part of the AVID program.	67	3.31	.82
I use the AVID strategies in my AVID elective class.	39	3.31	.77
I use the AVID strategies in my core classes.	55	3.25	.58
AVID has been successful in placing underrepresented students in Honors/AP	69	3.14	.65
I have shared AVID strategies with my non-AVID colleagues.	69	3.12	.65
AVID professional development has impacted my instructional style.	59	3.10	.69
I have regular contact with other site AVID team members.	67	3.10	.86
AVID professional development has affected the way that I think about teaching.	65	3.09	.68
AVID professional development has impacted the instructional tools that I use.	60	3.08	.72
AVID is helping my students successfully complete their Honors/AP classes.	65	3.06	.53
Our AVID site team has monthly meetings.	63	3.06	.91
Students are better prepared for college since we implemented AVID.	63	2.97	.65
AVID Elective classes are producing higher quality students.	70	2.96	.65
I am actively involved in the selection process for new AVID students.	69	2.96	.96
Most of my students like AVID.	65	2.95	.72
Student achievement has improved with AVID.	69	2.94	.64
AVID students successfully use the strategies taught in the AVID elective.	68	2.91	.66
AVID has been successful in my school.	69	2.88	.78
My non-AVID colleagues use AVID strategies.	63	2.86	.62
My attitude towards the AVID program has changed positively since I have been with the program.	63	2.84	.70
My school has developed a more positive college-going culture.	68	2.79	.76
AVID has changed (evolved) since I have been in the program.	57	2.72	.82
Changes should be made to the student selection process.	65	2.69	.86
AVID has a positive impact on the school beyond just those individuals (teachers, students, site members) involved directly with AVID.	65	2.69	.71
Our AVID site team regularly provides staff development school wide.	66	2.64	.78
Changes should be made to the staff selection process.	66	2.48	.79
I have regular contact with the CCSD AVID personnel.	68	2.13	.86
I have regular contact with site team members of other AVID schools.	68	2.01	.87

Note. SD = standard deviation. N = sample size.

Generally speaking, CCSD teachers are happy to be a part of the AVID program, are using the AVID strategies in their teaching and feel that students are experiencing academic success as a result of being involved in AVID. The areas that teachers feel less positive about appear to be those related to collegiality and collaboration and not as centrally related to the program goals or effects on students.

Parent Survey Results

Surveys were sent home to parents of 10th through 12th grade AVID students at the nine schools participating in the outcome evaluation. The survey assessed parents' attitudes about the AVID program and their perceptions about whether it has been effective in aiding their child towards college success. Specifically, the survey asked about school staff communication with parents, their participation in their child's education, communication with their children, perceptions about college feasibility and about their child's academic future.

Surveys were returned from 313 parents[4]. Women filled out 245 of the surveys and men filled out 60 (8 respondents did not mark their gender). The parents were on average 43 years old and varied in their completed education and the number of years their child has participated in the AVID program (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2. Descriptive Statistics about the Parents

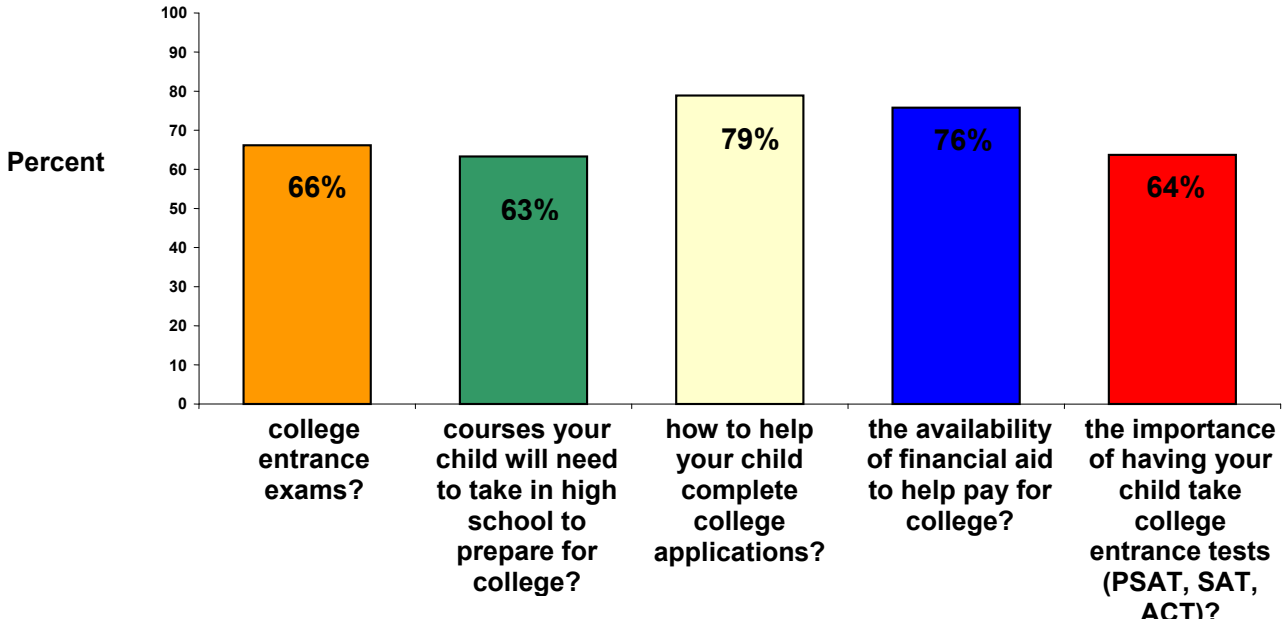
Parent Descriptives	N	Mean	SD	Median	Range
Parent Age	270	42.74	7.29	42.00	21-71 years old
Highest Level of Education	288	11.99	2.52	12.00	6-16 years in school
Number of Years Child has been in AVID	308	1.93	.91	2.00	0-6 years

Note. SD = standard deviation. N = sample size.

The results of the survey show that parents generally hold positive attitudes about the AVID program. However, in the area of school staff communication about preparing for college, AVID parents in the Clark County School District reported receiving little information (see Figure 1.1). Most parents said that school staff had not spoken with them about college entrance requirements, courses their child will need to take in high school in order to prepare for college, how they can help their child complete college applications, the availability of financial aid to help pay for college, or the importance of taking college entrance exams (e.g., PSAT, SAT, ACT).

[4] Based on database information and number of AVID sections, it is estimated that between 840 and 560 parents received the survey, resulting in a response rate ranging between 37% – 55%.

Figure 1.1. ***School staff has never spoken with me about…***



The results also show, however, that parents could be doing more to facilitate the academic success of their children:

- 72% of parents had never requested academic help for their child from school staff
- 65% of parents had never had a conference with their child's teacher regarding the child's progress in school
- 73% of parents had never had a conference with their child's school counselor regarding the child's progress in school

When it comes to talking with their children, AVID parents are doing their part. A full 95% of the parents report talking to their child about attending college and about his/her academic progress. More than 93% of the parents said that they do believe their child can afford to attend a 4-year college using financial aid or scholarships. Just 28% reported that their child could attend by relying on family resources.

Parents also responded to a number of questions about their perceptions of their child's academic success and experiences with the AVID program. They were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with 17 statements using a 4-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 = "*strongly disagree*" to 4 = "*strongly agree*." Most AVID parents were confident that their child's academic career would extend beyond high school (see Table 1.3).

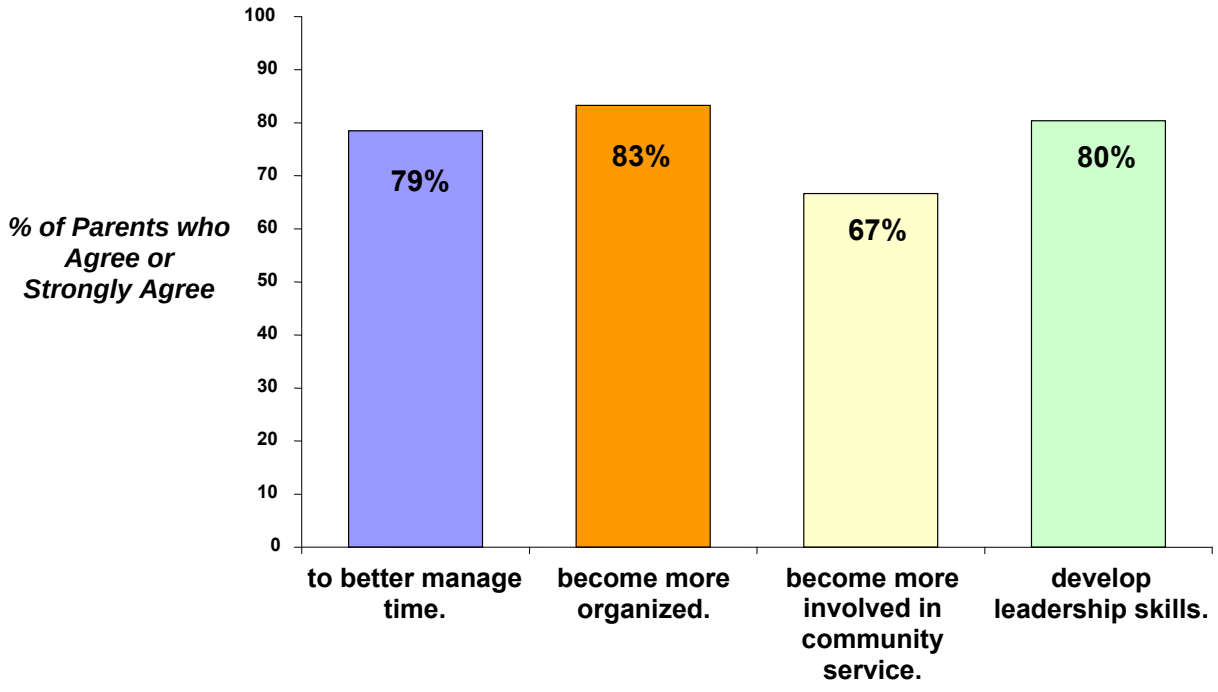
Table 1.3. Parents' Perceptions of their Child's Academic Success and Experiences with the AVID Program

Parent Survey Items	N	Mean	SD
I want my child to attend college.	312	3.90	.42
My child will complete high school.	313	3.88	.51
My child is a good student.	311	3.68	.67
My child will complete a 4-year college or higher.	310	3.58	.67
My child completes his/her homework on a regular basis.	310	3.45	.71
The AVID experience has been valuable for my child	311	3.37	.77
AVID has helped to prepare my child for college.	312	3.32	.80
AVID is helping my child to perform better in school.	310	3.31	.78
I am satisfied with the AVID program.	310	3.30	.77
AVID activities are appropriate for my child's needs.	311	3.27	.78
AVID gives my child the support needed to succeed in honors/AP classes.	310	3.22	.80
AVID has helped increase my child's self-esteem.	310	3.19	.82
My child will complete some college (but less than a 4-year college).	309	2.29	1.12

Note. SD = standard deviation. N = sample size.

Finally, the majority of AVID parents in the Clark County School District do believe that the program is helping their child to develop important academic and life skills (see Figure 1.2). Parents believe the AVID program is helping their children with time management, organizational skills, community involvement and leadership aptitude.

Figure 1.2. ***AVID has helped my child…***



Parent Predictors of Student Outcomes

For a smaller subset of the parent surveys, parent responses were linked with their AVID students' school records. Correlations between all parent survey items and the students' Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) reading and math scores were examined. Because survey items are highly correlated with each other, the parent survey items that were significantly related to students' ITED reading and math scores at a $p < .05$ level were entered into a linear regression model. This allowed us to determine which items accounted for unique variance in the students' scores (see Tables 1.4-1.7). The green highlighting in Tables 1.5 and 1.7 indicate those variables that account for a significant portion of the variability in the ITED scores. Significance in this case is identified when the p-value for the F- and t-test statistics are at or below .05.

Table 1.4. Overall Model of Parent Attitudes Predicting AVID Students' ITED Reading Scores

	R	R Square	F	p
Dependent Variable = Students' ITED Reading Scores	.46	.21	5.67	.00

Table 1.4 indicates that the overall model accounted for 21% of the variance in students' ITED reading scores. This means that this combination of parent variables significantly predicted student reading scores.

Table 1.5. Parents' Attitudes as Unique Predictors of AVID Students' ITED Reading Scores

Parent Survey Items	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	p	95% Confidence Interval	
	β	Std. Error			Lower	Upper
Have you ever had a conference with your child's counselor regarding your child's progress in school?	8.41	5.40	1.56	.12	-2.25	19.07
Have you spoken to your child about what they do in the AVID classroom?	.56	5.83	.10	.92	-10.96	12.08
Do you provide academic support for your child at home?	13.68	7.17	1.91	.06	-.49	27.86
Have you attended an AVID event with your child?	11.58	4.68	2.48	.01	2.34	20.82
Do you think your child could afford to attend a public 4-year college using financial aid?	14.44	9.27	1.56	.12	-3.87	32.75
My child will complete a 4-year college or higher.	11.94	3.56	3.36	.00	4.91	18.97

Note. Sample size = 157. Items with green highlighting were significantly related to ITED scores at the $p < .05$ level.

Closer examination (see Table 1.5) of the items reveals that AVID students with parents who have attended an AVID event with their child and/or who believe that

his/her child will complete a 4-year college or higher tend to have higher ITED reading scores.

Tables 1.6 and 1.7 show the results of a similar set of analyses predicting student ITED math Scores.

Table 1.6. Overall Model of Parent Attitudes Predicting AVID Students' ITED Math Scores

	R	R Square	F	p
Dependent Variable = Students' ITED Math Scores	.32	.10	9.95	.00

Table 1.6 demonstrates that again, parent attitudes significantly predicted math scores. The overall model accounted for 10% of the variance in ITED math scores

Table 1.7. Parents' Attitudes as Unique Predictors of AVID Students' ITED Math Scores

Parent Survey Items	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	p	95% Confidence Interval	
	β	Std. Error			Lower	Upper
Do you think your child could afford to attend a public 4-year college using financial aid?	12.45	8.05	1.55	.12	-3.43	28.33
My child will complete a 4-year college or higher.	12.01	3.22	3.73	.00	5.66	18.35

Note. Sample size = 175. Items with green highlighting were significantly related to ITED scores at the $p < .05$ level.

Closer examination of the items (see Table 1.7) reveals that AVID students with parents who believe that her/his child will complete a 4-year college program or higher have higher ITED math scores.

Two additional regression models were run to see if these parent attitudes predicted student scores on the Nevada High School Proficiency Exam (NHSPE). The results were very similar to those presented in Tables 1.4-1.7. Students with parents who believe that their child will attend a 4-year college program or higher have better NHSPE reading scores ($t = 2.23$, $p = .03$, $CI = 1.54 \rightarrow 20.76$) and NHSPE math scores ($t = 2.23$, $p = .03$, $CI = 1.36 \rightarrow 22.51$).

Student Results

The student outcome data came from school records for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders in the 2006-07 academic year and from voluntary surveys that AVID students completed. Data for AVID students and their matched non-AVID comparison group was collected on attendance rates, Honors/AP enrollment, Nevada High School Proficiency Exam (NHSPE) reading and math scores, NHSPE pass rates, ITED reading and math scores, cumulative grade point average (GPA), and class rank. Graduating AVID students also reported on their plans after graduation. The student survey asked AVID students only

about their academic goals and expectations, experiences with college preparation at their high school, and how the AVID program has impacted them as a student and a person overall[5].

AVID Student Survey Results

As with the teachers and parents, survey data was also collected from AVID students. A total of 615 students from across the district completed the survey. The survey asked about students' experiences with college preparation and their experiences with and perceptions of the AVID program.

Although most AVID students did report that school staff had spoken with them about college, many said that they had not had discussions with school staff about how to fill out college and financial aid applications (see Table 1.8).

Table 1.8. Staff Communication with Students

Student Survey Items	No	Yes
Has school staff ever spoken with you about attending college?	40 (6.4%)	575 (93.5%)
Has school staff ever spoken with you about taking the PSAT, SAT, or ACT?	62 (10.1%)	553 (89.9%)
Has school staff ever spoken with you about college entrance requirements or the courses that you need to take in high school in order to prepare for college?	103 (16.7%)	512 (83.3%)
Has school staff ever spoken with you about what it takes to succeed in college?	109 (17.7%)	506 (82.3%)
Has school staff ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?	193 (31.4%)	422 (68.6%)
Have you met individually with an instructor to discuss your academic progress?	267 (43.4%)	348 (56.6%)
Has school staff spoken with you about how to complete college applications?	339 (55.1%)	276 (44.9%)
Has school staff spoken with you about how to complete financial aid applications?	435 (70.7%)	180 (29.3%)

Students were asked to indicate how participating in AVID has impacted them by marking their response on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = "*strongly disagree*" to 4 = "*strongly agree*." Students reported that participation in AVID has impacted them in a positive way (see Table 1.9). **AVID students realize the importance of college, feel more confident and comfortable in class and have developed important life skills.**

[5] Note that the student survey was given to all AVID students at all schools in the district, thus it is reflective of general attitudes and thus cannot be related specifically to the AVID students in the outcome study.

Table 1.9. Students' Reports of AVID's Impact

Student Survey Items	N	Mean	SD
I have realized how important college is to my future goals.	615	3.66	.70
I have been inspired to explore my academic potential.	615	3.21	.82
I am more comfortable asking for help in my classes.	615	3.18	.89
My belief in myself and my abilities has increased.	615	3.15	.85
I have gained the courage to speak my mind.	615	3.13	.90
I participate more in class discussion.	615	3.06	.91
I have developed leadership skills.	615	3.02	.89
My self-confidence has increased.	615	3.01	.86
I have learned to better manage my time.	615	2.92	.87
I feel more confident about speaking in public.	615	2.90	.87
I had the opportunity to visit a college campus.	615	2.88	1.29
I am more involved in community service.	615	2.53	1.00

Note. SD = standard deviation. N = sample size.

Students were also asked to indicate which features or characteristics of the AVID program were or were not helpful by using the 4-point Likert-type scale where 1 = "*strongly disagree*" and 4 = "*strongly agree*." **As Table 1.10 shows, students reported that several different features and characteristics of the AVID program were helpful for their academic success.**

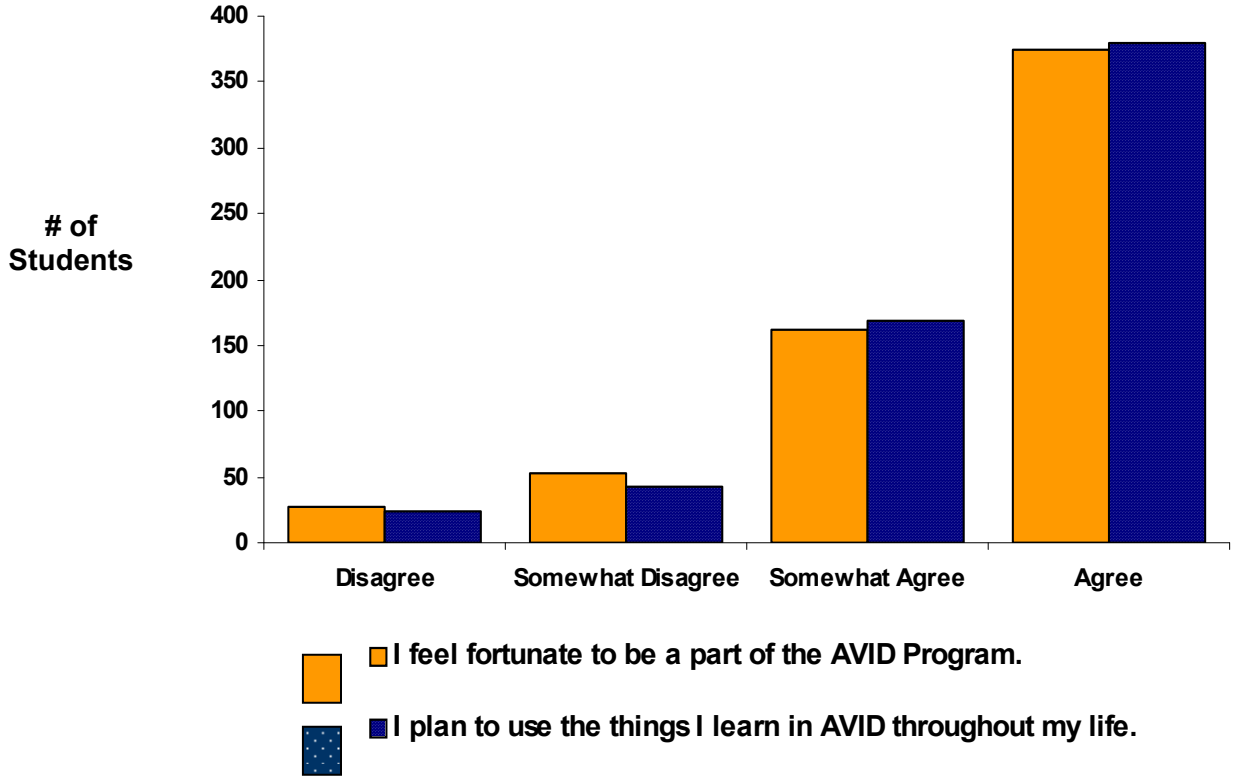
Table 1.10. Students' Reports of AVID Features That Were Helpful

Student Survey Items	N	Mean	SD
The AVID program provides teachers and tutors who help me make positive progress in school.	615	3.37	.83
The AVID program teaches organizational skills that help me to be more successful in school.	615	3.29	.79
The AVID program gives me the guidance and encouragement I need to achieve my goals.	615	3.24	.81
The AVID program support network of teachers and classmates encourages me to take more initiative in school and do more for myself.	615	3.16	.82
The AVID program gives me the support I need to succeed in honors/AP classes.	615	3.07	.89

Note. SD = standard deviation. N = sample size.

Finally, the 615 AVID students said they felt fortunate to be a part of the AVID program and plan to use the things they learned in AVID throughout their lives (see Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3. ***AVID students feel positive about the program…***



Student Outcome Analysis Results

Students from AVID schools were matched with students from non-AVID schools based on gender, GPA and ethnicity, resulting in a final sample of 473 non-AVID students and 474 AVID students. Data were collected from 503 students in 10th grade (47.2% of total sample) with 91.5% of them as English proficient and 8.5% as English Language Learners (ELL); 302 students in 11th grade (28.4% of total sample) with 93% of them as English proficient and 7% as ELL; and 142 students in 12th grade (13.3% of total sample) with 90.1% of them as English proficient and 9.9% as ELL. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 869 (or 81.6%) English proficient students and 78 (7.3%) ELL students. Table 1.11 shows the demographic breakdowns for the AVID and non-AVID students.

Table 1.11. Demographic Data for AVID Student Sample

Student Demographics	AVID		Non-AVID	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Male	195	41.1%	193	40.8
Female	279	58.9%	280	59.2
White	106	22.4%	103	21.8
Black	123	25.9%	128	27.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	46	9.7%	45	9.5
American Indian/Alaskan	1	.2%	1	.2
Hispanic	198	41.8%	196	41.4

Note. Total sample size = 947. T-tests on the matched variables (e.g., gender, ethnicity and 8th grade GPA) demonstrated no significant differences between the two groups.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that AVID students would perform better on several student outcomes when compared to a matched sample of non-AVID students. **Overall, AVID students are performing significantly better on several student outcomes. (see Tables 1.12 and 1.13).**[6]

Table 1.12. Comparison of Student Records for AVID and Non-AVID Students

Student Records	t-test	df	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower	Upper
ITED reading score	.26	829	-3.83	4.98
ITED math score	1.90	819	-.14	8.52
NHSPE reading score	1.87	829	-.31	12.25
NHSPE math score	2.37*	874	1.37	14.82
NHSPE reading pass/fail	3.06*	872	.03	.02
NHSPE math pass/fail	.66	911	-.04	.09
Total # of semesters with honors/AP courses (2004-06)	6.02*	922	1.94	3.81
Cumulative GPA at last grading period	4.65*	906	.14	.36
Class ranking at last grading period	3.60*	895	-62.80	-18.48
Average daily attendance	2.22*	902	.00	.02

Note. * = $p < .05$. Green highlighting denotes those records where average scores for AVID students were significantly different ($p < .05$) than average scores for non-AVID students. df = degrees of freedom. Levene's test for equality of variances is not assumed. Average daily attendance is calculated as the proportion of days absent to days attended for the 2006-07 school year; this was last calculated on May 15, so it is short of the last

[6] These same comparisons were made within each grade level (e.g., comparing 10th graders to 10th graders, 11th graders to 11th graders and 12th graders to 12th graders). Although in general, within-grade, AVID students tended to perform better than their peers, the differences were not statistically significant for most variables. The exception was that 10th and 12th grade AVID students had significantly higher cumulative gpa and class rank than the non-AVID groups.

month of the school year. Total # of semesters with honors/AP courses includes only those honors/AP courses taken at the current school, so honors/AP courses that were transferred in are not counted.

Table 1.12 indicates that more AVID students passed the reading portion of the NHSPE than non-AVID students (N = 403 or 85% of AVID students passed compared to N = 356 or 75% of non-AVID students) and AVID students had higher school attendance than non-AVID students. The means and standard deviations for the remainder of the variables that showed a significant difference between AVID and non-AVID students are depicted in Table 1.13.

Table 1.13. Average Scores on Student Outcome Variables

	AVID Students		Non-AVID Students	
	Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
• Higher NHSPE math scores	301.59	46.76	293.49	56.24
• More semesters with AP courses	9.77	6.75	6.90	7.90
• Higher overall cumulative GPA	2.96	.76	2.71	.88
• Better class rankings	190.11	156.26	230.75	186.50

Although the mean scores for AVID students may not appear to be that different from their matched non-AVID peers on several of the variables in Table 1.12, it is important to note that there is more variability in the scores from the non-AVID students than there is from the AVID students. This is seen in the standard deviations reported in Table 1.13 and is largely what accounts for significant differences between the groups.

AVID students are required to be enrolled in at least one Honors/AP course each year they are with the AVID program. **The results show that AVID students who attend schools with block scheduling took significantly more semesters with Honors/AP courses (*M* = 10.89, *SD* = 6.66) between 2004 and 2006 than AVID students enrolled in schools with traditional schedules (*M* = 6.38, *SD* = 5.85; *t* (223) = -6.97, *p* = .00, *CI* = -5.77→-3.22).**

Also important to note is that the number of semesters with Honors/AP courses taken by AVID students ranges widely and is not consistent with the number of AVID students at each school. For example, one school had 51 AVID students with an average of three semesters with Honors/AP courses taken. When compared to a school with 25 AVID students and an average of 10 semesters with Honors/AP courses taken or a school with 75 AVID students and an average of 11 semesters with Honors/AP courses taken, it appears that something is falling between the cracks at the school with 51 AVID students but the fewest amount of Honors/AP courses being taken. Perhaps not all schools are requiring AVID students to take Honors/AP courses or maybe the schools do not have enough teachers to offer the Honors/AP courses students need. This is an issue that needs follow-up attention since taking Honors/AP courses is a fundamental component of the AVID program.

Data on post-graduate plans was collected from 84.5% of the 12th graders in AVID during the 2006-07 school year. These students reported mixed plans after graduation (see Table 1.14).

Table 1.14. AVID Students' Plans Post High School

Student Records	No	Yes
Applied to a 4-year college	18 (25.4%)	42 (59.2%)
Attending a 4-year college	29 (40.8%)	31 (43.7%)
Attending a 2-year college	37 (52.1%)	23 (32.4%)
Submitted a FAFSA application	38 (53.5%)	22 (31.0%)
Attending a military or technical school	56 (78.9%)	4 (5.6%)

The majority of the students did turn in an application to a 4-year college with about 44% of them planning to attend a 4-year institution. A full 32% of the AVID graduates will attend a 2-year college and 4 out of the 60 will go to a military or technical school. Of the 60 students for which we had this data, 31% of them did fill out a FAFSA application for student financial aid to fund their post-graduation academic plans.

AVID IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

To better describe the nature of the AVID program in the Clark County School District (CCSD) and complement the quantitative outcome evaluation results, the CCSD Research Department gathered qualitative data regarding the implementation of the AVID program across school sites in the district. Twelve high schools, six in their second year of involvement with the AVID program and six in their third year, were included in the study. The study was small in scope and took place over a period of two weeks with the intent of providing a "*snapshot*" of how AVID is implemented across the district. This report ends with a set of recommendations for action, set in the larger context of how other AVID sites within the Clark County School District can effectively implement AVID.

PARTICIPANTS, METHOD AND PROCEDURES

This section provides an overview of the methods, analyses, and findings that were used to examine the fidelity of the AVID program in Clark County School District in relation to AVID's goals, objectives, and standards.

Schools in the Study

Twelve schools participated in the implementation study. Six schools were in their second year of implementation and six were in their third year of implementation. Schools were selected randomly by the evaluators from a list of third and second year schools.

Data Collection

To examine whether AVID sites across the twelve schools were implementing AVID based on standards outlined by the AVID program, two methods of data collection were conducted – interviews and classroom observations. Eleven AVID coordinators (one coordinator was not available for an interview) were interviewed either face-to-face or via telephone and 12 AVID elective classrooms were observed. The 12 AVID elective classrooms that were observed were selected based on availability and convenience for both the AVID elective teachers and researchers.

The interview was designed to provide information about the following:

1. Selection process
2. Nature of the program
3. Tutorial program
4. The nature of the AVID site team
5. The responsibilities of the AVID coordinator

Classroom observation was designed to provide information about the following:

1. The AVID culture within the classroom
2. The use of AVID strategies (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, and Reading strategies; WIC-R) in the classroom
3. The nature of the AVID curriculum

4. The nature of tutorial sessions

Interviews and classroom observations were conducted from April 12th to April 24th, 2007 by two research team members. The interview protocol was created by the research team (see Appendix I). Interviews were tape recorded and were later transcribed by a member of the research team. Observational data was collected with the use of a checklist created by members of the research team (see Appendix II) and handwritten field notes. After each classroom observation period, the observers compared notes to reach common agreement about observations. Only one classroom observation was conducted per participating school.

AVID COORDINATOR INTERVIEW RESULTS

This section of the report presents the analysis and results of coordinator interviews.

Analysis of Coordinator Interviews

Interviews were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative analysis. Traditionally, in qualitative analyses, data is analyzed to identify information that may be semantically linked together into a common theme. The common theme is called a category/major theme. The sequence of information which form a common theme are usually called sub-themes or codes (see Spradley, 1980).

Data was analyzed using the software Atlas.ti. Atlas.ti is computer software used to analyze large bodies of qualitative data including text, graphs, audio, and video data. The software allows for analysis of data that could not otherwise be analyzed by standard statistical procedures. Atlas.ti is based on several principles including visualization (network view), integration (one hermeneutic unit), serendipity (ability to browse through the data), and exploration. The software is able to provide graphical depictions of the data, code, filter, build networks, and make memos. The software also provides outputs on frequencies of sub-themes and quotes. Most importantly, Atlas.ti provides data representation at the highest theoretical level (network views) and also allows the researcher to represent data at the lower levels including sub-themes and quotes. For this study, Atlas.ti was used to identify themes and sub-themes from the data.

Some questions and responses from the interviews were analyzed quantitatively. Means and frequencies were run from the statistical software, SPSS.

Section 1: Findings from the Qualitative Analysis of Interviews

Major Themes and Sub-themes per Interview Protocol Question

Major themes and sub-themes per interview question are presented in the following section. The themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 2.1. The counts per sub-themes by coordinator are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.1: Themes and Sub-Themes for Interview Data

Themes	Sub-Themes
Eclectic Duties	Clerical Organizational
Changing Recruitment Method	Unsystematic Methodical
Conformity to Program	Standard Non-standard
Lack of Commitment	Staff Recruitment Attrition Parental Involvement Administration Time Management
Support	Students Site Team District Administrator
Assistance	Clerical Activities Academic
Different Sources of Attrition	Students Expelled Teachers Left Students Voluntary Drop Out/Relocation
Buy In Problems	Students Teachers
Availability	Teachers Tutors

I. Describe your duties in AVID

Findings from the analysis of this question revealed the major theme – *eclectic duties.* Most – though not all – coordinators revealed undertaking various responsibilities. Major sub-themes from that broad theme included *organizational* and *clerical responsibilities*. That is, most of the coordinators reported conducting organizational and clerical duties in their capacity as AVID coordinator. For example, one coordinator reported that "my responsibilities involve meetings, calendar, oversee that those things get done and doing clerical stuff".

II. Describe the AVID selection process of students at your school

Responses revealed that sites have a *changing recruitment method*. Two sub-themes, *unsystematic* and *methodical* form this major theme. The unsystematic theme emerged from coordinator reports of hand picking students without any formal interviews. However, coordinators also reported looking at students' profiles and getting teacher recommendations to select participants based on AVID's standard, leading to the theme

of *methodical* selection. At least four coordinators reported that at one point of their selection process over the years, they were both *unsystematic* and *methodical* in recruiting. For example, one coordinator stated, “Because we did not really have the time in the previous spring to see what we had to do, we kind of hand-picked students.” This coordinator went on to state, “Last year, we started back in the spring, the AVID team met with students and the process was a little bit different because we met with the students and got their yes or no, I want to be in the program. Then we incorporated the parents”.

Within the methodical sub-theme, most coordinators reported selecting students in the academic middle with desire and determination to go to college, who were recommended by teachers or counselors, and who were willing to participate in the program. This sub-theme is characterized by a specific process and criteria for selecting students. For example, one coordinator stated, “We look at 8th grade transcripts-looking for AVID profile, 2.0-3.4 GPA”. Another reported, “I take teacher recommendations first and I might get like 60, this year I got like a hundred, and I go through and I check their GPA’s, their attendance, their behavior, and I eliminate some based on that. Then I pass invitations to apply because if they don’t meet the AVID criteria you can eliminate more.” Yet another focused primarily on the criteria of willingness to participate in the program, “We basically find out if they want to be there because the key for the student’s success is that they want to be in AVID.”

III. Describe the nature of the AVID program

The recurring theme for this question was the *degree of conformity* to the nature of AVID programs. Coordinators recognized that their sites *conformed* to the requirements of the AVID program, which include AVID elective classes and tutorial programs. However, coordinators also reported *non-conformity* to aspects of the AVID program including merged classes across grade levels and not all students enrolled in advanced courses. Specifically, 6 out of the 11 coordinators reported having both recurring sub-themes. For example, one these coordinators stated, “This is our third year, we have one class of juniors, we have one class of sophomores, and we would have had two classes of sophomores but our administrator chose to put together in-coming freshman with in-coming sophomores, so there’s a newcomers class and that’s how it happened. Next year we will have a class of juniors and seniors together, a class of sophomores and a class of freshman.” Four coordinators reported *conforming* to the requirements of AVID and one did *not conform* to AVID requirements.

IV. Are there any barriers to effectively implementing AVID at your school?

In response to this question, the major theme was *lack of commitment to the program*. Approximately 73% of coordinators reported *lack of commitment* as a barrier to effectively implementing AVID at their school. Specifically, coordinators reported lack of commitment in relation with *staff problems, recruitment issues, attrition problem, lack of parental involvement, time constraints,* and *administration issue*s. That is, two coordinators expressed that their barrier to effectively implementing AVID is unavailability of staff. For example, one coordinator claimed, “We need an AVID counselor that’s just for AVID students.” Coordinators also reported having recruitment issues, such as not being able to get to the middle schools to recruit eighth graders into their AVID program. Consistent with *lack of commitment*, one coordinator reported having issues with attrition in that their

AVID students are dropping out of the program at some point during the process. Teacher attrition was also a problem expressed by one coordinator.

Lack of parental involvement was also a sub-theme. That is, two coordinators believed that the difficulty they face getting parents to be actively involved in AVID program is a barrier to effectively implementing AVID. One coordinator reported *time management* as a major barrier to effectively implementing AVID. This theme indirectly relates to lack of commitment to AVID because the coordinator reported being overwhelmed and unmotivated because of the lack of time and announced plans to leave the program by the end of the school year. Five coordinators felt that they lacked support from their administration, specifically support from school administration. Three out of these five coordinators revealed that they did not have enough financial support from administration to effectively implement the program.

Experiencing *buy-in problems* was also a recurring theme in response to this question. That is, a few coordinators felt that they had or were experiencing problems with effectively marketing AVID to *students* and *teachers.* For example, one coordinator claimed, “The biggest barrier is student buy-in. There is still miscommunication over what AVID represents. Faculty is kind of ambivalent about the whole thing.”

It is relevant to mention here that one coordinator reported issues different from the majority of responses. This issue may be critical to effectively implementing AVID at that site, thus it is relevant to report here. One coordinator felt that lack of *availability* of teachers and tutors. That is, the coordinator felt that the AVID program at the school is not effective because the program lacks teachers to teach the elective classes and enough tutors to assist in the AVID tutorial program.

V. What are the facilitation factors for effectively implementing AVID?

Coordinators mostly felt that *support* is the facilitating factor in effectively implementing AVID. More than half of coordinators felt that the general support they receive make their AVID program work efficiently. Sub-themes relating to this major category included *site team, district, students,* and *administrator support.* Most coordinators felt that the support they get from their site team, district, students, and/or administrators make their AVID program effective. For example, one coordinator said about the site team and district support, “We have a really strong site team and we do have good support from the district.” Student commitment and support of the program also appears to be a factor of success, “The kids that do buy-in to the AVID program, the one’s who do what they need to do, they also facilitate.” In regards to administrator support, one coordinator reported, “We have a lot of administrative support; my principal is an advocate for the program.”

VI. What are the duties the tutors conduct?

Coordinators felt that the primary job of the tutor was to *assist*. Sub-themes included *clerical*, *activities*, and *academic* assistance. Eighty-two percent of coordinators felt that the tutor’s job was to assist in clerical and academic activities in the classroom. As well as assist in other AVID activities including field trips and liaising with parents. For example, one coordinator stated, “Primarily they lead tutorial groups on Tuesdays and Thursdays, they also help on field trips, and organize files for certification.”

VII. How is attrition in your AVID program?

This question was a probing question and three coordinators were not probed on this question. However, it is relevant to report here because a recurring theme emerged for the 8 coordinators that responded to this question.

The emerging theme for this question was *different sources of attrition*. Responses show that the sources of attrition originated from different areas. These areas included *voluntary drop out/relocation of students, expulsion of students from the program, and teachers leaving the program*. All coordinators reported one, some, or all of sources of attrition. For example, one coordinator summed it up, “We have had some students removed from the program for lack of motivation, but mostly they moved. Teachers are trained but because of changes in the master schedule, they no longer are going to teach AVID even though they’ll still be at the school.”

Table 2.2: Number of Sub-Themes per Coordinator

Theme	Sub-themes	Coordinators											
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12
Eclectic Duties	Organizational	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	*NA	1	1	1	1
	Clerical	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	NA	1	1	1	0
Changing Recruitment Method	Unsystematic	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Methodical	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	NA	1	1	1	1
Degree of Conformity	Standard	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	NA	0	2	1	1
	Non-standard	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	NA	2	1	1	0
Lack of Commitment	Staff	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Recruitment	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Attrition	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Parental Involvement	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	NA	1	0	0	0
	Time management	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Administration	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	NA	1	1	2	0
Support	Students	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	1	0
	Site Team	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	NA	1	0	1	1
	District	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Administrator	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	NA	0	0	0	1
Assistance from tutors	Clerical	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	NA	0	0	1	0
	Activities	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Academic	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	NA	1	1	1	1
Different sources of attrition	Students Expelled	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	NA	0	1	1	0
	Teachers Left	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0
	Students dropped out	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	NA	0	1	0	0
Buy In Problems	Student Buy In	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	NA	1	0	0	0
	Teacher Buy In	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	NA	1	0	0	0
Availability Problems	Teacher	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	1	0
	Student	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	1	0

* NA – Not Applicable (No interview was conducted)
C - Coordinator

Summary of Qualitative Findings

From coordinator interviews, ten major themes with accompanying sub-themes emerged:

1. The coordinators performed eclectic duties including organizational and clerical responsibilities.
2. The way the sites selected students changed over time. In some cases, the process changed from unsystematic to a more formalized and systematic selection process. Methodical selection is characterized by specific criteria and plans for selection, whereas informal selection is characterized by the lack of consistent and formalized procedures.
3. The coordinators appeared to have varied in their conformity to the nature of the AVID program. Some coordinators reported *conforming* to AVID's procedures and some reported a non-conforming nature of their AVID program.
4. Coordinators felt that lack of commitment to the program were the main barriers to effectively implementing their AVID program. That is, coordinators believed that administration, attrition, parental involvement, recruitment, staffing, and time management issues all factored into that lack of commitment.
5. A few coordinators also felt that buy in problems from teachers and students are barriers to effectively implementing AVID.
6. Lack of availability was also another major barrier to effectively implementing AVID. One coordinator felt that there were a lack of available tutors and teachers in the program.
7. Coordinators felt that support they receive from students, their site team, the district, and their administration are instrumental in effectively implementing AVID.
8. Coordinators believed that tutor's primary role is to assist. Tutors traditionally help conduct clerical and academic activities in the classroom. As well, as assist in other AVID activities.
9. Coordinators felt that there were various sources of attrition including students being expelled from the program, students voluntarily dropping out or moving, and teachers leaving the program.

Section 2: Quantitative Analysis of Interviews

A few questions from the interviews were analyzed quantitatively. These questions included information about eight site team members who attended summer institute; space restrictions for potential AVID students; advanced course enrollment; and tutors. The interviewer failed to consistently ask the same questions across coordinators resulting in fewer than eleven responses to most of these questions. Means and frequencies were run to analyze responses.

Findings from the Quantitative Analysis of Interviews

I. Participation by Site Team Members who had attended the 2006 Summer Institute

Approximately twenty-seven percent of the eight coordinators who were asked this question revealed that the 8 site team members who attended the summer institute were no longer at their school while 72.7% reported that site team members were still employed and part of the program. Of the 27.3% of coordinators who reported losing site

team members, 1 member left per school. Two coordinators reported that these members left for another school and one reported that the team member left the district entirely.

Of the members that were still part of a team, 81.8% of coordinators reported that all were active and only 18.2% revealed that a few members on their AVID team were not actively participating in program activities. Approximately 90.9% of coordinators reported that site team members consistently use AVID strategies in their classrooms. One coordinator was not asked this question

II. Space Restrictions for Potential AVID students

Only 4 coordinators were asked this question. However, it is important to report here. Of the 4 who responded, all claimed to establish space restrictions for potential AVID students as they seek to admit only the most qualified students for the program

III. Advanced Courses Enrollment

Similarly, only 4 coordinators were asked about enrollment in advance courses. Three coordinators reported not having all of their students enrolled in AP. However, at two of these sites, greater than 80% of students were enrolled in AP classes. One coordinator recognized that their AVID students did not have the skills required for advance classes so students were placed in classes which matched their potential level. On the other hand, one of the four coordinators reported that all students were enrolled in at least one advance course.

IV. Number of Tutors

Responses from nine coordinators revealed that an average of 6.2 tutors was employed per site and all tutors got regular training by the district. Tutors were available at all sites.

AVID CLASSROOM OBSERVATION RESULTS

This section of the report presents the results of the AVID elective classroom observations. Results are divided into seven broad areas:

1. Demographic information
2. Objectives of the lesson at observation
3. AVID culture in the classroom
4. General strategies for classroom activities
5. Classroom instruction
6. WIC-R strategies
7. Tutorials

Analysis of Classroom Observations

Observations took place during a complete, single, AVID elective class period at each school site. Due to differences in block versus traditional schedule school sites, a class period could range from 52 to 85 minutes. Observations lasted for entire class periods. An observation checklist was used for data collection. Observers also recorded field notes on

classroom activities for triangulation purposes and consequently to improve validity of findings. Thus, data from observations were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis involved looking at frequencies and means and qualitative analysis included searching for common themes across questions.

Section 1: Findings from the Quantitative Analysis of Observations

I. Demographic Structure of Observations

This section reports the characteristics of the AVID elective classes in which observations were conducted. Table 2.3 presents a graphical representation of demographic information of the classrooms.

Table 2.3: Demographic Information

Grade Level	Number of Classes	Percent of Classes
9th Grade	1	8.3%
10th Grade	6	50.0%
11th Grade	1	8.3%
9th and 10th Grade Combined	1	8.3%
10th and 11th Grade Combined	1	8.3%
11th and 12th Grade Combined	2	16.7%
Total	**12**	**100%**

II. Lesson Objective at Time of Observation

The evaluators observed classrooms during varying activities. This section reveals the activities that were observed. Table 2.4 presents the activities that were observed.

Table 2.4: Activities at Time of Observation

Classroom	Activities at Time of Observations
Classroom # 1	Tutorial
Classroom # 2	Tutorial and reading
Classroom # 3	Socratic Seminar, writing, and reading
Classroom # 4	Tutorial
Classroom # 5	Public Speaking and personal development, tutorial
Classroom # 6	Goal setting, personal development, binder grading
Classroom # 7	Goal setting, personal development
Classroom # 8	College path, tutorial
Classroom # 9	Time management, tutorial, personal development, public speaking, choosing college
Classroom # 10	Personal development, planning admission, tutorial
Classroom # 11	Self awareness, personal development, team building
Classroom # 12	Tutorial

III. Classroom Reflects AVID Culture

In this section, the issue of whether the classroom reflects AVID's culture is reported. The AVID culture is reflected in the classroom layout, students' possession of binders, and references about college enrollment.

Table 2.5 provides types of posters by classroom. Posters included information about AVID's mission, WIC-R strategies, AVID students' work, Costa's level of questioning, information on Cornell notes, handouts, newsletter, sample binder, AVID forms, and AVID wall of fame.

Table 2.5 AVID posters by Classroom

Classroom	Types of AVID Posters
Classroom # 1	AVID's mission, WIC-R, Students' Work
Classroom # 2	WICR Strategies
Classroom # 3	WICR Strategies
Classroom # 4	Handouts, Costas level of questioning
Classroom # 5	Costas level of questioning
Classroom # 6	WICR, AVID wall of fame
Classroom # 7	WICR, Costas
Classroom # 8	WICR, AVID's mission
Classroom # 9	None
Classroom # 10	Newsletter, sample binder, forms
Classroom # 11	None
Classroom # 12	Costas level of questioning, Cornell notes

Table 2.6 shows findings for number of binders, references to college enrollment, answering questions about college, and modeling excitement about AVID. Overall, students carried binders to their AVID classes. However, there were only two classrooms in which all students had AVID binders as required by AVID. Teachers felt that binders

were unnecessary load for students and found it more feasible to require students to bring binders only when there were binder checks. Binder checks were conducted at least once per week across sites.

Moreover, in six classrooms, there were references made to eventual college enrollment. However, in the remaining six classes, given the nature of the lesson objective, these references were not relevant. Similarly, in most classrooms, there were no questions about college because it was not applicable to lesson objectives at classroom observation. However, in one classroom, despite repeated questions from students about college, the teacher did not address the issues and seemed more focused on completing the task for the day.

Table 2.6: Findings about AVID culture

AVID culture	Number of Classes	Percent of Classes
Everyone with binders	2	16.7%
Not Everyone With Binders	10	83.3%
References to college enrollment	6	50.0%
No references to college enrollment	6	50.0%
Answered questions about college	2	16.7%
Did not answer questions about college	1	8.3%
Not applicable at time of observations	9	75.0%

IV. Use of General Strategies

In this section, results concerning the use of strategies are presented. Strategies include such techniques as rules of tutorial sessions and what is expected during public speaking activities. Table 2.7 presents the findings for use of general strategies.

In most classrooms, teachers clearly explained strategies including rules for collaboration, rules for Socratic circles, and rules for tutorials. In these classes, students were also encouraged to use strategies and students were actively using these strategies. However, judgment cannot be made about the remaining classrooms' fidelity to using these strategies as students seemed very aware of the strategies and consequently any reminder would have been futile.

In four classrooms, teachers were answering questions about strategies. However, in the remaining eight classrooms, students did not ask teachers about strategies. Similarly, students seemed to already have prior knowledge of what were expected of them during AVID.

Table 2.7: Findings for General Strategy Use

	Number of Classes	Percent of Classes
Clear Explanation	9	75.0%
Unclear Explanation	3	25.0%
Encourage to use strategies	9	75.0%
Not encouraged to use strategies	3	25.0%
Actively using strategies	9	75.0%
Not actively using strategies	3	25.0%
Teacher answering questions about strategies	4	33.3%

V. Classroom Instruction

This section reveals results of classroom instruction. This includes student engagement, teacher accommodating students' needs, and students having appropriate materials for classroom activities. Table 1.8 presents these results.

In majority of classrooms, students were engaged and teachers were very accommodating to students (e.g. answering students' questions about tasks; clarifying information, etc) and in all classrooms students had appropriate material for classroom activities.

Table 2.8: Findings about Classroom Instruction

	Number of Classes	Percent of Classes
Student engaged	11	91.7%
Students not engaged	1	8.3%
Teacher is accommodating students	11	91.7%
Teacher is not accommodating students	1	8.3%
Students have appropriate material	12	100.0%

VI. The WIC-R Strategies

This section reveals result about the writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading curriculum and strategies. The WIC-R strategies are paramount to the AVID program and guidelines are provided by the AVID program to effectively implement these strategies. Observations were conducted to examine fidelity to these guidelines.

VI.a. Writing and Reading

Three classrooms conducted writing activities at time of observations. In all 3 classrooms, students were given material to read and write about. Results from the observations reveal that in all classrooms students had learning logs, logs related to the subject area,

and students shared their learning log responses with other students as mandated by the AVID guidelines.

VI.b. Inquiry

Three classrooms had inquiry activities at the time of observations. Two classrooms did Socratic circle and in one classroom tutors conducted a critical thinking activity. The questioning strategy was used in all classrooms across activities.

Level of questioning used: Results show that 16.7% of the classes that were observed used low level questioning (Blooms and Costas) **while 83.3% of classes used high level questioning.**

Teacher/tutor guiding the inquiry process: **In all three classrooms where inquiry was done, teachers/tutors effectively guided process.**

Students actively participating in inquiry: **Students were actively participating in inquiry and most made significant contributions to the inquiry task.**

Students collaborating during inquiry: **Collaboration was evident among students during inquiry across sites.**

Desk arrangement during inquiry: **In classes doing Socratic circle, desks were arranged appropriately (in a circle) for the inquiry.**

VI.c. Collaboration

Table 2.9 presents the findings on collaboration.

In most classes, teachers did not discuss group etiquette before group work; explain benefits of collaboration; and discuss areas groups can improve on after collaboration. However, in these classes, students seemed keenly aware of benefits of collaboration and the appropriate conduct required during group activities.

Overall, most classes adhered to the other requirements of collaboration outlined by AVID including providing instructions before groups; establishing specific areas/routes for groups to meet; arranging desk appropriately; setting a reasonable time limit for collaboration; and reflecting on group activities.

Table 2.9: Findings about Collaboration

	Number of Classes	Percent of Classes
Discussion of group etiquette before group work	3	25.0%
No discussion of group etiquette before group work	9	75.0%
Discussed benefits of group	2	16.7%
Did not discuss benefits of group	10	83.3%
Instructions given before group	8	66.7%
No instructions given before group	4	33.3%
Specific route established for groups	9	75.0%
No specific route established for groups	3	25.0%
Desk arranged appropriately	8	66.7%
Desks not arranged appropriately	4	33.3%
Reasonable time limit	9	75.0%
No reasonable time limit	3	25.0%
Group reflection	7	58.3%
No group reflection	5	41.7%
Discussion about improvements	5	41.7%
No discussions about improvements	7	58.3%

VII. Tutorial

This section reports about the tutorial sessions that were observed. Eight classrooms conducted tutorial sessions at time of observations.

Students bringing subject notes for tutorial: In 12.5% of the 8 classrooms, students did not bring notes for tutorial whereas **in 87.5% of the classes, students brought notes from their other subjects.**

Students completing learning logs/tutorial worksheets: In all of the eight classrooms, students completed learning logs/tutorial worksheets.

Students actively participating in tutorials: Overall, students actively participated in tutorial in all eight classrooms.

Tutors assisting students: **Tutors assisted students in 87.5% of the classrooms**, however in one classroom, tutors were unavailable to help students for the entire length of the tutorial session because half-way into the tutorial session, tutors were required to attend another tutorial in another AVID class at the site.

Students are asking questions of tutor**: In 87.5% of the 8 classrooms, students were asking questions of tutor**, in 1 classroom, tutors were unavailable to answer questions from students at one point during tutorial since they were in another AVID classroom.

Students taking detailed notes during tutorials: **In all classes, students were taking detailed notes during tutorial.**

WIC-R strategies being followed in tutorials: **Results reveal that in 75% of the classrooms, WIC-R strategies were being followed**, whereas in 25% they were not.

Tutors assessing student participating and engagement: In 37.5% of the classrooms, tutors did not assess student participation and kept students engaged. **However, in 62.5% of the classes active participation and engagement occurred.**

Tutors using reflection and evaluation throughout tutorials: In 50% of the classrooms, tutors did not **use reflection and evaluation during tutorials, while 50%, tutors did**. However, at most sites, students tended to self-reflect occasionally and/or initiated evaluations of their peers during tutorials.

Section 2: Findings from the Qualitative Analysis of Observations

The researchers took field notes during observations as a form of triangulation to ensure validity of findings. Furthermore, predetermined checklist may not capture the qualitative aspect of observations. Observers compared field notes to find consistency. Common agreement between observers was established.

Findings from Observation Field Notes

The researchers identified variations across sites in the following broad areas:

1. AVID culture in the classroom
2. Classroom instruction
3. Tutorial Sessions
4. Use of strategies

I. AVID culture in the classroom

Most of the classrooms in which observations were done reflected aspects of the AVID culture. When observers walked into the AVID classrooms, there were a sense and feeling of AVID. Most classrooms had posters and/or flyers concerning AVID; however the number and content of posters varied across classrooms. In some classrooms, there was a single poster concerning AVID and in others, there were many, ranging from the WIC-R strategies to AVID's missions.

Furthermore, in most classes, teachers/tutors appeared excited about AVID and were warm and engaged with students while in some instances, teachers seemed detached from the process often times sitting at their desk for the entire class period with little or no interaction with students. In most cases, students did not bring binders. However, as stated in the earlier section, most teachers reported that students usually brought binders at time of binder checks.

II. Classroom instruction

In majority of classes, students were engaged at varying points during activities. However, there were many times, specifically during tutorial sessions and other collaborative activities, students would get off-task and become disengaged in classroom activities. For example, in one classroom, although students were on task for the first 15 minutes of class, one student was listening to music while others worked, and a few students packed up their bags about 10 minutes before the end of class to leave. At another site students stopped working about 15 minutes before class ended and just sat there or left the classroom. However, in most classes, teachers and/or tutors were effective in getting students back on task.

III. Tutorial Sessions

There was variability in the nature of tutorial sessions across sites. With respect to the way tutors conducted tutorials, at some sites, tutors provided answers to students instead of students deriving answers by themselves, while at other sites tutors continually used inquiry to probe students. At most sites, students collaborated in their groups and brought questions from other subject areas. Occasionally students posed lower level questions, but then tutors would encourage higher level thinking.

IV. Use of WIC-R

In most classrooms, some forms of the WIC-R strategies were used. However, some sites used these strategies more frequently and effectively than others. For example, in one site, the teacher incorporated writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading all in the same class and encouraged students to use these tools.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DISCUSSION

Outcome Results

The purpose of the outcome evaluation study was to determine if AVID leads to increased college preparation and achievement levels among students in the Clark County School District. Additionally, the AVID study team assessed how students, teachers and parents feel about the AVID program and whether parent attitudes can influence AVID student outcomes.

The results demonstrate that CCSD students in AVID definitely experience positive outcomes. They are attending college at high rates, and are outperforming their peers on some standardized tests, grade point average, attendance rates, and enrollment in honors/AP courses. Furthermore, these students feel good about themselves and their abilities to be successful. They attribute at least part of these emotions to their participation in AVID. Teachers and parents also report positive experiences with AVID. Teachers are using the AVID strategies in their everyday teaching and report that the program has helped their students. Parents reported that although many of them do not have regular communication with AVID staff at their child's school, the program is helping their children to achieve academic success.

Implementation Results

Although AVID has a successful history (see Watt, Yanez, Cossio, 2003; Watt, Powell, Mendiola, & Cossio, 2006; Swanson, 2000), the implementation evaluation focused on whether implementation of AVID in Clark County School District has been strictly theory-driven, or whether it has become more theory-guided, and more flexible, altering certain components from the original implementation guidelines. Specifically, we examined variability in the essentials outlined by AVID including the nature of the program, the selection process, tutorial program, site team roles and responsibilities, the curriculum, and the use of AVID strategies in the classroom. We also examined the AVID culture in the classroom. AVID has prescribed regulations about these elements that sites are expected to adhere to.

AVID is based on placing underrepresented students in advanced courses and providing an AVID elective class that provides students academic and social support. **Results of the study show that there was site specific variability in the nature of the program. For example, although all sites had elective classes, at some sites all students were not placed in advance courses.**

In regards to the selection process, sites are provided with precise guidelines by which students are selected for inclusion into the program. Students must have academic potential, must have GPAs between 2.0 and 3.5, must have the desire and determination, and can be referred by teachers, counselors and the students themselves. **Our results found that variability exists across sites in how students were selected. For**

example, in some sites, students were handpicked, while in others, students were referred by teachers and counselors.

AVID expects every site to have tutorial sessions to help in supporting students in their advance courses. Tutors are expected to provide academic support using AVID strategy of inquiry and perform clerical duties including evaluating student binders and class and text notes. **Interviews and observations reveal that tutors perform their expected duties. However, the way in which tutorials were conducted varied across sites.** At some sites, tutors effectively guided students through inquiry during tutorials and at others tutors did not effectively use the inquiry process.

Coordinators are expected to assist with organization and management of AVID. **An overarching theme across sites demonstrated that coordinators performed their duties as outlined by AVID.** AVID also expects that schools or districts supports the essentials and commits to AVID. **Responses from interviews revealed that the support they receive from district, site team, administrators, and students made their AVID program effective. However, lack of commitment to the program including recruitment and attrition problems, lack of parental involvement, inability to effectively market AVID to staff and students, and lack of support from administration were reported as barriers to fully implementing the AVID program**.

Additionally, AVID mandates sites to have a strong and relevant writing, collaboration, inquiry and reading curriculum as a basis for learning in the AVID elective class. Strategies of the WIC-R curriculum were implemented across sites at the time of observation. However, **there was variability of effective implementation across sites. In most sites, other strategies including rules for public speaking and taking Cornell notes were established and used by students.** However, in a few sites the better use of these strategies is recommended.

The evaluators also examined the AVID culture in the classroom. The evaluators looked at the atmosphere of the classroom and whether it reflects the AVID program and its goals and objectives. There were slight inconsistencies in classroom layouts across sites. **In other words, although most of the classrooms reflected the AVID culture, not all classrooms had prominently posted WIC-R principles and college/university banners were not present in all schools.** Also the degree of personalization, e.g. “personality profiles” (pictorial autobiographies) were not evident in every observation site. **Results also showed that not all teachers demonstrated enthusiasm for AVID and not all students had their required AVID binders at time of observations.**

The overall finding of the implementation evaluation is that AVID has not been implemented with strict fidelity at all sites. There are several possible reasons for this conclusion. It may be that sites are not strictly theory-driven and may be more theory-guided to suit the needs of the students at their site. Although the AVID program provides materials and criteria for “doing” AVID, there are areas which are presented as guidelines and the specific way in which those guidelines are enacted are open to site discretion. It is also possible that because AVID is still a fairly new program in CCSD, staff are still “learning” the program and processes to implement the program, such as proper recruitment techniques, are still evolving. Further, due to the high rate of staff and student turnover in CCSD, implementation may be influenced as staff with institutional program

knowledge by transition to other schools or positions. However, given that AVID is implemented across multiple sites, variability across site is not unusual (see Mowbray & Herman, 1991). Care should be taken for sites to adhere as close to program guidelines as possible, as with many programs, student outcomes are directly related to implementation levels.

Study Limitations

As evaluators, we were faced with various limitations, the most prevalent of which is the very nature of social science research. The investigation of the effectiveness of AVID through the outcome study was limited to data normally collected in the educational setting and data that were available at the time of the evaluation. Thus, it was not possible to assess other outcomes of interest, such as college preparatory exam scores or final school attendance rates. Although the survey data offered a glimpse into motivational and attitudinal issues related to school success and participation in the AVID program, the data was not linked to individuals to protect confidentiality, limiting the use of this data in more explanatory type of analyses. Further, due to practical constraints, the AVID surveys were only given to parents, teachers, and students participating in the AVID program. This limits the possibility of comparing whether the matched sample of non-AVID students are attending college at the same rate or have similar attitudes as their AVID peers.

In evaluating the processes involved in AVID through the implementation component, there were additional limitation. Because of the restricted time frame, the evaluation included only one visit per school and eleven coordinator interviews. The restricted nature of the evaluation time frame cannot infer what may in fact occur at different times. Moreover, interviews with more coordinators and elective teachers would have provided us with more information about the implementation of AVID. A minimum of three visits per school in different classrooms and interviews with more site team members, would have greatly improved the inferences that can be made. Additionally, because AVID elective classes focus on different elements of the program on different days, various aspects of the curriculum and activities were observed across sites and this further restricts comparison of fidelity across sites. Moreover, given that the current study provides just a snapshot of the implementation of AVID, results cannot be easily generalized to the larger district. Moreover, a fair assessment of the fidelity of AVID across sites cannot be made as the same interview questions were not asked of all coordinators. This lack of consistency limits judgment about implementation across sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Using information from both the outcome and implementation results, recommendations were developed in the areas of implementation, culture, curriculum, advanced placement courses, tutorials, selection, and motivation/intervention for students. The following recommendations are provided so that other sites in the Clark County School District may be able to effectively implement AVID:

1. Clark County School District AVID program should undertake a larger study to explore the implementation of AVID. The study could include interviewing more site team members and conducting observations across more sites with more observations per site.

2. Clearly, the kinds of support sites receive are vital to effectively implementing AVID. This demonstrates the necessity for adopting a program that is based on strong support from administrator, district, site team members, and students.
3. It would also benefit the AVID program and its students, if all sites display the AVID culture by teachers showing excitement about AVID, all students carrying their AVID binders, and having a sufficient amount of AVID material posted on classroom walls.
4. Given that the WIC-R strategies are paramount to the AVID program, all sites across the district will benefit from consistently and effectively adopting the AVID writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading curriculum and their strategies. Additional training in ways to introduce the WIC-R strategies may be helpful for some AVID teachers.
5. Placement of students in advanced courses is an area in need of improvement. Some sites are struggling with placing all students in advanced courses as mandated by the AVID program. This is clear from both the qualitative interview information as well as the counts from the outcome evaluation. Additional support to coordinators from the central office in garnering cooperation from school leadership in providing these opportunities to students may be necessary.
6. Sites and students would also benefit from tutors that consistently use AVID strategies during tutorials and tutors were available across sites.
7. The selection process for enrolling students in the program is still evolving at many sites. It is likely that the first few cohorts of AVID students, including those students used to evaluate outcomes of the AVID program, may not have been ideal candidates to take full advantage of the opportunities AVID offers. Program outcomes may improve as schools refine their selection process to ensure that new AVID students have the motivational and academic aptitude to succeed in post-secondary education. As schools refine their selection procedures to ensure that students enrolling in AVID are truly appropriate for the program, attrition is also likely to decline.
8. Student motivational issues, time constraints, and difficulties in handling more rigorous work, may contribute to student attrition from the program. The AVID program may need to develop additional strategies for supporting struggling students before they leave the program.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this evaluation project demonstrates the importance of the AVID program for minimizing the gap in academic standards and goals for minority students. One anonymous AVID student summed it up best when asked how AVID has affected his/her life:

"[AVID has] given me a voice and an opportunity to prove to myself that I can and I will make it!"

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APPENDIX I

Interview Protocol

Number of Years Teaching? _____ In CCSD? ____ At this School? _____

Have you taught AVID elsewhere? (outside of Clark County) Y____ N____

Content Area Specialty: _____

Team member status: _____

Describe your duties in AVID:

[e.g. organizational responsibilities, activities, home school partnership program]

"Good morning, my name is Milan Jelenic and this is Ordene Edwards, we are doctoral students from UNLV working in conjunction with the Research and School Improvement Department of CCSD. We want you to know that the information we collect will be kept confidential and will be used only by the research and school improvement department. Thank you for allowing us to interview you. Do we have permission to record this interview? This is an on-going study of how AVID is implemented. Before we begin we would like to go over the consent form with you. Do you have any questions? Thank you."

1. Are the eight site team members who were at the summer institute last year still at your school? If not, where are they now? Are they part of an active AVID site team? Are they using the AVID strategies?

2. Describe the AVID selection process of students at this school.

3. Describe the nature of the AVID program here in your school. Are all students enrolled in Honors/AP classes?

4. Are there any barriers to effectively implementing AVID at your school? What are the facilitating factors?

5. How many tutors do you have at your school? Do tutors get regular training? Discuss the duties the tutors conduct. Currently, how many times per week do you have tutorials

APPENDIX II

Observation Protocol

____ Number of Students

____ Grade Level

Ethnic/racial representation: White ___ Black ____ Hispanic _____ Asian _____

Classroom configuration: _____

____ Everyone has an AVID binder? IF not, how many students? _____

____ Students are engaged and paying attention to class activities.

____ Teacher is making references to eventual college/university enrollment

____ Teacher is answering students' questions about college

____ Teacher is accommodating students' needs.

____ Students had the appropriate material for the assignment or class activity

____ Strategies (any of the elements checked above) are being clearly explained to students.

____ Students are encouraged to use strategies.

____ Students are actively using strategies.

____ Teacher is answering students questions about strategies/activities.

____ The AVID classroom reflects the culture of AVID, e.g. AVID posters, etc

____ The teacher models excitement about AVID.

The class was focused on the following key elements of college preparation.
Check all that apply:

THE THREE COMPONENTS OF AVID

CURRICULUM

STUDENT SUCCESS PATH:

___ Time management

___ Goal setting

___ Organization

___ Note taking

___ Public Speaking

___ Developing portfolios

___ Working with others

___ Study strategies

___ Test taking strategies

___ Reading to learn strategies

COLLEGE PATH

___ Self-awareness and personal development activities

___ College entrance examination preparation

___ Writing the college admission essay

___ Choosing a college

___ Planning for admission

___ Financial aid

___ College placement examination preparation

___ Career preparation

WRITING CURRICULUM

___ Oral language/public speaking

___ Note taking practice

___ Test preparation

___ Research

___ WIC-R activities

TUTORIALS

___ Collaborative study groups

___ Problem solving

___ Note taking

___ Higher level thinking questions

___ WIC-R strategies

___ Reflection and evaluation

MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITIES

___ Speakers

___ Philosophical chairs/Socratic seminar

___ Team building

WIC-R STRATEGIES

The WIC-R strategies are paramount to the AVID program. A few or all of the strategies should be used consistently in the classroom. Following is each component of the WIC-R. Check all that apply.

WRITING:

Note taking

____ Students are learning how to take and are taking class and textbook notes: Cornell, etc

Learning logs

____ Students have learning logs

____ Learning logs relate to subjects that they are studying

____ Students share learning log responses with other students in collaborative groups

The writing process

____ Teacher discuss criteria for the writing prompt

_____ Students prewrite

____ Students write a draft

____ Students exchange drafts with peers for comments and revisions

____ Students write further drafts

____ Students write a final draft

____ Teacher evaluates the final draft

____ Students are encouraged to revise.

____ A major writing assignment was given (if applicable)

____ A timed writing assignment was given (if applicable)

INQUIRY:

Method of inquiry used:

___ Skilled questioning and writing questions (most often in collaborative groups)

____ Socratic circle /Philosophical chairs

____ Quickwrite/discussion

____ Critical thinking activities

____ Open-mindedness activities

Questioning strategy/ level of questioning use by teacher/tutor:

Blooms	Costa's
__Knowledge	Level one – gathering and recalling information
__Comprehension	Level two – making sense of gathered information
__Application	Level three – applying and evaluating information
__Analysis	
__Synthesis	
__Evaluation	

___ Teacher/tutor are guiding the inquiry process.

___ Students are actively participating in answering questions/inquiry.

___ Students are collaborating with each other during inquiry.

___ The desks are arranged in a way to encourage eye contact during the Socratic circle.

COLLABORATION

____ Teacher/tutor discussed group etiquette before beginning group work

____ Teacher/tutor discussed the benefits to working in collaborative groups

____ Teacher/tutor provided students with careful instructions and simple directions before they move into groups

____ Teacher/tutor established a specific route for moving into groups

____ Teacher/tutor dad students move their desks close together to prevent distractions among groups

____ Teacher/tutor established a reasonable time limit.

____ Students wrote about and discuss what went well in their groups

____ Students wrote about and discuss what they needed to improve for the next time.

READING:

____ Teacher helped students connect text to prior knowledge

____ Teacher helped students identify and make sense of the structure of the text relative to the content

Teacher helped students process the text using one/a few of these strategies:

___ General reading strategies

___ PQ5R

___ Jigsaw

___ KWL (What I Know, Want to Know, and Learned)

TUTORIAL:

____ Students brought notes for subjects in which they need help

____ Students completed learning logs/tutorial worksheets

____ Students are actively participating in the tutorial

____ Students are asking questions of the tutor

____ Tutors are assisting students

____ Students are taking detailed notes during the tutorial.

____ WIC-R strategies are being followed (as outlined above?)

____ Tutors assess student participation and keep students engaged

____ Tutors use reflection and evaluation throughout tutorial

BINDER GRADING AND MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

____ Binders are graded

____ In preparation for speakers, students research and develop questions.