

## **The AVID Student**

AVID targets students in the academic middle – B, C, and even D students – who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. These are students who are capable of completing rigorous curriculum but are falling short of their potential. Occasionally, they will be the first in their families to attend college, and many are from low- income or minority families. AVID pulls these students out of their unchallenging courses and puts them on the college track: acceleration instead of remediation.

## **The AVID Elective**

Not only are students enrolled in their school’s toughest classes, such as honors and Advanced Placement, but also in the AVID elective. For one period a day, they learn organizational and study skills, work on critical thinking and asking probing questions, get academic help from peers and college tutors, and participate in enrichment and motivational activities that make college seem attainable. Their self-images improve, and they become academically successful leaders and role models for other students.

## **Curriculum**

The AVID curriculum, based on rigorous standards, was developed by middle and senior high school teachers in collaboration with college professors. It is driven by the WIC-R method, which stands for writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading. AVID curriculum is used in AVID elective classes, in content area classes in AVID schools, and even in schools where the AVID elective is not offered.

## **Who Uses AVID**

AVID is at work in over 4,000 middle and high schools in 45 states and 15 countries. Large urban schools, tiny rural schools, resource-rich suburban schools, and struggling schools – they all find that AVID meets the needs of their students in the middle.

## **Results**

A well-developed AVID program improves school-wide standardized test scores, advanced rigorous course enrollments, and the number of students attending college. Since 1990, more than 30,000 AVID students have graduated from high school and gone on to college. Ninety-five percent of AVID students report enrolling in college, 77 percent in four-year institutions and 17 percent in community colleges. The national average for four-year college enrollment is 35 percent.

## Why AVID Works

Between the remedial programs for students who lag far behind, and the gifted –and – talented programs for a school’s brightest children, lies the silent majority: average students, who do “okay” in ordinary classes but, because they don’t attract attention to themselves, are left alone. Many of these students hunger for more challenging coursework, but fear failure. Their potential lies dormant, waiting to be recognized, encouraged, and supported.

First, AVID identifies these student. The selection criteria include:

- \***Ability:** Are the students getting Cs and Bs but are capable of more? Can they succeed in college preparatory courses with support?
- \***Desire and Determination:** Do they want to attend college? Are they willing to work hard to get there?
- \***Membership in an underserved group:** Are they in the middle academically? Are they **not** working to their potential? Are they in a low income household? Will they be the first in their family to attend college?

The AVID program is tailored to the needs of this diverse group of students, and it works for them because

- \*AVID **accelerates** underachieving students into more rigorous courses, instead of consigning them to dead-end remedial programs.
- \*AVID offers the **intensive support** students need to succeed in rigorous courses.
- \*AVID uses Socratic methods and study groups that **specifically** target the needs of under-achieving students.
- \*AVID is a **school-wide** initiative, not a school within a school.
- \*AVID **changes the belief system** of an entire school by showing that students that are in the middle academically, and low-income and minority students can achieve at the highest levels and attend colleges.
- \* The role of teacher is **redefined** from lecturer to advocate and guide. The role of counselor changes from gate-keeper to facilitator.
- \*AVID creates site teams of administrators and educators from different content areas, encouraging **communication and sharing** among teachers, counselors, and principals.
- \*All AVID strategies are **based on research** on tracking – the process by which some children are channeled into challenging courses and others are relegated to remedial ones- and peer influences in student achievement.