

What AVID is...

- *AVID is an acronym that stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination.*
- *AVID is an in-school academic support program for grades 5-12 that prepares students for college eligibility and success.*
- *AVID places academically average students in advanced classes.*
- *AVID levels the playing field for minority, rural, low-income and other students without a college-going tradition in their families.*
- *AVID is for all students, but it targets those in the academic middle.*
- *AVID is implemented schoolwide and districtwide.*

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. Typically, 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.

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 students. 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 a low-income household? Will they be the first in their family to attend college? Are they historically unlikely 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 **schoolwide** initiative, not a school within a school.
- AVID **changes the belief system** of an entire school by showing that 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.

Teaching Methodologies

WIC-R — or writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading — forms the basis of the AVID curriculum. It gives students the skills they need to succeed in college-preparatory classes, like Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate.

- **Writing** to learn. AVID emphasizes writing in all subjects, with a focus on clarifying and communicating their thoughts and understanding material.
- Emphasis on **inquiry**. AVID is based on inquiry, not lecture. Many activities, from Cornell notetaking to tutorial groups, are built around asking questions, which forces students to clarify, analyze, and synthesize material.
- A **collaborative** approach. The AVID classroom is not a traditional one in which a teacher lectures to passive students. An AVID teacher is a facilitator and an advocate. But students, not teachers or tutors, are responsible for their learning. Tutors function as discussion leaders, while students challenge, help, and learn from one another.
- Critical **reading**. AVID students don't merely read words on a page. They are taught to analyze, question, critique, clarify, and comprehend the material.

These techniques turn students from passive learners into active classroom contributors and critical thinkers, an approach that's necessary for college admission and success.

But don't take our word for it: keep surfing, check out data demonstrating AVID's effectiveness, and read quotations from students, teachers, administrators, and researchers who are pleased with the AVID effect.