MEMORANDUM

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Terry B. Grier, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2011–2012 AVID PROGRAM

CONTACT: Carla Stevens, 713-556-6700

Attached is the report of the The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. The AVID program was developed originally in San Diego to increase the number of secondary students participating in rigorous academic courses, including Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP courses. The program targets at-risk students who (1) are economically disadvantaged, (2) are underrepresented in four-year colleges, (3) possess the potential to become first-generation college students, and (4) are currently enrolled in regular (non-gifted and talented, non-special education) classes. During the 2011–2012 school year, Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers who elected to participate in the AVID program received training on the AVID curriculum to ensure that it was applied appropriately. Students who participated in the AVID program received tutoring twice weekly from volunteer AVID tutors. All tutors were college students and they provided content-specific support and guidance with reading, study skills, note taking, organizational skills, writing, inquiry, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Overall, 1,056 students were enrolled in the 2011–2012 AVID program, a 49.8 percent decrease from 2010–2011. The largest decreases in student enrollment occurred at the high school level. In all sixth-grade subjects, seventh-grade math, eighth-grade science, tenth-grade math and science, and all eleventh-grade subjects, AVID students outperformed their non-AVID counterparts. This performance difference was especially pronounced on the STAAR End of Course exams. 59.7 percent of AVID participants enrolled in at least one Pre-AP or AP class. In 2011-2012, 176 AVID participants took a total of 348 AP exams. This represented 40.1 percent of the students enrolled in AVID. This is a 78.2 percent increase over the 22.5 percent of participants who took an AP exam in 2010–2011. The percent of exams with scores of 3 or more increased slightly from 9.1 percent in 2010–2011 to 10.3 percent in 2011–2012.

Administrative Response: The effectiveness of the AVID program is evident. Student performance and engagement is high among AVID programs nationwide when implemented correctly. Implementation, however, is a costly endeavor with the average cost of year one implementation reaching \$30,000 for a mid-size campus. In the instance where a decrease in student enrollment in AVID occurred from the 2010-11 school year to the 2011–12, grant funds were no longer available and being utilized for AVID at the following campuses: Davis, Sam Houston, Waltrip and Yates.

The 2012-13 school year has presented HISD with a new opportunity to reinvest in AVID and commit more campuses to the program. Currently, a total of 24 HISD campuses offer the AVID program - 19 of our campuses have committed to the AVID/Rice University two-year grant. The goals of the grant includes increasing student participation/enrollment in AVID by 20%, and a 10% increase in the number of students participating in AP school-wide by the end of the two-year grant.

Should you have any further questions, please contact my office or Carla Stevens in the Research and Accountability Department at (713) 556-6700.

Tung B. Grien TBG

Attachment

cc: Superintendent's Direct Reports Lupita Hinojosa School Improvement Officers Alan Summers Estibaliz Arriaga





Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Findings Related to Student Performance, 2011–2012

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND ACCOUNTABILITY HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



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ADVANCEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION (AVID) FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDENT PERFORMANCE, 2011–2012

Executive Summary

Program Description

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program was developed originally in San Diego to increase the number of secondary students participating in rigorous academic courses, including Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP courses. The program targets at-risk students who (1) are economically disadvantaged, (2) are underrepresented in four-year colleges, (3) possess the potential to become first-generation college students, and (4) are currently enrolled in regular (non-gifted and talented, non-special education) classes. In order to be selected for the AVID program, students must have a GPA between 2.0 and 3.5. During the 2011–2012 school year, Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers who elected to participate in the AVID program received training on the AVID curriculum to ensure that it was applied appropriately. Students who participated in the AVID program received tutoring twice weekly from AVID tutors. All tutors were college students and they provided content-specific support and guidance with reading, study skills, note taking, organizational skills, writing, inquiry, collaboration, and critical thinking.

There was no budget for the 2011-2012 and tutoring was provided by college students hired by campuses or work-study students from Houston Community College and the University of Houston-Downtown. The AVID program aligns with the district's "College Bound Culture" initiative, the district's Strategic Direction Core Initiative 3 "Rigorous Instructional Standards and Supports", and the "College Readiness" aspect of the state's House Bill 1.

Highlights

- Overall, 1,056 students were enrolled in the 2011–2012 AVID program, a 49.8 percent decrease from 2010–2011. The largest decreases in student enrollment occurred at the high school level.
- At every grade level and in most subjects specifically at the high school level, students enrolled in AVID outperformed their non-AVID counterparts. This performance difference was especially pronounced on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) End-of-Course exams.
- 59.7 percent of AVID participants enrolled in at least one Pre-AP or AP class.
- In 2011-2012, 176 AVID participants took a total of 348 AP exams. This represented 40.1 percent of the students enrolled in AVID. This is higher than the 22.5 percent of participants who took an AP exam in 2010– 2011. The percent of exams with scores of 3 or more increased slightly from 9.1 percent in 2010–2011 to 10.3 percent in 2011–2012.

Recommendations

- Because there is evidence that the AVID program has a positive effect on student performance, it is recommended that recruitment efforts be increased in an effort to elicit more student participation, especially at the high school level.
- It is recommended that teachers in the AVID program promote more participation in AP and Pre-AP classes and encourage students to take the AP exams when appropriate in an attempt to increase the numbers of AVID participants who receive AP credit.
- Because students who are enrolled in seventh grade, but take the eighth grade test perform better than students who are enrolled in eighth grade, and take the eighth grade test, it is recommended that the district support transitioning more students into this intra-grade position. The AVID program provides one possible avenue through which schools can increase enrollment and continue to support the achievement of this population of students.
- It is recommended that more attention be paid to English/language arts performance in the AVID program as these subjects do not show the same patterns of improvement among AVID students.

Administrative Response

The effectiveness of the AVID program is evident. Student performance and engagement is high among AVID programs nationwide when implemented correctly. Implementation, however, is a costly endeavor with the average cost of year one implementation reaching \$30,000 for a mid-size campus. In the instance where a decrease in student enrollment in AVID occurred from the 2010-11 school year to the 2011-12, grant funds were no longer available and being utilized for AVID at the following campuses: Davis, Sam Houston, Waltrip and Yates.

The 2012-13 school year has presented HISD with a new opportunity to reinvest in AVID and commit more campuses to the program. Currently, a total of 24 HISD campuses offer the AVID program - 19 of our campuses have committed to the AVID/Rice University two-year grant. The goals of the grant includes increasing student participation/enrollment in AVID by 20%, and a 10% increase in the number of students participating in AP school-wide by the end of the two-year grant.

Introduction

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is a secondary program to prepare students for the rigors of a four-year college or university. The Houston independent School District (HISD) works to ensure the success of AVID students through a six-year plan which promotes collaborative learning and inquiry with specific focus on reading and writing. In small groups, AVID students ask, explore, and answer questions. This is achieved through Carousel Walks, Think-Pair-Share, group projects, and response groups. AVID students are taught levels of questioning and are given opportunities to apply questioning techniques. AVID students regularly participate in inside/outside circle discussions, panel discussions, Philosophical Chairs, and Socratic Seminars. AVID incorporates strategies that can help students become more effective readers. The strategies include graphic organizers, jigsawing text, reciprocal teaching, Think-Alouds, reader response, and SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite/write, Review). Writing is also an essential part of AVID. AVID students are taught the writing process and strategies to enhance their writing skills. The strategies include Cornell Note-taking, double entry journaling, compare and contrast charts, Know Want Learn (KWL), learning logs, quick writes, and Generating Interaction between Schemata and Text (GIST). The Six Year Plan, developed in collaboration with Federal and State Compliance, P-16, Student Engagement and the secondary lead counselors, is aligned to the college bound culture program and is now the official form for mapping student graduation plans (middle to high school). AVID supports HISD students' successful completion of high school and entrance into college.

Supporting Research

AVID identifies eleven essentials which guide the overall philosophy of the program. These essentials include: (1) selecting students who would benefit from the support given in the AVID program ("students in the middle"), (2) voluntary participation from students and teachers, (3) commitment by the district and participants to fully implement the program, (4) a rigorous curriculum in AVID classes, (5) strong and relevant writing and reading activities, (6) inquiry, (7) collaboration incorporated into AVID classroom activities as a basis for instruction, (8) student access to AVID-trained tutors facilitating tutorials, (9) monitoring of student progress by using multiple sources of data, (10) adequate resources to support the program (i.e. funding, curricular, and professional development support), and (11) an active interdisciplinary site team focused on the development and implementation of the program (AVID, n.d.). These factors are necessary to the success of AVID students and a successful implementation of the program. Taken as a whole, these factors serve two main functions: to promote a rigorous academic curriculum and provide the support necessary for students to be successful within such a curriculum.

When implemented correctly, students enrolled in an AVID program show increased grades (Black, McCoach, Purcell, & Siegle, 2008; Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002; Hooker & Brand, 2009; Watt, Yanez, & Cossio, 2002), higher likelihood of high school graduation (Watt, Powell, Mendiola & Cossio, 2006), higher likelihood of college graduation (Mendiola, Watt, & Huerta, 2010), higher state accountability test scores (Watt, Powell, & Mendiola, 2004; Watt et al., 2006), higher enrollment in AP courses (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002; Hooker & Brand, 2009; Watt et al., 2006), and better attendance (Watt, Powell, & Mendiola, 2004). Furthermore, the AVID program has a positive effect on student morale. Teachers and parents have found that when a student is enrolled in AVID, they begin to exhibit more interest in education and invest more of their time in achieving expected outcomes, (Black, McCoach, Purcell & Siegle, 2008). Students also began to hold higher expectations for themselves and their educational attainment (Lozano, Watt, & Huerta, 2009). Taken together, these findings suggest that the AVID program is effective at increasing student performance and morale both during their participation in program and after students have graduated. These long-lasting effects indicate that the AVID program is successful not only in providing immediate support for student achievement, but also teaching students

the skills they need to be successful in college.

Program Goals and Objectives

There are three program goals outlined for AVID:

- Provide education reform and school improvement to advance student achievement in reading and mathematics.
- Increase AP and Pre-AP course enrollment and completion for participating students.
- Expand learning opportunities through best practice models to improve teaching and learning.

Methods

The AVID program administrator provided a list of participants by school and grade. Participants were then matched to their 2011–2012 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) or Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) scores. AVID participants were also matched to the HISD AP database to determine their enrollment in AP courses as well as which students elected to take AP exams and how they scored. There were 1,056 participants in this group from grades 6–12.

For the purpose of comparison, students enrolled in AVID during the 2011–2012 school year were matched to students with similar demographics and 2010–2011 test scores (see **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**, **p. 5**). This group of 1,010 students was used as the comparison group for all analyses to determine if the AVID program has a positive effect on student performance. There was a total of 1,003 AVID and 1,010 non-AVID students for whom all data are available.



Figure 1. Demographic data for students in AVID and the comparison group.



Figure 2. 2010–2011 TAKS data for students in AVID and the comparison group.

AVID Not AVID

Results

What was the level of participation in AVID for the 2011–2012 school year?

- Overall AVID participation decreased from the 2010–2011 school year to the 2011–2012 school year. During the 2010–2011 school year, there was a total of 2,105 students who participated in AVID. That number decreased to 1,056 participants during the 2011–2012 school year, a 49.8 percent decrease (Figure 3, p. 6, Tables 1 and 2, p. 12).
- AVID participation increased in the sixth and seventh grades from the 2010–2011 school year to the 2011–2012 school year. The number of sixth grade students participating in AVID increased from 85 in the 2010–2011 school year to 96 in the 2011–2012 school year, a 12.9 percent increase. The number of seventh grade students participating in AVID increased from 211 in the 2010–2011 school year to 325 in the 2011–2012 school year, a 54.0 percent increase (Figure 3, Tables 1 and 2).
- AVID experienced sharp decreases in participation in the eighth through twelfth grades. The largest decrease occurred among ninth graders. Ninth grade participation decreased from 608 in the 2010–2011 school year to 185 in the 2011–2012 school year, a 69.6 percent decrease (Figure 3, Tables 1 and 2).
- Over the course of the last 5 years, AVID enrollment increased in high school until 2011-2012, where there was a sharp decline. Among middle school students, enrollment in the AVID program has remained fairly steady in the past 5 years ranging from a low of 501 to a high of 757 (**Figure 4, p. 6**).



Figure 3. AVID Participants by Grade, 2010–2011 & 2011–2012

Figure 4. Total AVID Participants since 2008–2009 to 2011–2012



Middle School High School

What was the level of academic achievement for students enrolled in AVID for the 2011–2012 school year?

 On the STAAR grades 6–8 assessment, students enrolled in AVID outperformed students not enrolled in AVID on sixth grade reading and mathematics, seventh grade mathematics, eighth grade science, and eighth grade mathematics taken by seventh grade students. Students not in AVID outperformed students in AVID on seventh grade reading and writing and eighth grade reading, mathematics, and social studies (Figure 5, p. 7). The largest gap was among eighth grade students in mathematics. Students not enrolled in AVID outperformed AVID students by an average of 1.9 raw score points.



Figure 5. 6–8 STAAR performance for students enrolled in AVID and the comparison group of non-AVID students.

 On the STAAR End-of-Course exams, students enrolled in AVID outperformed students not enrolled in AVID in all subjects (Figure 6). The largest gap was in Geometry where students enrolled in AVID outperformed students not enrolled in AVID by 45.8 percentage points. However, it should be noted that for the spring 2012 testing, only advanced students took the Geometry End-of-Course test as a ninth grader.

Figure 6. STAAR End-of-Course performance for students enrolled in AVID and the comparison group of non-AVID students.



On the 10th and 11th grade TAKS, AVID students outperformed students not enrolled in AVID in all subjects with the exception of 10th grade ELA and 10th grade Science (Figure 7). The largest gap was in 11th grade Social Studies where students enrolled in AVID outperformed students not enrolled in AVID by 7.6 percentage points.



Figure 7. 10th and 11th grade TAKS performance for students enrolled in AVID and the comparison group of non-AVID students.

What was the testing frequency of AP exams among AVID students for the 2011–2012 school year?

- 59.7 percent of AVID participants enrolled in at least one Pre-AP or AP class (Table 3, p 13).
- There was a 49.6 percent decrease in the number of AVID students taking AP exams from the 2010–2011 school year to the 2011–2012 school year. This decrease is an artifact of the substantial decrease in high school program participants. As a contrast, there was a 9.1 percent increase in the number of students taking AP exams, districtwide (**Table 4, p. 13**).
- The number of AP exams taken decreased for AVID students, however not for the entire district. While the number of exams taken by AVID students decreased by 72.4 percent from the 2010–2011 school year to the 2011–2012 school year, the percentage of students in the AVID program who elected to take an AP exam increased 78.2 percent from the 2010–2011 school year (Table 4).
- The percent of AVID students taking an AP exam was 40.1 and the percentage of students in the district taking an AP exam was 28.0 percent (Table 4).
- The percent of AVID students who scored a 3 or higher on their AP exam increased from 9.1 percent to 10.3 percent.

Discussion

The AVID program served 1,056 students who met one or more of the following criteria: economically disadvantaged, from groups traditionally underrepresented in four-year colleges, had the potential to become first generation college students, and were not enrolled in Pre-AP or AP courses prior to their participation in the program. AVID Tutors and AVID Elective teachers worked with students to ensure success in all classes and support performance on standardized tests. In the majority of grades and subjects, specifically at the high school level, AVID students outperformed their non-AVID counterparts on each STAAR or TAKS test.

Since 2008, AVID student enrollment in HISD has steadily increased through 2010-2011. However, the district experienced a significant decline in AVID student enrollment for the 2011–2012 school year due to the closing of the Smaller Learning Communities grant that Davis High School, Sam Houston, Milby High School and Waltrip High School had used to implement AVID. To address the issues of enrollment, additional funding sources should be identified and AVID recommends that recruitment take place through a culturally proficient lens. In other words, indicators such as attendance and behavior should be thoroughly investigated on a case by case basis prior to reaching a decision to exclude a student from the program (AVID, 2008). Further, to ensure the continued success of AVID it is critical that the aforementioned 11 factors be an intricate component of overall planning and implementation. Additionally, adopting AVID methodologies like tutoring and student binders have been shown to raise expectations and improve outcomes for all students, (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002).

There were some interesting patterns in test performance between AVID and non-AVID students. The first pattern shows that seventh grade students who took the eighth grade mathematics test had much higher performance than their eighth grade counterparts. This was true of both AVID and non-AVID students. These results indicate that it would be beneficial to support transitioning more students into this intra-grade position. The AVID program provides one possible avenue through which schools can increase enrollment and continue to support the achievement of this population of students.

The second pattern indicates that students in AVID, while improving their performance in other areas, are not improving their performance in reading and ELA. In seventh and eighth grade reading as well as tenth grade ELA, AVID students underperformed their non-AVID counterparts. These findings suggest that more attention should be paid to these areas, particularly within the AVID program.

The third pattern shows that AVID students drastically outperformed non-AVID students in all subjects on the STAAR End-of-Course exams. This indicates that the skills learned in AVID transfer well to these subjects and suggests that it may be useful for students who are not enrolled in AVID to learn similar skills (e.g. note taking, summarizing, study skills) in order to improve performance in these subjects.

Although fewer students took AP examinations, the percent of AVID students who elected to take at least one AP exam increased from 2010–2011 to 2011–2012. The percent of AVID students who scored a 3 or higher on an AP exam also increased during the 2011–2012 school year. In general, AVID students are more likely to enroll in an AP course and attempt an AP exam than students in the district. This indicates that the AVID program is useful in allowing more students to access the benefits of the AP program.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the AVID program is effective in increasing the performance of the students involved both as measured by the state accountability assessments (STAAR, EOC, and TAKS) and by participation in the AP program. The largest benefit of the AVID program is in the support

it provides for student academics. It allows students who would normally be passed over to learn the skills that are necessary to transition into more rigorous academic programs. The support provided to students in the AVID program is most beneficial when it is maintained over the course of several years as the students are able to learn, implement, and see the results of their better study skills and improved focus. Ultimately, these skills can be transferred to college and help these students continue their success as the academics get more challenging.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1: AVID Elective Participation by Grade and School, HISD Middle									
and Combined Schools, 2010–2011 and 2011–2012									
		2010–2	011		2011–2012				
School	6th	7th	8th	Total	6th	7th	8th	Total	
Burbank	-	-	-	-	-	45	27	72	
Cullen	-	12	-	12	-	-	-	-	
Fondren	-	25	36	61	-	-	-	-	
Fonville	-	70	95	165	-	-	-	-	
Hartman	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	12	
Holland	24	26	31	81	26	32	24	82	
Jackson	-	-	-	-	-	67	2	69	
Johnston	20	23	38	81	20	37	27	84	
Key	-	-	-	-	-	21	16	37	
McReynolds	20	22	19	61	-	-	-	-	
Ortíz	21	13	21	55	30	1	13	44	
Pilgrim									
Academy	-	-	-	-	-	13	6	19	
Revere	-	11	7	18	-	31	33	64	
Sharpstown Intl.	-	9	14	23	20	36	10	66	
Welch	-	-	-	-	-	30	38	68	
Totals	85	211	261	557	96	325	196	617	

AVID PARTICIPATION DATA

Table 2: AVID Elective Participation by Grade and School, HISD High Schools, 2010–2011 and 2011–2012

	2010–2011				2011–2012					
School	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total
Chávez	-	6	36	17	59	-	-	-	-	-
Davis	55	36	22	14	127	20	23	14	4	61
Furr	40	88	32	42	202	19	18	37	14	88
Houston Math/										
Science/Tech. Ctr.	-	-	82	79	161	82	1	8	33	124
Kashmere	-	-	-	-	-	27	-	-	-	27
Milby	-	-	17	5	22	-	-	-	-	-
Sharpstown	39	27	27	31	124	10	6	10	9	35
Sterling	104	44	61	15	224	-	-	-	-	-
Waltrip	79	34	30	44	187	1	21	12	9	43
Westbury	252	19	31	6	308	-	-	-	-	-
Yates	39	40	12	43	134	26	11	6	18	61
Totals	608	294	350	296	1,548	185	80	87	87	439

APPENDIX B

AVID AP ENROLLMENT AND TESTING DATA

Table 3: AVID Participant Pre-AP and AP Enrollment by School, 2011–2012							
		Pre-AP AP		Unduplicated			
		Enrollment	Enrollment	Pre-AP and AP			
_	AVID	by AVID	by AVID	Enrollment by			
School	Enrollment	Participants	Participants	AVID Participants			
Middle & Combined							
Schools							
Burbank MS	72	18	6	19			
Hartman MS	12	4		4			
Holland MS	82	82		82			
Jackson MS	69	27		27			
Johnston MS	84	83	6	83			
Key MS	37	22		22			
Ortíz MS	44	34		34			
Pilgrim Academy	19	1		1			
Revere MS	64	42	1	42			
Sharpstown Intl.	66	58		58			
Welch MS	68	25		25			
Totals	617	396	13	397			
High Schools							
Davis HS	61	45	21	49			
Furr HS	88	71	81	85			
Houston Math/							
Science/Tech. Ctr.	124	77	45	110			
Kashmere HS	27	19		19			
Sharpstown HS	35	24	17	27			
Waltrip HS	43	28	23	36			
Yates HS	61	33	15	41			
Totals	439	297	202	233			
District Totals	1,056	693	215	630			

Table 4: AVID AP Exams 2010–2011, 2011–2012									
	AVI	D Participant	s	District					
	2010–2011	2011–2012	Percent Change	2010–2011	2011–2012	Percent Change			
Number of Students Taking Exams	349	176	-49.6	12,287	13,403	9.1			
Number of Exams Taken	1,259	348	-72.4	21,336	23,227	8.9			
Number of Exams Scored 3 or Higher	114	36	-68.4	5,656	7,106	25.6			
Percent of Exams Scored 3 or Higher	9.1	10.3	13.2	31.2	30.5	-2.2			
Percent of Students who took an AP Exam	22.5	40.1	78.2	25.1	28.0	11.6			
Number of AP Exams per student	3.6	2.0	-55.6	1.7	1.7	0			