

AVID – Advancement Via Individual Determination
Presentation to
Senate Select Committee on Education Reform and Public School Finance
February 6, 2006

I. Introduction

- Eileen Friou, AVID District Director, Richardson Independent School District
- Problem solved: AVID is the answer to improving the academic performance of high school students in Texas and increasing graduation and college enrollment numbers.

II. What is AVID? *Advancement Via Individual Determination*

- Started in 1980, AVID is a proven philosophy and corresponding program for students in grades 6-12 that encompasses the idea that “effort creates ability.”
- AVID’s mission:
“To ensure that all students – especially students in the middle not previously successful in a pre- college curriculum – will succeed in a rigorous curriculum, and increase their enrollment in four-year colleges.”
- Basis for AVID is 3 R’s: 1-Relationships, 2-Rigor, 3-Relevance
 1. Relationships - A critical component of AVID is developing relationships between adults and students in school.
 2. Rigor - While the requirement is that AVID students take at least one advanced academic course, over half add additional advanced courses after their first year.
 3. Relevance - Career exploration, college choices, goal setting and self reflection are heavily emphasized in AVID. Students realize their decisions as early as 6th and 7th grade affect their college opportunities.

III. How AVID works

- AVID is a recognized reform model for secondary schools.
- Students apply to be in the AVID program. Upon selection, students and their parents are required to sign a contract confirming their responsibilities and intentions to succeed in the program.
- AVID students must take an AVID class as one of their elective courses and they must enroll in one or more advanced academic classes (Pre AP or AP).
- AVID is designed to increase school-wide learning and performance. AVID students will:
 - Succeed in the most rigorous curriculum
 - Participate in mainstream activities of the school
 - Increase their enrollment in four-year colleges
 - Become educated and responsible participants and leaders in a democratic society.

IV. AVID Works

AVID is the answer to improving performance of high school students. What differentiates AVID from other educational reform programs is its incredible success rate. In Texas . . .

- **AVID students score a 3 (out of 4) or higher on AP science exams** at a rate 1 ½ times their classmates.
- On TAKS, **AVID students score 2 to 12 percentage points higher** than non-AVID students in Math and Science
- In 2004, **99 percent of AVID students enrolled in college**; 83 percent of AVID students attended 4 -year colleges, and 16 percent attended a 2 -year college.
- On a national basis, **99.1% of AVID students graduate from high school compared to 70% graduation rate nationally.**
- AVID data also documents **improvement in daily student attendance.**
- Additionally, implementation of AVID transforms the school's culture and dramatically **increases the achievement of the entire student body.** In California, all students graduating from AVID schools have improved completion of four-year college entry requirements at a rate of more than 500 percent higher than students in non-AVID schools.

Statistics give the "what" of AVID's success; students tell the "why" of AVID's success. (*Jose's story*)

V. AVID Costs

- AVID is a non-profit organization
- Tremendous "bang for your buck" or as RISD Superintendent says, "It is an enormous value for the cost." AVID changes students' lives for the better, both academically and socially.
- Average cost is approximately \$1.80 per student per day for first three years. It becomes more cost effective as more students join the program.
- The AVID budget: Tutoring – 45%; Staff training – 30%; Curriculum materials and supplies – 20%; Administrative costs – 5%

VI. Conclusion

AVID is the answer to improving secondary education and student performance in Texas. As school districts continue to struggle financially, implementing the AVID program and even continuing AVID in some districts is not an option. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, Wachovia Bank, and other organizations interested in secondary education have given funding to help support the AVID program in some districts, but it is not guaranteed in the future. I would ask the state legislature to allocate funding for the AVID program as part of the high school reform initiative. AVID is a non-profit organization that has a solid track record of improving student academic performance in secondary schools. In Texas, we can't afford not to have AVID in our schools.