

AVID: A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM MODEL FOR TEXAS

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of a recent comprehensive school reform effort in the state of Texas has been examined in this article. The effort, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), was studied in-depth over the two-year implementation period through school visits, observations, stakeholder interviews, and student performance data analysis. Main findings revealed that through proper implementation (strong instructional leadership, using AVID strategies school-wide, and staff development), underachieving, economically disadvantaged, ethnic minority students can succeed in a rigorous curriculum. AVID is a catalyst for school-wide reform; AVID addresses and influences school policies that can be barriers to student success; AVID is a pathway to opening access to Advanced Placement; and AVID can be adapted to meet the capacity and needs of individual campuses to implement reform.

This article examines the recent implementation of a Comprehensive School Reform effort, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), in 26 Texas secondary schools, and the implications of this effort for historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students. The AVID project began in the

state of California in 1980, when a high school English teacher, Mary Catherine Swanson, had a vision for her recently desegregated suburban school in San Diego County, California. Her vision was to provide all students access to rigorous curricula, particularly those who were historically underrepresented in four-year colleges and universities and now found themselves in Mary Catherine's high school English classes.

The acronym "AVID" represents an abbreviation of the Latin term *L. avidus*, meaning eager for knowledge. AVID provides opportunities for students who are eager for knowledge, but historically have been denied appropriate access to knowledge provided through rigorous curriculum and instruction. (Historically underrepresented groups are defined in this article as African American, Hispanic, and low socioeconomic (SES) students.) Typically, AVID students are those who have been placed in "regular-non-academic-non-college" curricula. Through AVID, these "average" or "middle" students are identified by AVID site team members, enrolled in advanced classes, and provided with a support elective class equipped with college tutors and a highly trained AVID teacher.

The purpose of the AVID elective classroom is to provide academic and social support to AVID students. Once in AVID, students have access to rigorous curriculum, including Advanced Placement (AP) classes, and are expected to successfully enroll in and complete college. The AVID elective classroom provides the extra support, or social scaffolding (Mehan, Villanueva, Hubbard, & Lintz, 1996) that AVID students need to be successful in their more rigorous classes. Students learn how to study collaboratively (Treisman, 1992), how to take Cornell notes (Pauk, 1974), and most importantly, how to navigate through the "hidden curriculum" (Apple, 1982; Apple & Weis, 1983; Dreeben, 1968; Nieto, 2000; Young, 1971). AVID has a 93% success rate in sending underrepresented students to college (Mehan et al., 1996).

This article specifically focuses on seven school districts in Texas, and their 26 schools that recently implemented AVID as a model for school-wide reform. These school districts applied for and received Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRDI) grants from the federal government via the Texas Education Agency. The CSRDI represents re-distributive legislation sponsored by Obey and Porter that focused on changing how school was conducted (Block, Everson, & Guskey, 2001; McLaughlin, 1991). After two years of CSRDI AVID implementation, the questions that were explored in this study included (a) has AVID been a vehicle through which each of the seven districts of study has expanded access to rigorous coursework; (b) has there been school-wide impact as evidenced by changes in school culture and school policy; (c) has the implementation of AVID made a difference in the achievement levels of the AVID students of study; and (d) are the AVID students of study "on track" for college preparation and enrollment?

Theoretical Framework

Before 1954 and *Brown vs. Board of Education*, differentiated curriculum and instruction took place in separate schools. When states were required to desegregate

their schools, the practice of curricular differentiation based on racial differences was no longer legal. Schools in the United States have struggled over the last 50 years to provide equitable education for all students. The public school institution was considered the great equalizer—as students moved through the educational system, they were theoretically provided an equal playing field. In practice, public schools have magnified the differences between children from wealthy and impoverished backgrounds as well as between students of different ethnic backgrounds. Schools have directly influenced the opportunities and outcomes provided for children through the practice of tracking, adopted in the early 1900s with compulsory attendance legislation. Children were placed together on the basis of similar aptitude, achievement or aspirations. Group placement in tracks became self-perpetuating and students were often grouped at the same academic level for all subjects, regardless of possible ability differences across subject areas (Persell, 1977). Between 1965 and 1975, most American secondary schools dismantled their “tracking” procedures that assigned students to pre-determined programs of courses for the duration of their high school years. Track labels, such as honors, remedial and basic, were no longer applied to programs in which students were assigned, but instead were applied to the courses in which students were enrolled (Lucas, 1999). Freedman (2000) referred to this differentiated process of isolating minority students in remedial classes with low expectations as creating “instructional ghettos” within schools (p. 15).

The practice of tracking exacerbates differences in achievement by lowering the achievement of students in low tracks and raising the achievement of students in high tracks (Kerckoff, 1986). Further, another analysis of national data reported in *High School and Beyond* showed that low-income students and a disproportionate percentage of students of color were found in low tracks. Nearly five decades after landmark *Brown*, the practice of tracking, though varied and most often disguised, remains institutionalized in American secondary schools.

Perspectives

In 1997, The National Task Force on Minority High Achievement was organized by The College Board specifically to address the serious educational issue of the limited presence of minorities among high achieving students at all levels of the educational system. In one of its most recent documents, *Reaching the Top: A Report of the National Task Force on Minority High Achievement*, The College Board (1999) recommended that elementary schools and secondary schools raise the academic achievement, enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of African-American, Latino, and Native American students (p. 3).

The structure of America’s public schools reveals that, to some extent, efforts have been made to “level the playing field” through federal funding. Over the years, special programs have been implemented to address the needs of various student populations. Included in these groups of “special” students are the very high achiev-

ing students, or the gifted and talented. Gifted and talented students are most often assigned to rigorous academic curricular tracks in which their teachers hold high academic expectations of them (Maeroff, 1999; Mathews, 1998). Also included in the special students category are students labeled as "at-risk" and "special education." At-risk and special education students are provided additional funding in an attempt to equalize their educational opportunities. Even so, students labeled as at-risk and special education are provided with minimum academic rigor, often limited to vocational experiences and training.

Students in the "academic middle," however, are more often overlooked and underserved by special program funding and are not likely to share classes with high achieving students, nor do they qualify for special programs provided to special education students; thus they are in the middle. The reform effort examined for this article, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), has been designed to meet the needs of students in the middle, particularly underachieving, socio-economically disadvantaged minority students. It is the goal of AVID to raise academic achievement and successful access to college, and to raise college completion rates of minority students—a concern of The College Board and many others in the educational community.

Due to high dropout rates and low standardized test scores for Hispanic and African American students in Texas and nationally, AVID appears to be an appropriate model to address concerns of high academic performance, and college attendance and completion rates for students in the middle. Despite the growth of Advanced Placement curricula in Texas schools, the percentages of low-income and minority students who have access to these advanced classes are still significantly below those of middle-class, Caucasian students. Only 7.9% of Hispanic students, and 4.3% of African American students, as compared to 13.4% of Caucasian students, took an advanced placement test in 1999 (Texas Education Agency, 2000). Participation in AP is an issue throughout the state of Texas, and it is expected that through AVID, underrepresented students will increasingly participate in and complete AP classes, and ultimately, college.

Methods

This study combined both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Primarily, baseline data (from 1998-99), including grade point averages, attendance, course enrollment, and various test scores were collected for approximately 1,000 students in 26 secondary schools in Texas. Similar data were collected in the fall of 1999, in the spring of 2000, and in the summer of 2001. Researchers examined similarities and differences in student achievement, course enrollment, and attendance rates across and between schools. Comparative data were collected reflecting the demographic make-up of the AVID students. The education levels of AVID students' parents were also collected.

In addition, tape-recorded, structured interviews (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) were conducted with personnel (teachers, counselors, and administrators) from each AVID campus over the 1999-2000 school year, resulting in 126 interviews. Though the interview questions were standardized on a script, most were open-ended and the design remained flexible as to accommodate new themes that continually emerged (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Subjects were asked to provide information on the implementation of AVID efforts on their campuses. Those directly involved in AVID were interviewed, in addition to teachers and other staff members not directly involved in AVID. All interviews were coded using The Ethnograph 5.0™. Several classroom observations were also made; however, these were primarily informal and served to provide researchers additional knowledge about the AVID elective class implementation. During these observations, AVID students were also informally interviewed.

Findings

Both the qualitative and quantitative data that were collected assisted researchers in responding to the four research questions. The research questions were (a) has AVID been a vehicle through which each district of study has expanded access to rigorous coursework; (b) has there been school-wide impact as evidenced by changes in school culture and school policy; (c) has the implementation of AVID made a difference in the achievement levels of the AVID students of study; and (d) are the AVID students of study “on track” for college preparation and enrollment? Findings are reported below.

Equal Access to Rigorous Curriculum

Course enrollment. In the fall of 1999, AVID students were enrolled for the first time in rigorous coursework (identified by Advanced, Honors, Pre-AP or Advanced Placement (AP) courses on their class schedules). The definition of rigorous coursework varied across schools. Four schools (2 high schools and 2 middle schools) chose to immerse their AVID students into a full load of rigorous courses immediately, others (13 schools) simply placed AVID students in an advanced social studies or science course, while the remaining AVID students (from 9 schools) were enrolled in at least two rigorous courses. Researchers found the decision of AVID student placement to be based on teacher and counselor expectations and recommendations. At least one school was hesitant about placing the AVID students in rigorous coursework at all, and it was not until the second semester that student schedules were changed to reflect at least one rigorous course. Researchers observed student class schedules when conducting their research visits; however, not all of the 26 schools provided 100% of the AVID student schedules. Figure 1 shows the percentage of students enrolled in rigorous coursework in one of the seven Texas CSR/D/ AVID districts. One middle school and two high schools are illustrated. This figure

also addresses the percentage of the entire school population enrolled in rigorous coursework (defined by enrollment in Pre-AP or AP courses).

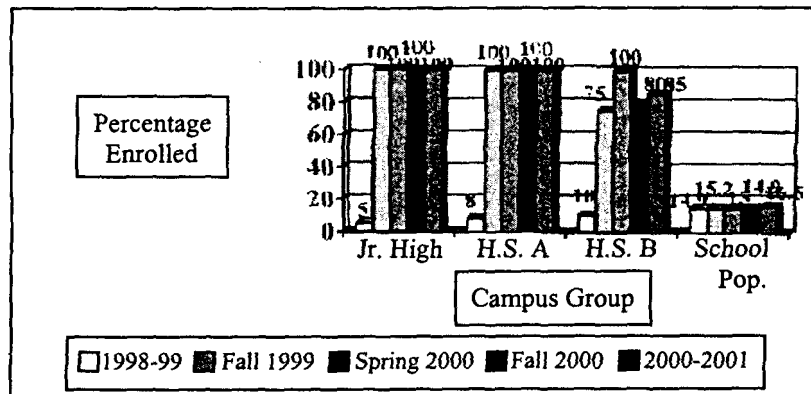


Figure 1: AVID Student Rigorous Course Enrollment

Administrative support. AVID principals were crucial participants in the placement of AVID students in advanced courses. The principal's level of participation on the AVID Site Team was central to how effectively AVID was implemented. Schools whose principals and counselors played an active role on the AVID Site Team (a campus team composed of academic core area teachers, an AVID coordinator, a counselor, and an administrator) had enrolled their AVID students in more than one rigorous course. Conversely, on campuses where principals and counselors did not play active roles in the implementation of AVID, students were placed in fewer rigorous courses and Site Team members found themselves struggling against the master schedule, counselor attitudes, and school board policies. Some of these observations made from the interview transcripts are explained below.

One supportive principal expressed her desire to implement AVID, even though her particular campus did not receive grant funding for AVID as other schools in her district did.

After attending an AVID orientation, and sending my teachers to visit an AVID school, we decided this is the best program for our kids . . . we decided to go all out with implementation the first year. We have over 100 students in the program and we have five sections of AVID.

AVID student schedules from this school reflected an average enrollment in two to five rigorous courses, and all AVID students were placed on the highest graduation plan (Distinguished Achievement Plan).

By contrast, a principal within the same district, whose campus did receive grant funding, was more hesitant about the motives of AVID, perhaps due to his not attending the required AVID Summer Institute training. He stated:

My goal is for us to be the best AVID school in Texas. We're starting out small, and we intend to add students each year . . . have a lot of confidence in (the AVID coordinator) and I know he can do the job (of implementation).

This principal appeared to be "hands-off" and had little knowledge of the goals and mission of AVID. AVID student schedules at this campus reflected an average enrollment in zero to two rigorous courses.

Changes in School Culture and Policy

Non-AVID teachers using AVID strategies. Perhaps the most notable observation in schools that adopted AVID as their comprehensive school reform model was the presence or absence of school-wide AVID impact. Texas AVID site teams began using AVID strategies in their own classrooms at the beginning of the 1999 school year, and slowly began to share these strategies with their fellow teachers. Not only were teachers found to be modeling strategies in many of the AVID schools, but AVID students were also reported to be modeling note-taking, organization, and collaboration skills for non-AVID students. Site team members in-serviced other teachers in the building on AVID strategies in an attempt to expand AVID school-wide. All 26 schools exhibited some degree of AVID strategy-sharing among the faculty. Reactions to the sharing of AVID instructional strategies varied among non-AVID teachers. Many teachers were comfortable with their own methods of note-taking and notebook organization and were reluctant to change, since the existing system seemed to work well for them. Several teachers who were interviewed reported that they had "modified" the AVID strategies to fit their needs. One social studies teacher explained:

We don't apply the Socratic method of learning. We haven't used the Cornell notes extensively, but we have touched on them . . . more or less given the option to my students to use them . . . We definitely have used the organization of a binder.

A high school science teacher added, "In science, it's modified. We went through (AVID subject-area) training and for science it's totally different. It (Cornell note-taking) can be modified."

A non-AVID Advanced Placement teacher expressed her reservations about AVID. "It just seems like we are spoon-feeding these (AVID) kids. The AVID teachers baby them and how are they going to make it in college if their hands are always being held here?"

Policies restriction access. In four cases, school board policies were blamed for restricting the access of certain groups of students to rigorous courses. Most of these policies stated that students must be enrolled in a pre-AP or similar course in as early as 6th grade in order to be recommended for subsequent pre-AP and AP classes at the high school level. To the researchers' knowledge, during the time of study, no such existing board policies had been changed; however, several principals took it upon themselves to ignore board policy in order to admit AVID students into rigorous courses. One middle school principal exclaimed, "I told my counselor, 'I don't care what the policy says, put them (the AVID students) in the pre-AP courses!'" Another high school principal failed to recognize any problem with access to AP courses.

Since we have an "open-enrollment" policy, any student can enroll in AP classes. They just need a recommendation from their teachers in order to do so, and most students will not enroll if they don't have the prerequisites. Our Advanced Placement program is strong here at (our school) and it continues to grow each year.

Advanced placement data. Researchers reviewed Advanced Placement candidate data in the state of Texas for the years 1995-2000 and found that Hispanic and African American candidates are still below the number and percentage of Caucasian and Asian-American candidates (Texas Education Agency, 2000). In addition, the Texas Education Agency compiles data each year on the percentages of Texas students, by ethnicity, taking AP and IB (International Baccalaureate) exams. In the AVID schools of study, percentages of Advanced Placement candidates (all students in school) mirrored those of the state, with two clear exceptions. These exceptions took place in schools with over 94% Hispanic populations; however, the small Caucasian populations in these schools were over-represented in Advanced Placement enrollment and testing participation. (Since AVID students are still in the neonatal stages of AVID implementation in Texas, no AP data are yet available for these students exclusively.) Figure 2 illustrates the AP and IB exam-taking percentages in Texas for the 1998-99 academic year.

Faculty attitudes toward AVID students. Faculty members who were interviewed generally reported that they welcomed the AVID students into their advanced classrooms, and that the AVID students were "model" students. One recurring comment dealt with the ability levels of the AVID students. An English teacher explained:

A lot of these kids are Spanish speakers coming into the pre-AP classroom not reading on grade level. Academically, I think they (the AVID students) have been cheated because either they were placed in lower classes in junior high or they were never exposed to excessive reading at home. . . . So although they may be successful, I think a little more AVID concentration on reading and writing would make these kids superb in all their academic classes.

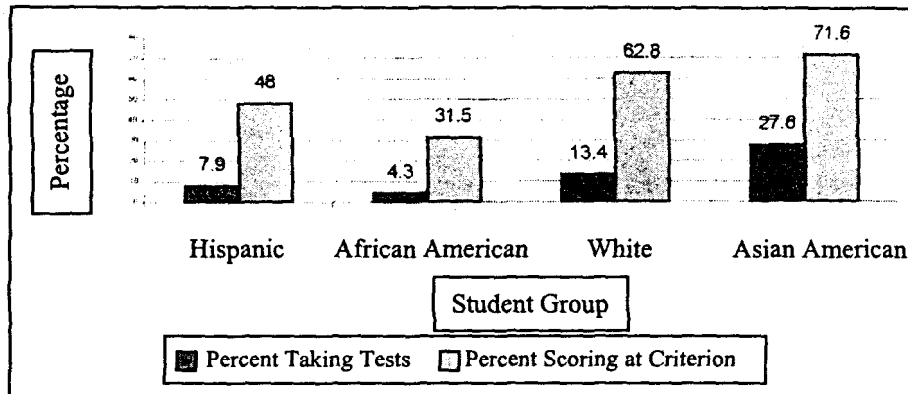


Figure 2: Combined Texas AP and IB Exam Participation, 1998-99

“You can tell the difference between the AVID students and the non-AVID students,” added one high school science teacher. “The AVID students raise their hands, they take notes, they ask questions over and over, and if they don’t understand, they come in for tutoring.”

AVID-ization of schools. Teachers and principals who were interviewed often used the term “AVID-ized,” but it was applied in different ways. (For purposes of this article, the researchers have used this term to define changes in school culture.) One AVID teacher explained. “We say we’re ‘AVID-ized’ around here. You see AVID posters all over the school and our AVID students are showcased for their achievements—something they probably never experienced before.” A high school principal and his counselor both used the term while being interviewed. The principal stated:

Most, if not all, of our teachers on this campus are using AVID strategies to some degree in their classrooms. They use the Cornell notes and the use of Socratic questioning has increased. I guess you could say we are becoming AVID-ized!

The counselor added:

With the principal’s support, we have scheduled all of our AVID students into pre-AP classes. They are spread out among the pre-AP classes and are not concentrated into the same classes. I think this is one way we are AVID-izing our campus.

Still another principal shared her vision of an AVID-ized campus:

My goal is to have everyone on this campus trained (at the AVID Summer Institute). Slowly we’re seeing teachers adopt the (AVID) strategies, but it

would benefit them so much more to actually attend the training. I think once we do that, we can proclaim that we are AVID-ized!

AVID Student Achievement

TAAS and End-of-Course Exams. From the testing, performance, and attendance data that were collected, the statewide test, Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), and the End-of-Course (EOC) exams were perhaps the best measures of performance that were available to the researchers for examining AVID student progress. Figure 3 illustrates TAAS reading and math passing rates for AVID students prior to enrollment in AVID (Spring, 1999 for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders, or Spring, 1998 in the case of 10th graders), and after being enrolled in AVID (Spring, 2000 and Spring, 2001). The student population includes seventh, eighth, and tenth graders taking the TAAS. (Ninth graders do not take the TAAS test.) The figure reflects an improvement in the average TAAS passing rates of nearly 15% in math and over 7% in reading for students who were enrolled in AVID for two years.

Figure 4 illustrates AVID student performance on the 2000 and 2001 Algebra and Biology End-of-Course (EOC) exams relative to the rest of the school. Since the EOC exams are taken only once, usually in ninth grade, student growth cannot be measured with this exam participation. Figure 4 is used to display AVID student performance relative to the performance of the general school population. The percentages of AVID students passing the Algebra and Biology exams were higher than the general school population in both 2000 and 2001.

Attendance rates. Most remarkable of all the performance data were the attendance rates of the AVID students versus the rest of the school population. Figure 5 illustrates the attendance rates of both AVID students (middle and high school combined) and general population students (middle and high school combined) in AVID schools for the full and spring semesters of the 1999-2000 school year, and for the 2000-2001 school year. Clearly the AVID students improved their attendance rates relative to the rest of the students in the school. A steady attendance rate persisted among the general population while the AVID students' attendance rate improved over two and a half percentage points.

Attrition rates. AVID student enrollment grew from year one to year two in the state of Texas; however, some students did drop out of AVID for various reasons. AVID teachers explained that many of the students were initially misidentified for the program. This was primarily due to the lack of knowledge AVID Site Team members had about AVID student selection criteria during the selection process. Other reasons cited for contributing to attrition included student preferences, district realignments, and students transferring to non-AVID campuses. Figures 6 and 7 reveal AVID student enrollment for the 1999-2000 and the 2000-2001 school years, respectively. In examining 6th through 12th grades, both the 9th and 10th grade classes decreased in enrollment from year one to year two. The overall increase in student

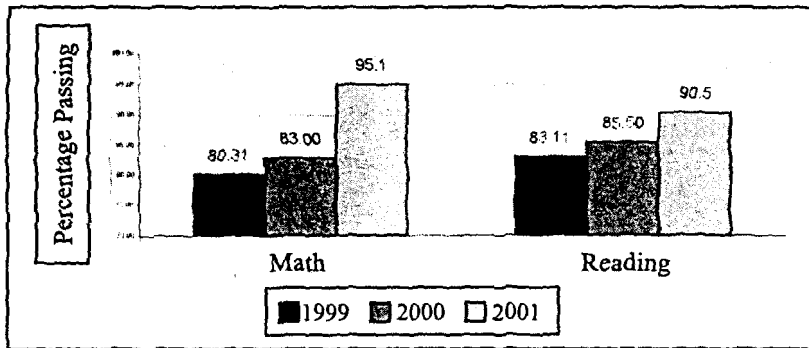


Figure 3: TAAS Passing Rates for Texas AVID Students

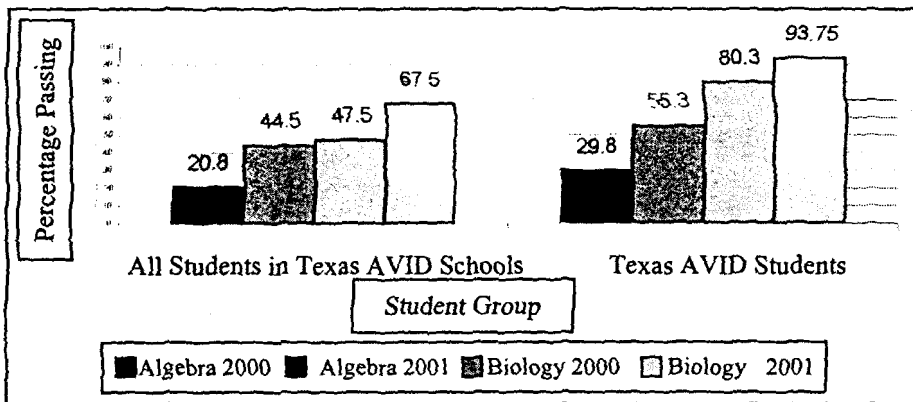


Figure 4: Algebra and Biology End-of-Course Passing Rates

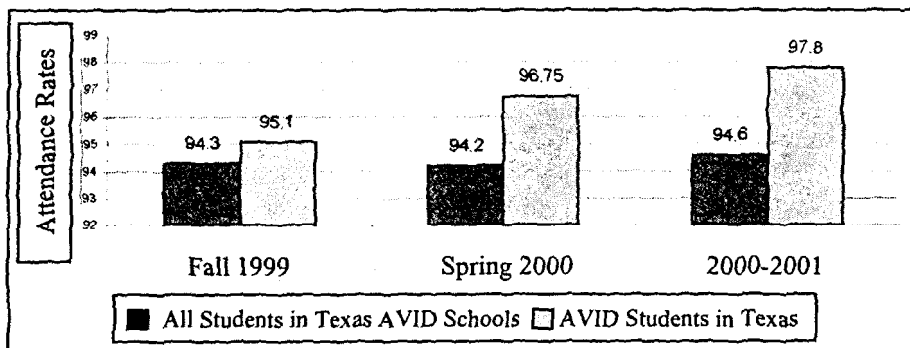


Figure 5: AVID Student Attendance versus School Population, 1999-2000

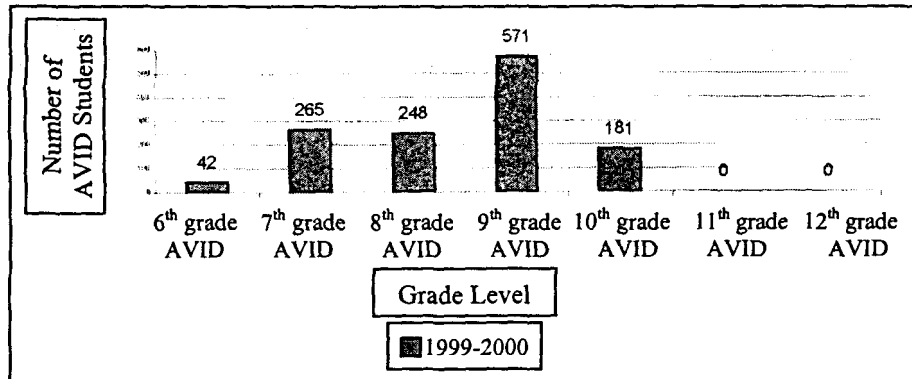


Figure 6: 1999-2000 Texas AVID Student Enrollment

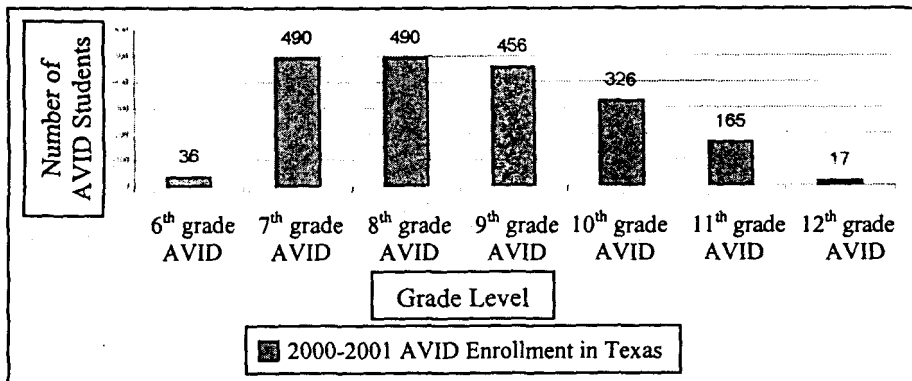


Figure 7: 2000-2001 AVID Enrollment in Texas

enrollment from year one to year two was 673 students. Most of those students were added in grades seven through nine.

Student Progress in College Preparatory Classes

AVID students' average grades. AVID student report cards were reviewed for the fall and spring semesters of the 1999-2000 school year. These data were never again collected on the AVID students. Though a slight drop in average grades for science, social studies and the AVID elective class were observed, AVID student average English and math grades increased slightly. Neither the decrease nor the increase in grade performance was significant; however, the researchers noted that students were enrolled in more rigorous courses. Despite this added rigor, AVID students were still performing at the both percentile or higher in the core academic

areas. Figure 8 shows Texas AVID students' average grades in English, math, science, social studies, and the AVID elective class.

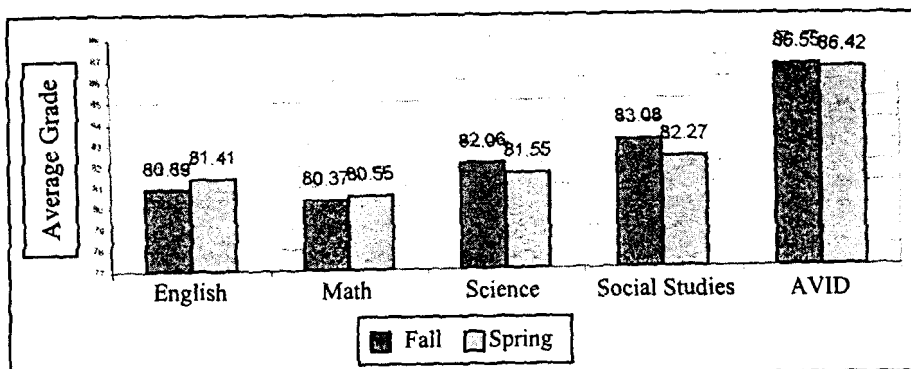


Figure 8: AVID Students' Average Grades

Graduation plans. The state of Texas has three possible high school plans from which students can choose to graduate. The Minimum plan requires 22 credits, and the Recommended and Distinguished plans require students to take 24 credits. The main difference between the Recommended and Distinguished Achievement (DAP) plans are the four advanced measures that are required of the DAP. Examples of these advanced measures include scoring a 3 or higher on an Advanced Placement exam, taking a course for college credit, and participating in a research project that includes a mentor from the community. The graduation plans of AVID high school students in Texas are shown below in Figure 9, as compared to the graduation plans of Texas' 1999 and 2000 graduates.

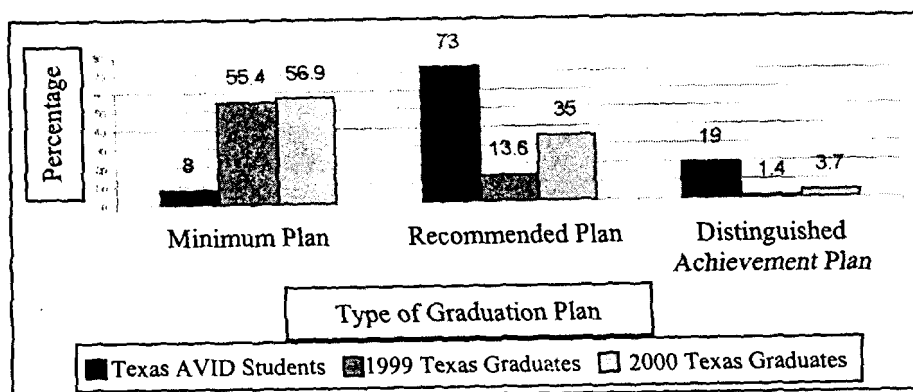


Figure 9: Graduation Plans of Texas AVID Students

Results and Conclusions

Several observations were made from the descriptive quantitative data that were collected. *Commonalities* were identified among the 26 schools. AVID students in the schools of study were primarily Hispanic and African-American, regardless of the ethnic distribution of the school. The average AVID student's parents had only an 8th grade education. (This information was self-reported by students.) AVID student socioeconomic status (SES), was reported to be much lower than the average student in Texas public schools in 1999-2000. Over 90% of the AVID students of study were placed in rigorous coursework for the first time in their educational careers. Despite the dramatic change in academic placement, grade point averages, state-mandates test scores, and attendance rates of AVID students tended to rise or remain at high levels.

Differences were also identified between the AVID campuses. These differences varied and included (a) the extent of student enrollment in AVID across schools. AVID enrollment varied from eight students in one school to over 100 students in two other schools. The average school of study enrolled 49 AVID students; (b) the amount and types of rigorous courses in which students were enrolled. AVID students were enrolled in rigorous courses, ranging from just one rigorous class to a full advanced class schedule. Campuses also differed in their labeling of classes, using terms such as "advanced," "honors," and "pre-AP"; and, (c) variances in school-wide change. Although many AVID campuses were moving toward school-wide change by using AVID strategies, only a few campuses were addressing access and equity issues found in district policies, and none were aggressively pursuing changes in district policy.

The descriptive data allowed researchers to begin answering three of the four research questions. First, has AVID been a vehicle through which each district of study has expanded access to rigorous coursework? The data suggest that AVID schools are making conscious efforts toward expanding access to rigorous coursework by enrolling underrepresented students in these courses. In addition, AVID students are succeeding in rigorous courses, putting to rest the myth that they may have been incapable of performing at high academic levels.

Second, has the implementation of AVID made a difference in the achievement levels of the AVID students of study? The AVID students of study have outperformed their classmates on state-mandated exams (TAAS and End-of-Course). In addition, the grade point averages of AVID students remained at high levels (above the 80th percentile) despite added rigor. Most notable, AVID student attendance rates improved and surpassed those of the general population.

Third, are the AVID students of study "on track" for college preparation and enrollment? By examining graduation plans and course enrollment of the AVID students of study, researchers have concluded that these students are on track for college enrollment, and more importantly, success. Nearly all of the AVID students of study (92%) were *at least* on the Recommended Graduation Plan, and 19% were on

the Distinguished Achievement Plan. Both plans are rigorous, require 24 academic credits, and are recognized by the State of Texas as graduation plans that meet the requirements necessary for college enrollment.

The qualitative data collected from interviews and observations assisted researchers in answering research question two, as well as reinforcing and expanding on what was learned from the quantitative data. Perhaps the most difficult question to answer was question two: has there been school-wide impact as evidenced by changes in school culture and school policy? In order to answer this question, school-wide impact must first be defined. Researchers conducted this study with three components of school-wide impact in mind. These components included students, teachers, and school structure.

Students impacted by AVID not only included AVID students themselves, but also included students that came in contact with AVID students. Teacher interview transcripts revealed that AVID students were identifiable by their eagerness to ask questions, their willingness to attend tutoring, and their use of AVID strategies in the classroom (AVID binder and Cornell Notes). Students who used to "blend into the woodwork" now stood out in class and began to "fit-in" with other serious students. As one AVID student stated when asked how she had changed over the past year and a half, "I now care about my grades. I understand the importance of taking notes and studying for tests. I know what a 'GPA' is!" Schools with large numbers of AVID students had a greater impact on non-AVID students, due to the numbers of different classes AVID students were enrolled in, and consequently the numbers of non-AVID students they came in contact with. AVID student enrollment also increased from the first to the second year, indicating that the AVID schools were expanding efforts to include more students in AVID.

Teacher impact was perhaps the most significant component of school-wide change. Teachers who were not on the AVID Site Team were affected by AVID in several ways. First, many teachers of rigorous courses had AVID students in their classes. Several of these teachers who were interviewed had positive things to say about the AVID students and were interested in learning more about AVID. Second, AVID Site Team members conducted in-services on AVID throughout the school year. Due to these awareness sessions, many non-AVID teachers adopted AVID strategies, such as Cornell notes, Socratic seminars, and collaboration, for use in their own classes. The impact of AVID on teachers varied across schools, and reasons for this variance may include school size, the importance of AVID conveyed by principal, the number of AVID students enrolled in classes not taught by Site Team members, and the number of in-service sessions non-AVID teachers attended.

The impact of AVID on school structure was difficult to examine and assess. Researchers identified components of school structure, which included curriculum, instruction, campus leadership, and campus policies. These components were used to assess AVID's school-wide impact. AVID appeared to thrive in and make a significant impact on schools where a strong instructional leader, who took ownership of the program, was present. Researchers observed schools where the AVID coordina-

tor was "on his/her own," and found in these cases, that AVID became just another program, tucked away in one classroom of the school

Researchers also concluded that AVID middle schools tended to be more "AVID-ized" than AVID high schools. This could be due to school size, the nature of middle school teachers, the nature of middle school principals, and/or more simplistic student scheduling. By examining lessons plans of some of the non-AVID teachers, it appeared that many were using AVID strategies in their instructional methods. AVID has its own curriculum and in several cases, the curriculum flowed into non-AVID classrooms. The most common AVID strategies that were observed in non-AVID classrooms were the use of Cornell notes, binder organization, and Socratic questioning.

Researchers concluded that school policies were not yet changed as a result of AVID; however, the master schedule and teaching assignments had been affected. Master schedules from year one to year two reflected an increased number of rigorous (advanced, honors, and pre-AP) courses; therefore, teachers were teaching fewer "regular" classes, and more "advanced" classes. It is anticipated that this increase will result in an increase in Advanced Placement courses within the next year to two years.

Educational Importance and Implications

The results of this preliminary study of AVID implementation revealed that through proper implementation of this program, underachieving, economically disadvantaged, ethnic minority students are succeeding in a rigorous curriculum. Although the implementation of AVID varied among the 26 campuses studied, the vision of AVID remained constant. After one and half years since AVID was first adopted, all 26 AVID campuses in Texas have, to some extent, implemented AVID strategies school-wide. The AVID Site Teams have influenced the work of the campuses' vertical teams and the members of the Site Team have emerged as leaders in the reform efforts of the campuses.

Implications for the CSR/D/AVID implementation include the following:

- AVID is a catalyst for school-wide reform on those campuses that share AVID strategies with their entire staff.
- AVID addresses and influences school policies that can be barriers for students to access rigorous and advanced curriculum.
- AVID is a pathway to opening access to Advanced Placement classes and increasing the numbers of college-goers among ethnic minority and low socio-economic students.
- AVID implementation can be adapted to meet the capacity and needs of individual campuses to implement comprehensive school reform.

Researchers seek to continue examining AVID efforts in Texas, particularly since the original CSR/D grant funding cycle has ended. Several Texas campuses,

however, have implemented AVID without the assistance of CSRD monies. These campuses will be examined in the future. Questions to be explored include (a) how will Texas AVID sites continue to implement AVID after CSRD funding ends? (b) how successful are AVID sites without CSRD funding as compared to the CSRD/AVID sites? (c) how will the first cohort of AVID graduates affect Texas' new state accountability ratings? and (d) how will the state's colleges and universities receive and support the first cohort of AVID graduates?

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