Review of AVID Research

Watt, K.M., Mills, S.J., & Huerta, J. (In Press.). Identifying attributes of teacher leaders within the AVID program: A survey of school principals. *Journal of School Leadership.*

Study Description
This study has identified attributes of teachers that principals believe best exemplify a teacher leader, and attributes that are taken into consideration when selecting an AVID elective teacher. The implications of this principal survey study are important not only for those involved with AVID, but for all levels of school leaders interested in school reform.

Key Findings
- secondary school principals and vice-principals agree on attributes that are necessary in teacher leaders
- respondents did not consider all teacher leader attributes when selecting their AVID elective teacher
- administrators agreed that mentoring other teachers and conducting professional development were attributes descriptive of a teacher leader, yet many did not use these criteria when selecting their AVID teacher
- conclusion: principals may see the immediate need for a high quality teacher to teach the AVID elective class, yet initially underestimate the importance of the AVID teacher in using AVID as a catalyst for school-wide reform.

Watt, K.M., Huerta, J., & Mills, S.J. (2010). Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) professional development as a predictor of teacher leadership in the United States. *Professional Development in Education, 36*: (1), 1-16.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between AVID professional development and teacher leadership using comprehensive measures of each. Additionally, the study examined the role of the AVID site coordinator, a leadership role that elective teachers often assume, and examined whether AVID professional development impacts inexperienced teachers differently than experienced teachers.

Key Findings
- Teacher leadership increases with each Summer Institute (SI) that a teacher attends.
- Teachers exhibit significant gains in teacher leadership once they have attended their first SI, but something of a plateau in teacher leadership gains occurs after the second SI.
- Teacher leadership increases as teachers attend more trainings and activities.
- Teacher leadership does not increase significantly unless a teacher has attended at least two of the additional activities led by their district or regional director (RD/DD).
- Females exhibited significantly greater levels of teacher leadership than did males

Lozano, A., Watt, K.M., & Huerta, J. (2009). A comparison study of 12th grade Hispanic students' college anticipations, aspirations, and college preparatory measures. *American Secondary Education*, 38: (1), 92-110.

Study Description
The purpose of this study was to assess the differences in educational aspirations and educational anticipations between four groups of high school seniors and to identify college preparatory measures achieved by the four groups. This study also served as a follow-up study of AVID and GEAR UP 10th graders, which allowed researchers to measure whether any changes in aspirations and anticipations within the four groups occurred between the 10th and 12th grade.

Key Findings
- Significant differences in educational anticipations were found among the four groups of high school seniors, and a change in students' anticipations occurred between the 10th and 12th grade.
- The AVID, AVID/GEAR UP, and GEAR UP groups raised their anticipations level by increasing their level of satisfaction from Associate's to Bachelor's over the 2-year period.
- There were no differences in educational aspirations among the four groups.
- The intervention programs, GEAR UP and AVID, provided students with access to benefits of social and cultural capital that may have otherwise not been available to them.

Watt, K.M., Johnston, D., Huerta, J., Mendiola., I.D., & Alkan, E. (2008). Retention of first-generation college-going seniors in the college preparatory program AVID. *American Secondary Education, 37*:1. 17-40.

Study Description
This is a study of the retention behaviors of high school seniors in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) elective class. The design involves a multiple case study of eight high schools chosen from California and Texas. Focus groups of high school seniors were conducted in four Texas schools and in four California schools. This mostly qualitative study included student focus groups, teacher and administrator interviews, and surveys of teachers, students, parents, and administrators.

Key Findings
- Students who felt nurtured stayed in AVID; personal bonds with the AVID teachers were key to continuing in the program for four years
- The family-like atmosphere of AVID was important to students' morale, self-esteem and determination
- School structural issues, such as scheduling, challenged some students yet they navigated their way around these barriers
- Tutoring during the school day was cited by students as an advantage to staying in the AVID program
- Administrators explained that strong middle school/high school articulation instilled in students the need for rigor and preparation for college
- Students who dropped AVID exhibited a lack of individual determination

Huerta, J., Watt, K.M., & Alkan, E. (2008). Exploring the relationship between AVID professional development and teacher leadership. *Academic Leadership, 6*: 1.

Study Description

The purpose of this study was to assess whether the professional development received while attending AVID Summer Institutes has an effect on AVID elective teachers' level of teacher leadership within their schools. Teachers from middle schools and high schools implementing, or planning to implement, the college preparatory program Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) were examined.

Key Findings
- Gender, level of education, teaching experience, and AVID professional development, when defined as the number of AVID Summer Institutes attended, are all significant predictors of teacher leadership.
- AVID professional development, even after any overlapping effects from a teacher's gender, level of education, and teaching experience have been accounted for, still significantly predicts changes in teacher leadership.
- 88% of the teachers in this study stated that they at least occasionally considered themselves to be a teacher leader at their school

Watt, K.M., Huerta, J., & Lozano, A. (2007). A comparison study of AVID and GEAR UP 10th-grade students in two high schools in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 12*(2), 1–29

Study Description

This is a study of four groups of high school students: 3 groups enrolled in two college preparatory programs, AVID and GEAR UP, and a control group not enrolled in a college preparatory program. Differences in student educational aspirations, expectations and anticipations, knowledge of college entrance requirements, knowledge of financial aid, and academic achievement in mathematics were examined. Researchers used various methods of statistical analyses as well as focus groups to gather their data. This study examined 10th graders and is the first part of a 2-year study of AVID and GEAR UP students.

Key Findings
- No significant differences in educational expectations/anticipations were found among the four groups – almost all of the students expected to get a college education.
- While not statistically significant, higher aspirations and college knowledge were found among AVID and GEAR UP students.
- Significantly higher academic preparation was found for AVID students, in the form of Advanced Placement course-taking, higher level mathematics classes taken in high school, and course-taking for college credit..

Watt, K. M., Powell, C.A., Mendiola, I.D. & Cossio G. (2006). Schoolwide impact and AVID: How have selected Texas high schools addressed the new accountability measures? *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk, 11*(1):55-73

Study Description
This is a study of high schools and their districts receiving Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) grants to support implementation of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) model. Over a 4-year period 10 such high schools in 5 districts have been examined to determine if schoolwide or district-wide accountability measures have improved over the period of study, compared to non-AVID high schools and districts. Selected sets of data are presented as the focus of this study, and include graduation or completion rates, advanced course enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP) results, and number of students graduating on advanced graduation plans.

Key Findings
Each of the 10 schools and 5 districts were matched on demographic variables including ethnicity and low-income status to establish non-AVID comparison groups.
School Accountability Ratings
- AVID high schools **improved** their accountability ratings as measured by the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills and dropout rates, over the 4-year study period.
- Non-AVID school accountability ratings also increased, however, only slightly.
Advanced Course Enrollment
- AVID schools showed **increases** in enrollment in courses of high rigor where the Non-AVID schools actually showed decreases in enrollment.
Graduates on Recommended or Distinguished Graduation Plans
- Both AVID and Non-AVID schools demonstrated **increases** in the number of graduates on recommended or distinguished graduation plans.
High School Graduation or Completion Rates
- AVID schools and districts showed **increases** in graduation or completion rates while Non-AVID schools and districts evidenced declines.

Watt, K. M., Huerta, J., & Cossio, G. (2004). Leadership and AVID implementation levels in four south Texas border schools. *Catalyst for Change, 33*: 2, 10-14.

Study Description
Four Texas secondary school campuses that implemented AVID as a Comprehensive School Reform model in 1999-2000 were examined in depth for the purpose of this study. The primary data collection instruments used in this study were the Texas AVID Student Data Collection Form and the Texas AVID Certification Form. The latter instrument allowed schools to identify their strengths and weakness and to determine whether or not they were meeting the goals of the program.

Key Findings
- Supportive and involved principals led to successful AVID CSR implementation efforts in the district of study, as reflected by their levels of certification.

- Leadership actions that have an impact on effective CSR implementation involve more than just adopting the CSR model for their campuses.
- Shared responsibility and full participation , appropriate staff development , low teacher turnover and appropriate resource allocation have been shown in this study to be key in successfully implementing AVID reform efforts.
- Administrative support in areas that do not involve financial resources, such as providing common planning periods for Site Team members to share AVID strategies with other faculty members, were found to facilitate AVID implementation.

Watt, K. M., Powell, C.A, & Mendiola, I.D. (2004). Implications of one comprehensive school reform model for secondary school students underrepresented in higher education. Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk, 9: 3, 241-259.

Study Description
This is a study of 10 high schools that implemented AVID during the 1999-2000 academic year as a Comprehensive School Reform model. Student performance data were collected on 1,291 AVID students in these Texas schools. Researchers examined test scores, attendance rates, advanced course enrollment patterns, graduation plans and school accountability ratings over 3-year period.

Key Findings
- All of the 10 AVID schools improved their accountability rating during the first 4 years of AVID implementation.
- AVID students outperformed their classmates on various standardized tests and attended school more often than their classmates.
- Advanced Placement course enrollment in each of the AVID schools is increasing, and more underrepresented students are being prepared for college.

Watt, K., Yanez, D., & Cossio, G. (2002). AVID: A comprehensive school reform model for Texas. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal, 19*: 3, 43-59.

Study Description and Research Questions
This study combined both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Baseline data (1998-99), including grade point averages, attendance, course enrollment, and various test scores were collected on approximately 1,000 students in 26 secondary schools in Texas. Similar data were collected in fall of 1999, spring 2000, and summer 2001. In addition, tape recorded, structured interviews were conducted with teachers, counselors, and administrators from 1999-2000. The research questions were as follows: (1) has AVID been a vehicle through which each district of study has expanded access to rigorous coursework; (2) has there been school-wide impact as evidenced by changes in school culture and school policy; (3) has the implementation of AVID made a difference in the achievement levels of the AVID students of study; and (4) are the AVID students of study "on track" for college preparation and enrollment?

Key Findings

- Data suggest that AVID schools are making efforts toward expanding access to courses of high rigor by enrolling underrepresented students.
- AVID students demonstrated success in rigorous courses putting to rest the myth that underrepresented students are incapable of performing in these types of environments.
- AP teachers not part of the AVID site team that had AVID students in their classes had positive comments about AVID students and expressed interest in learning about AVID.
- Non-AVID teachers adopted many of the AVID strategies including Cornell Notes, Socratic Seminars, and collaboration for use in their own classes.
- AVID thrived where there was clear administrative support and a strong instructional leader who took ownership of the program.
- AVID students of study have outperformed their peers on state mandated exams, grade point averages, and most notably, AVID student attendance rates improved and surpassed the general population.

Under Review and Not Yet Published

Watt, K.M., Huerta, J.J., & Mills, S.J. (2010). The Impact of AVID professional development on teacher perceptions of school culture and climate in the United States. Submitted to *Improving Schools*.

Study Description
This study examines relationships between Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) implementation and school culture and climate, as well as relationships between AVID professional development and teachers' perceptions of whether AVID has had an impact on their school's culture and climate. Over 3,100 teachers attending professional development workshops (AVID Summer Institutes) were surveyed regarding their perceptions of the impact AVID has on their school's culture and climate.

Key Findings

- Teachers from mature AVID schools reported higher levels of school culture and climate.
- AVID coordinators had significantly higher perceptions of AVID's impact on school culture and climate than AVID teachers who were not coordinators.
- Group openness, a culture subscale, received the highest responses from teachers indicating that AVID provides a venue for sharing ideas, values and beliefs among stakeholders (Fullan, 2004; Rooney, 2005).

Mendiola, I.D., Watt, K. M., Huerta, J. (2010) The impact of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) on Mexican American students enrolled in a four-year university. Submitted to *Journal of Hispanics in Higher Education*.

Study Description
The purpose of this study was to investigate the postsecondary educational progress of Mexican American students who participated in AVID. Three high schools and one university in south Texas (STBU) were selected to participate in this study. The researchers sought to explain how

specific components of the AVID program identified by AVID graduates enrolled in college have influenced their college experiences. The researchers also explored whether measures can be identified that indicate that Hispanic AVID high school graduates are on track for college graduation.

Key Findings
- Students were better prepared for college due to participation in AVID and being exposed to rigorous curriculum.
- Students formed relationships and bonds with others which positively influenced their educational experiences in high school and in college.
- Seventy-nine percent of the AVID students in the sample were on track to graduate from college in six years, compared to 54% nationally and only 28% at STBU.
- Strategies/components of the AVID program that influenced AVID high school graduates' college experiences include rigorous curriculum, Cornell notes, time management, binder organization, tutoring and small group collaboration, oral presentation skills, individual determination, and positive classroom environment.

Watt, K.M., Huerta, J., & Alkan, E. (2009). Identifying predictors of college success through an examination of AVID graduates' college preparatory achievements. Submitted to *Journal of Hispanics in Higher Education.*

Study Description
This study sought to investigate how AVID and other high school college preparatory achievements contribute to the college success of students underrepresented in higher education. Fifty AVID graduates at a four-year HSI university participated in this mixed methods research and exhibited greater retention rates and potential graduation rates than local, state, and national populations. Certain college preparatory achievements were found to be significant predictors of students' college success.

Key Findings
- meeting the Higher Education Readiness Component (HERC) in high school ($p=.011$) and taking college credit in high school ($p=.040$) were found to be significant predictors of college success
- the AVID variable was almost significant ($p=.085$) in predicting college success
- despite being from groups that are underrepresented at the college level, AVID graduates even showed greater retention rates and potential graduation rates than some state and national populations
- more students who were on track to graduate from college accumulated more college preparation achievements than did students who were not on track to graduate
- caution is advised when interpreting the results of the regression model with regards to AP course completion and completing four years of mathematics in high school, both not found to be significant in this study

Watt, K.M., Hueta, J., & Alkan, E. (2009). The implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) in a community college setting: A case study.

Submitted to *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*.

Study Description

This study examines the initial implementation process of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) in a northern California community college. Focus groups of students, faculty and administrators were conducted in the spring of 2008, as well as observations of several planning meetings in the spring and summer of 2008. In this initial implementation, faculty and administration sought to change the culture of the college, as to better serve the underrepresented students in their quest to transfer to four-year institutions. This study provides a framework for other community colleges and higher education institutions to leverage the academic potential of underprepared and historically underrepresented students.

Key Findings

- one semester of AVID implementation at the community college level cannot necessarily prepare students for transfer to a four-year institution
- students reported that the support they received through the AVID class helped them focus, become more organized, and become more motivated to continue their studies, in part due to the close interaction between them and the AVID faculty
- several AVID essentials were in place, such as the use of WICR strategies, allocating appropriate resources, and the interdisciplinary site team
- getting buy-in from other faculty members, reexamining the goals of the community college, and trying to change the culture of the community college were the biggest hallenges mentioned by the faculty focus group participants