



Big IDEAs

Dropout
Prevention
Strategies

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5
Fall, 2005

BIG IDEA—DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN THEY BEGIN WITH A PREMISE THAT ALL STUDENTS CAN AND WILL SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY

Making this a reality requires that schools engage students with challenging curricula, quality teachers, and administrators and staff who are completely committed to seeing students succeed.

JOSIE DANINI CORTEZ, M.A.
Intercultural Development Research Association

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

is a comprehensive middle school through senior high school reform program designed to prepare educationally disadvantaged students who have demonstrated potential for success in a rigorous secondary school curriculum for four-year college eligibility. First developed in 1980 by Mary Catherine Swanson, head of the English department at San Diego's Clairemont High School in 1980, the AVID program now serves 115,000 students in more than 2,200 middle and high schools in 36 states and 15 countries.

AVID's website (www.avidcenter.org) provides extensive information on the program and lists the following program description:

- **AVID** is an acronym that stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination.
- **AVID** is an in-school academic support program for grades five through 12 that prepares students for college eligibility and success.
- **AVID** places academically average students in advanced classes.

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TELEPHONE SEMINAR—INCREASING SCHOOL HOLDING POWER FOR ALL STUDENTS

Presenter: Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel; Executive Director, The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA)

Thursday, December 8, 2005

12:00 noon–1:30 p.m. EST

Site Registration Fee: \$75.00



U.S. high schools lose more than one third of their students before graduation, and the cumulative impact of this attrition affects every person. Schools can increase their "holding power" by adopting and

implementing programs that recognize students' inherent value, their contributions, and their potential significance to their communities and to society

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CELEBRATE THE 5TH ANNUAL NATIONAL INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK™! DECEMBER 5–9, 2005

Free, downloadable Celebration Kit available at www.inclusiveschools.org

Inclusive schools are better prepared to bridge the achievement gap for students of diverse abilities and backgrounds, because they integrate special education supports into the curriculum and affirm students' rich cultures.

The **5th Annual National Inclusive Schools Week™** will be celebrated in schools, classrooms, and communities **December 5–9, 2005**, with a special focus on the achievement gap and strategies for improving educational outcomes for all students. **NDPC-SD (www.dropoutprevention.org/)** is a proud partner of the Week.

The Week's sponsors, the **Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative (www.urbancollaborative.org/)** and **Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) (www.edc.org)**, are pleased to announce the release of the new **Celebration Kit (www.inclusiveschools.org/kit.asp)**, which may be downloaded for free from **www.inclusiveschools.org**. The 2005 kit has been expanded to include examples of how educators, families, and communities have celebrated the Week in previous years, lesson plans, and community building activities for use with students across grade levels, and several new resources on topics related to inclusive educational practice and multicultural education.

"Bridging the Gap: Achievement for All," a new supplemental resource to the kit, will help educators,



families, and community members better understand the causes of the achievement gap and ways they can help narrow it. They will also discover a number of valuable resources on study skills, culturally responsive education, learning-styles assessments, and student self-determination.

» **Great Things Happen in Inclusive Schools™**

The message of **National Inclusive Schools Week™** is **"Great things happen in inclusive schools™."** Students flourish in schools where their unique needs, interests, and talents are encouraged and supported. Family members feel welcome in inclusive schools and become more involved in their children's education. Teachers, both general and special education, collaborate with one another and have greater job satisfaction, because they know they are reaching all kids. These are just a few examples of the benefits of inclusive schools. We invite participants in the 2005 Week to comment on this message. What "great things" have you seen happening in schools and communities that are striving to be more inclusive? Visit **www.inclusiveschools.org** today to share examples, anecdotes, and data that demonstrate how and why inclusive schools and communities are good for kids and society as a whole.

» **Partnership Opportunity**

Join the growing number of companies, organizations, and school districts that have partnered with us to spread the message about the benefits of building inclusive schools and communities. For a complete listing of our current 2005 partners/sponsors and information on how your company, organization, or school district can get involved, please visit **www.inclusiveschools.org**. ♦

NDPC-SD 2006 TELESEMINAR SERIES

NDPC-SD is pleased to announce the next four events in our series of telephone seminars in 2006:

» February 2006 (Date TBA)

State and Local Efforts in Dropout Prevention

Jose Blackorby, SRI International

» May 2006 (Date TBA)

What Works in Dropout Prevention for Students with Disabilities

Brian Cobb, Colorado State University

» September 2006 (Date TBA)

Parent/Family Dropout Prevention Strategies

Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) and Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER Center)

» December 2006 (Date TBA)

Impact of Effective Instruction on Dropout Prevention

James Knight, University of Kansas and Joy Eichelberger, Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

Who should attend these programs:

Representatives of state education agencies, school based leadership teams, classroom and special education teachers, central office and building-level leadership, parent leaders, policymakers, and others interested in knowing what interventions work in dropout prevention.

Registration fee includes access from one telephone line and one set of reproducible participant materials. Participants can invite as many people to participate as one telephone connection can accommodate. After registering, instructions will be sent on how to access the seminar. Participants can pay using a credit card, check, or purchase order.

* Registration fee is waived for state education agencies and parent training and information centers.

Site Registration Fee Per Teleseminar: \$75.00*

For More Information and a Registration Form, Contact: Deb Hall at 800-225-4276 ext. 2168 or dhall@edc.org. ♦

UPCOMING EVENTS

» 18th Annual At-Risk Youth National FORUM

February 19–22, 2006; Myrtle Beach, SC

Download the registration brochure

Register Online at <https://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Register/IdentityConfirmation.aspx?e=39d6f7b3-d4de-437a-8ced-b9821bb08b82>

* * *

» 2006 Effective Strategies Institute

April 2–4, 2006; Des Moines, IA

More Info at <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/NDPC-SD/calendar/index.htm>

* * *

» 18th Annual NDPN Conference

October 22–25, 2006; San Antonio, TX

Online call for presenters at <http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Invitation.aspx?e=2c33d3df-5776-42b5-bfbe-e75c23b3c9ff>

BIG IDEA—DROPOUT PREVENTION EFFORTS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE . . . *continued from page 1*

- **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.

What AVID is not...

- **AVID** is not a remedial program.
- **AVID** is not a free ride.
- **AVID** is not a niche program.
- **AVID** is not a college outreach program.

“(AVID) will help us realize the ‘American Dream’—that through persistent effort and self-determination, all of our dreams can in fact become a reality.”

—Jesus Medrano, *AVID class of 2002,*
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

The program essentially restructures the teaching methods and approaches on a schoolwide basis in order to make college preparatory curricula accessible to most students. Students (B, C and D students) are enrolled in their school’s honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes and in the AVID elective. For one period a day, students “learn organizational and study skills, work on critical thinking and asking probing questions, get academic help from peers and college tutors, and participate in enrichment and motivational activities that make college seem attainable; Their self-images improve, and they become academically successful leaders and role models for other students.”

The AVID program selects students based on the following criteria:

- **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?

Once selected, AVID students are placed into rigorous courses and provided intensive and targeted support to ensure their success in these courses. Teachers become advocates and guides for their AVID students and counselors change from **“gate-keeper to facilitator”** (www.avidonline.org/). AVID also creates site teams of administrators, teachers and counselors who focus on supporting the AVID students, through increased communication and coordination.

“AVID serves as a model for what the modern education program ought to be; one that directly impacts students’ achievement in a positive way through a method which is lean and focused, supported by quantitative, independent data, and aligned with state priorities.”

—Dr. Ruben D. Olivarez Superintendent,
San Antonio Independent School District

AVID also provides comprehensive professional development to teachers and administrators as part of its support to the schools. Teachers use the AVID curriculum, which was developed by middle and senior high school teachers in collaboration with college professors. It is driven by the WIC-R method, which stands for writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading. Writing in all subjects is emphasized with a focus on clarifying and communicating thoughts. Students also are encouraged to ask questions, critically read, inquire, clarify, analyze and synthesize information. AVID students learn in a classroom where the AVID teacher is more of a facilitator and advocate and partners with the students in their learning.

“What makes AVID students stay in school when others drop out? The support they receive, the commitment to success they feel, the inspirational teachers they encounter, the self-determination they exercise—all these factors combine to make them persevere despite considerable challenges.”

—Mehan, H., Villaneuva, I., Hubbard, L.,
Lintz, A. (1996).

Parents are asked to sign a contract agreeing to support the AVID requirements, encourage and support their children and attend AVID meetings. Parents are kept

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BIG IDEA—DROPOUT PREVENTION EFFORTS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE . . . *continued from page 4*

informed about program events, and many often participate in planning programs.

The AVID program costs about \$3 per student per day the first year and declines in cost to about \$1 per student per day by the third year. Mary Catherine Swanson, AVID founder, and Robert Gira, AVID national program director, provide recommendations for implementing AVID on a schoolwide basis. These include:

- Well-trained teachers and tutors with large numbers of AVID students who meet the selection criteria;
- A multi-year approach for the AVID elective courses to serve a large portion of the AVID-eligible students;
- Regular meetings of the school's site team, which includes administrators;
- AVID essential components should minimally be "routine," with key components moving to the institutionalization level;
- Multiple AVID elective teachers from diverse academic areas;
- A plan to expand the use of AVID tutors schoolwide through peer tutoring and college tutors;
- The school should plan to train, within four years, at least half of the teachers, through the summer institute and AVID path trainings; and
- Key teacher leaders are fully trained to become AVID staff developers thus building school capacity.

When implemented as designed, the AVID program has impressive evaluation results. It has been shown to improve schoolwide standardized test scores, advanced-course enrollments, and the college enrollment. In 1996, Hugh Mehan published his study of the AVID program in eight high schools and found that AVID graduates outperformed their comparison groups in college enrollment. Moreover, 89 percent of the AVID graduates were still enrolled in college after two years, and 92 percent of all AVID graduates enrolled in college—75 percent higher than the overall student population (Mehan, H., Villanueva, I., Hubbard, L., Lintz, A. "Constructing School Success: The Consequences of Untracking Low-Achieving Students." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

» **Other published research that note AVID's success include:**

- *Implications of One Comprehensive School Reform Model for Secondary School Students Underrepresented in Higher Education.* Karen M. Watt, Charles A. Powell, Irma Doris Mendiola. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk* 9.3, 2004.
- *Investing Early: Intervention Programs in Selected U.S. States.* Elisa Cunningham, Christina Redmond, and Jamie Merisotis. Institute for Higher Education Policy. February 2003.
- "AVID: A Comprehensive School Reform Model for Texas." Karen M. Watt, Darlene Yanez, Griselda Cossio. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal* 19(3) (2002-2003).
- *The Magnificent Eight: AVID Best Practices Study.* Larry F. Guthrie, Grace Pung Guthrie. Center for Research, Evaluation and Training in Education. February 2002.
- *Longitudinal Research on AVID, 1999–2000.* Larry F. Guthrie, Grace Pung Guthrie. Center for Research, Evaluation and Training in Education. June 2000.

"What AVID shows is that high minority achievement can be more ordinary when schools not only insist on academic rigor but also offer personal support. AVID offers a blueprint for this scaffolding."

—Richard Rothstein, *New York Times*

The AVID center has evidence to indicate that the proportion of Latino students taking AP exams is seven times higher among AVID students than among U.S. students overall. The center also reports that 95 percent of the 30,000 AVID graduates enroll in two- and four-year institutions of higher education, and 85 percent complete their four-year college requirements. The AVID center can be contacted at www.avidcenter.org.

» **References**

Cunningham, E., Redmond, C. & Merisotis, J. (2003, February). *Investing early: Intervention programs in selected U.S. states.* Institute for Higher Education Policy.

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Guthrie, L. F., & Guthrie, G. P. (2000, June). *Longitudinal research on AVID, 1999–2000*. Center for Research, Evaluation and Training in Education.

Mehan, H., Villanueva, I., Hubbard, L., Lintz, A. (1996). *Constructing school success: The consequences of untracking low-achieving students*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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).

Watt, K. M., Yanez, D., & Cossio, G. (2002–2003). AVID: A comprehensive school reform model for Texas. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal* 19 (3). ♦

TELEPHONE SEMINAR—INCREASING SCHOOL HOLDING POWER *continued from page 1*

as a whole. This teleseminar will present a new framework for transforming schools. Participants will learn how communities and schools can work together, which school factors are key to student success based on research and IDRA experience, and an example of the power of shifting from a deficit view to one of valuing youth.

The seminar will be led by Dr. Robledo Montecel, executive director of the Intercultural Development Research Association, an independent, private non-profit organization dedicated to equity and excellence in education. A nationally recognized expert on the prevention and recovery of dropouts, Dr. Robledo Montecel directed the first statewide study of dropouts in Texas. Under her leadership, IDRA's innovative dropout prevention program, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, has made a visible difference in the lives of more than 220,000 children, families, and educators. Dr. Robledo Montecel has authored and co-authored a number of publications focusing on effective bilingual education, school holding power, and parent leadership. Dr. Robledo Montecel holds a bachelor of social work degree from Our Lady of the Lake University and a master's degree in educational evaluation from Antioch College. She earned a doctorate in research and evaluation from the Urban Education program at the University of Wisconsin at

Milwaukee. She has been named among the top 100 Hispanic influentials by *Hispanic Business* magazine.

Participants can invite as many people to participate as one telephone connection can accommodate. When you register, you will receive instructions on how to access the seminar from your telephone and how to receive participant materials by mail or e-mail. The seminar registration fee includes access from one telephone line and one set of reproducible participant materials. Participants can pay using a credit card, check, or purchase order. If you wish to use a purchase order, you must register by phone. All purchase orders must be made out to Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC).

Who should attend this program: Representatives of state education agencies, school based leadership teams, classroom and special education teachers, central office and building-level leadership, parent leaders, and policymakers.

Register by calling 1-800-775-7654, online at http://online.krm.com/iebms/reg/reg_p1_form.aspx?oc=10&ct=0015143&eventid=11125 or e-mail Jen Minotti at: jminotti@edc.org.

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The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) (www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html) is committed to positive results for children with disabilities. The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (www.dropoutprevention.org/) is an IDEAs that Work project (www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/Policy/IDEA/regs.html). Project Officer: Dr. Selete Avoke.

CONTACT US

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD)

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For additional information visit our website at www.dropoutprevention.org or e-mail us at NDPCSD-L@clemson.edu.