

## AVID Center

# AVID Central Florida Collaborative

## DOES THE AVID COLLEGE READINESS SYSTEM INCREASE COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS?

### Project Overview

#### **THE PROBLEM: What Challenge Did the Program Try to Address?**

Better employment outcomes and earnings are associated with possession of post-secondary education or credential. Lack of college preparedness is one barrier to post-secondary degree attainment. Schools in rural areas face additional challenges in preparing students for college-level work, including low population density, lower levels of resources, teacher recruitment and quality. The AVID College Readiness System (ACRS) was developed to increase middle and high school students' college preparedness in rural schools.<sup>1</sup>

#### **THE PROJECT: What Strategies Did the Program Employ?**

AVID Center acting as a representative for the AVID Central Florida Collaborative, received an i3 development grant (2013-2017) to implement the ACRS in eight schools in three school districts in Central Florida. The study focused on program implementation and outcomes, using a pre-post design that compared school staff and student outcomes before implementation with outcomes during implementation years. The study assessed the extent to which program implementation affected school and student outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> AVID Center received an i3 development grant supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation program through Grant Number U411C120039. Development grants provide funding to support the development or testing of novel or substantially more effective practices that address widely shared education challenges. All i3 grantees are required to conduct rigorous evaluations of their projects. The quality of evidence required to demonstrate a project's effectiveness depends on a project's level of scale or grant type.

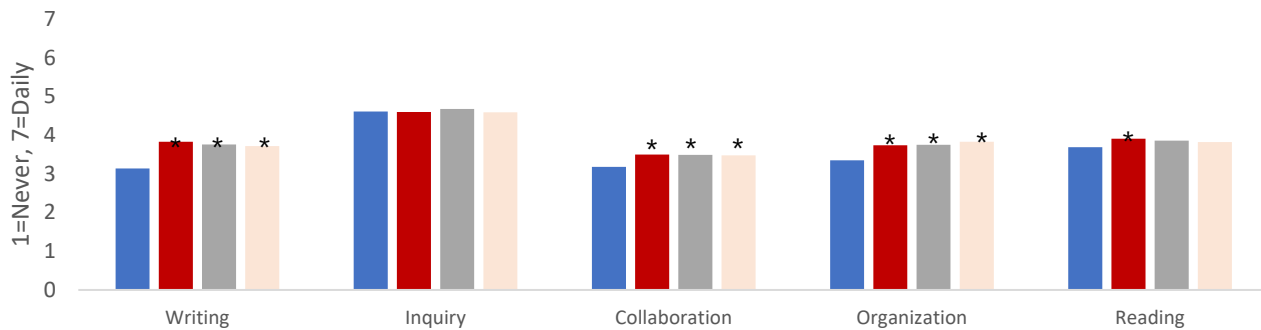
### THE ACRS MODEL

- **WICOR Model.** The WICOR (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading) model seeks to build students' reading strategies, study habits and critical thinking skills. It includes teaching methodologies and tools to create a rigorous college preparatory environment in classrooms.
- **AVID values.** All students deserve a rigorous academic experience and can and should be prepared for college. Incorporating these values in school culture is needed to ensure availability of more rigorous courses to more students.
- **Professional Development.** Included an off-site three-day Summer Institute, local trainings, and coaching sessions for AVID elective class teachers and AVID coordinators. Teachers are trained in the WICOR model and staff in the AVID core values.
- **School-based Site Teams.** A small group of teachers and other school staff who work to implement the AVID electives and to promote schoolwide use of WICOR model and AVID values.
- **AVID Elective Classes.** Year-long courses taught five days per week, for students interested in going to college but require additional support to ensure college preparedness. Two of the five weekly classes are based on small group tutorials led by college students. Students in AVID classes are encouraged to take at least one advanced class per semester and the schools agree to allow the students to take the rigorous classes.
- **Alignment of Activities to Facilitate Transitions.** Four core activities consisted of: middle-high school feeder teams, the teacher content collaboratives to share best practices and align curricula in biannual meetings, the vertical articulation collaborative to strategize ACRS implementation across districts and curricular goals, observe and share WICOR best practices, and the state college partnership to provide AVID PD to college staff and bring college instructors to participate in the teacher content collaboratives.

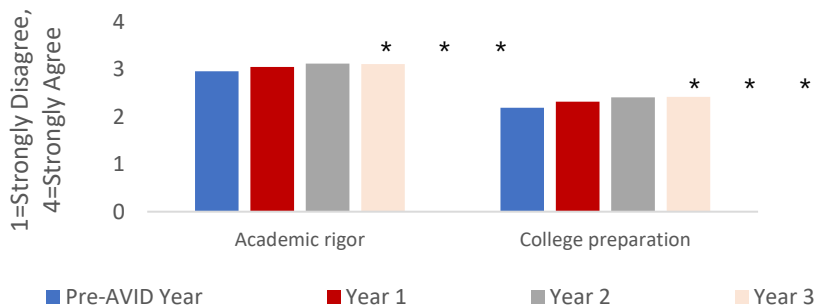
## Summary of Results

### DOES THE AVID COLLEGE READINESS SYSTEM INCREASE COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS IN MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS?

Teachers' Self-reported Use of WICOR Model Methodologies



AVID core values



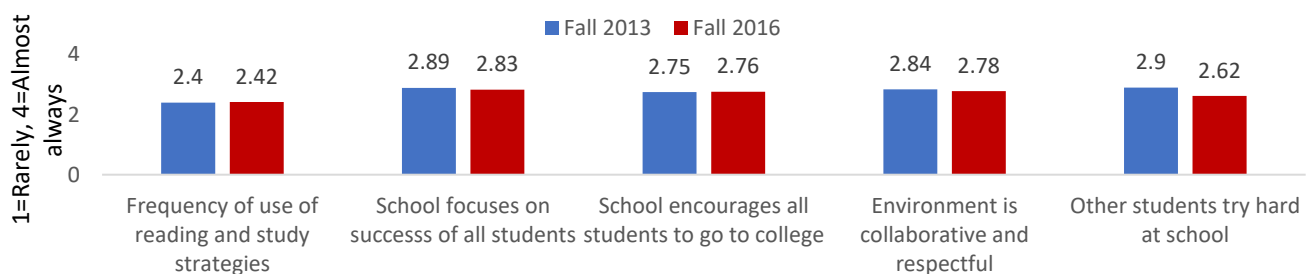
\*Differences between that year and Pre-AVID year are statistically significant at a 0.05 level.

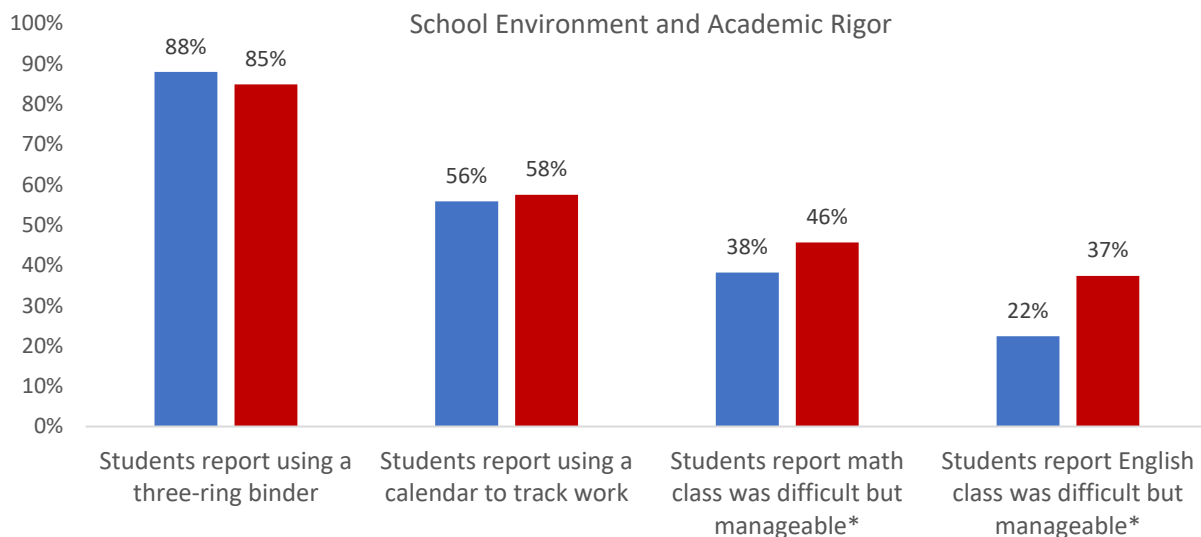
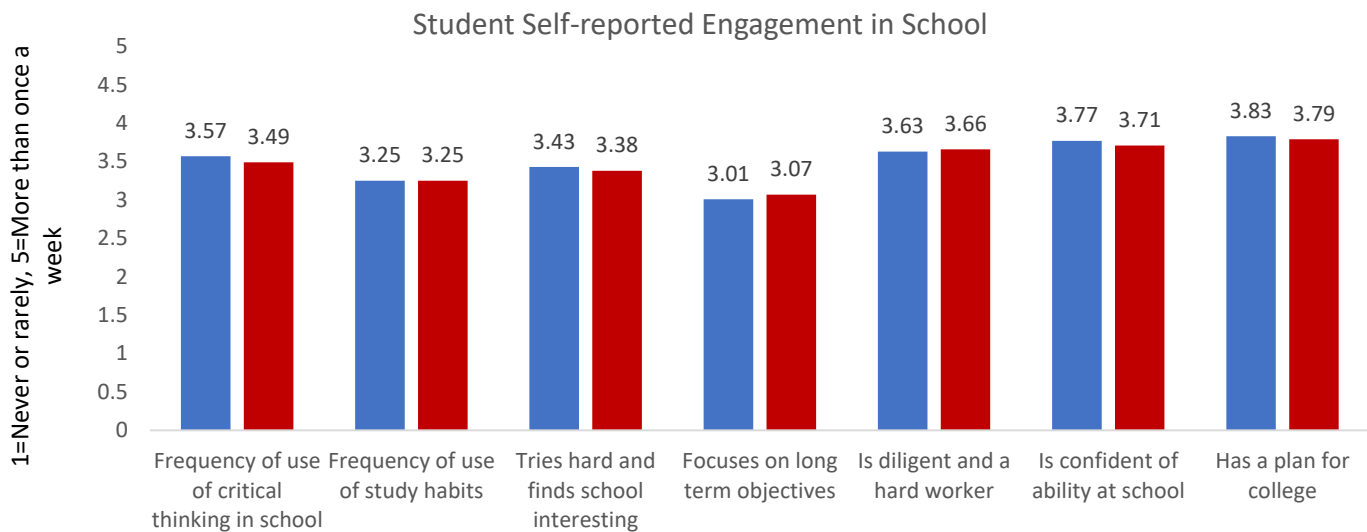
The study examined ACRS impacts on the school environment (using surveys of teachers and staff) and on middle- and high-school students (using surveys of students and administrative records). The program led to higher knowledge and use of the WICOR model over the three years of the program, awareness and adoption of AVID values in the school, and collaboration within and across schools.

- KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF WICOR MODEL.** There was positive, statistically significant change in teachers' reported use of WICOR model methodologies across the three years of implementation. On a scale from zero (never) to seven (daily), teachers' average use of the model's writing component rose from a self-reported frequency score of 3.14 pre-implementation to 3.72 by the third year. Levels of use of the inquiry component started high pre-implementation and stayed constant over three years.
- INCORPORATION OF AVID CORE VALUES.** Staff-reported attitudes and actions related to academic rigor and college preparedness were stronger during the years of implementation than in the year before implementation. On a scale from one (strongly disagree) to four (strongly agree), teachers' average self-reported score on the value of college preparation rose from 2.19 pre-implementation to 2.42.
- COLLABORATION WITHIN AND ACROSS SCHOOLS.** Levels of collaboration within and across schools, districts, and college grew in the years of implementation. Self-reported meetings between schools rose from an average level of 1.91 pre-implementation to 2.33 at the end of the three years.

### Student Outcomes

Students' Self-reported Use of Learning Skills and School Environment





\*Differences between that year and Pre-AVID year are statistically significant.

Student surveys indicated there was little difference in student outcomes before and after program implementation, including use of learning skills, school engagement, and post-secondary expectations. Student records showed no statistically significant differences in overall academic attainment or persistence. However, students after implementation were more likely to enroll in advanced courses and successfully complete them when compared to cohorts before AVID implementation.

- **LEARNING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES.** There was no difference in student-reported study habits.
- **AWARENESS OF AND EXPECTATIONS FOR FUTURE HIGHER EDUCATION.** There was no difference between student-reported post-secondary expectations.
- **ENROLLMENT AND SUCCESS IN ADVANCED COURSES.** Students from 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade were more likely to take advanced courses than students before implementation. Students were more likely to earn at least one credit in an advanced course and earn more advanced course credits than were students in the years before implementation.
- **STUDENT GPA.** While average GPA is similar in the third year of implementation to that before implementation, changes in state tests make the grades in the two periods not directly comparable.
- **OVERALL EDUCATION ATTAINMENT.** There is little difference in total credits earned in the school year, course credit courses, promotion to the next grade across all grades and high-school graduation for 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

### SECONDARY FINDINGS

- **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS.** After three years of implementation, 9<sup>th</sup> graders were 10% points more likely to be promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> grade than were those in the pre-implementation years. This difference is statistically significant.

Please see Appendices B and C for information about the evaluation's design and the quality of the evidence, respectively. Information about the assessments ACRS used in the study can be found in the section on "Program Implementation and Evaluation Resources."

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

We present considerations regarding study design, data sources and implementation study findings below.

- **PRE-POST ANALYSIS.** The pre-post design of the study cannot establish causation, only association between the program and outcomes measured.
- **PRE-POST DATA SOURCES ISSUES.** The study relies on staff, teacher and student surveys; and administrative records of students. Pre-post student changes compared students in a grade pre-implementation with results for a different group of students in the same grade, three years after implementation. As a result, the survey does not measure growth of the same group of students over time. Survey administration right after the summer in year 3 may have dampened the effects in habits and engagement due to the summer slide.
- **IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACRS COMPONENTS.** The implementation of the professional development and AVID elective classes components was successful in most schools with moderately high fidelity to the model. The implementation of the third component, site teams, was slow in many schools but was moderately successful by the third year.
- **TEACHER AND STAFF TURNOVER.** This was a chief obstacle to implementation of the program over the three years.
- **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TUTORS FOR AVID ELECTIVES TUTORS.** Lack of tutors for AVID electives made full implementation in schools challenging.
- **CLASSROOM WALK-THROUGHS.** The walk-throughs at one another's schools helped build engagement among principals and were a powerful learning experience by school, district leaders, and teachers.
- **PARTNERSHIP WITH STATE COLLEGE.** Due to buy-in from a college dean, more trainings were delivered by the systems coach at the college than anticipated, led to college pursuing AVID Higher Education Institution status and the building of a stronger connection from high-school to college.

## For More Information

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### Evaluation Reports

### Additional Reports

[Evaluation Report \(Full Report\)](#) (MDRC, March 2018)<sup>2</sup>

[How formative feedback can aid program development \(Brief\)](#) (Susan Sepanik, May 2018)

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<sup>2</sup> The information and data for this result summary was collected from the most recent report as of 01/22/2020: MDRC. (March, 2018). Building College Readiness Across Rural Communities: Implementation and Outcome Findings for the AVID Central Florida Collaborative Study. Retrieved from [https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/AVID\\_Full-Final.pdf](https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/AVID_Full-Final.pdf)

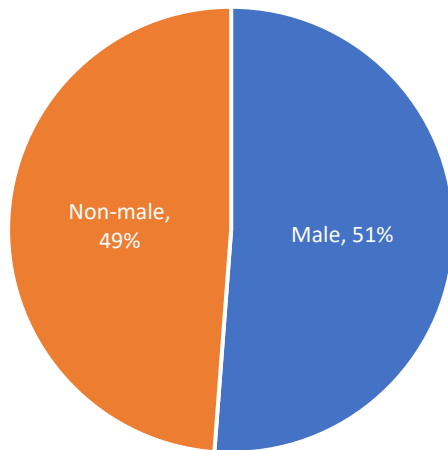


## Appendix A: Students Served by the Project<sup>3</sup>

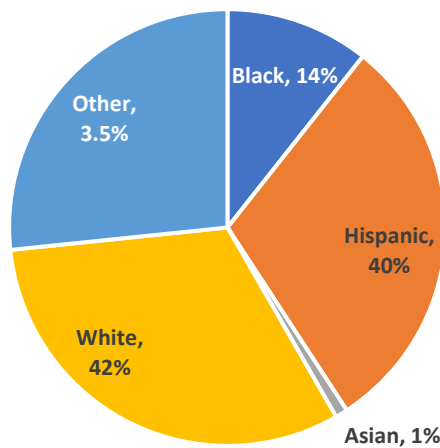
Student characteristics presented below correspond to the pre-AVID years student population served. The largest changes from pre-AVID years to Year 3 corresponded to an increase of 5.1% in the share of Hispanic students and a decrease of 4.2% in the share of white students served and a 3.1% reduction in the share of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch.

GRADE(S)													
PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

**GENDER**



**RACE/ETHNICITY**



**COMMUNITY**

**Not Reported**

**HIGH-NEED STUDENTS<sup>i</sup>**

Free/Reduced-Price Lunch	English Learners	Students with Disabilities
66.9%	2.6%	Not reported

<sup>3</sup> Student characteristics presented on this page correspond to the pre-AVID years student population served. The largest changes from pre-AVID years to Year 3 corresponded to an increase of 5.1% in the share of Hispanic students and a decrease of 4.2% in the share of white students served and a 3.1% reduction in the share of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch.

## Appendix B: Impact Evaluation Methodology<sup>4</sup>

The study compared survey of school staff over two years, before and after program implementation. Below, we present the samples for the cohorts of students surveyed who also had their administrative record outcomes compared.

### RESEARCH DESIGN:

<b>Design:</b>	Non-experimental pre-post design
<b>Approach:</b>	Four middle schools and four high schools in three rural school districts in Central Florida, compared pre- and post-implementation outcomes using surveys of students, staff, and teachers and student administrative data.
<b>Study Length:</b>	Two years

### DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: PRE-AVID AND YEAR 3 COHORTS

<b>Study Setting</b>	Sixty-two schools drawn from 11 large urban school districts across the U.S.
<b>Final Sample Sizes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Pre-AVID Group</i>: 14 middle schools and 15 high schools – N=12,942</li> <li>▪ <i>Year 3 Group</i>: 15 middle schools and 14 high schools – N=4,727</li> </ul>
<b>Pre-AVID years Group Characteristics:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Black: 14.0%</li> <li>▪ Hispanic: 39.6%</li> <li>▪ Asian: 1.2%</li> <li>▪ White: 41.6%</li> <li>▪ Other (race): 3.5%</li> <li>▪ Male: 51.2%</li> <li>▪ Eligible for free/reduced-price lunch: 66.9%</li> <li>▪ English Language Learners: 2.6%</li> <li>▪ Special Education Status: 11.2%</li> </ul>
<b>AVID Year 3 (2015-2016) Group Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Black: 14.0%</li> <li>▪ Hispanic: 44.7%</li> <li>▪ Asian: 0.8%</li> <li>▪ White: 37.4%</li> <li>▪ Other (race): 3.1%</li> <li>▪ Male: 50.4%</li> <li>▪ Eligible for free/reduced-price lunch: 63.8%</li> <li>▪ English Language Learners: 2.0%</li> <li>▪ Special Education Status: 14.0%</li> </ul>
<b>Data Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student records: Enrollment, attendance, suspensions, course grades</li> <li>▪ Surveys: Administrators, students, and teachers</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> These data reflect only the evaluation sample in the impact study, not the entire population served.

### Key Measures for Student Outcomes:

#### Student Surveys

- Use of Learning Skills
- Engagement in School
- Post-secondary awareness and expectations
- School Environment and academic rigor
- Academic Outcomes
- Credits earned in advanced coursework (at least one credit earned in advanced course, total advanced credits earned, core advanced credits earned, dual enrollment credits earned – 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, honors and advanced placement credits earned – 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades)
- Academic performance (GPA – 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, state ELA achievement level – 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades)
- Total credits earned
- Core credits earned
- Promotion to next grade
- High school graduation
- High school persistence: retention in school through the school year

## Appendix C: Quality of the Evidence

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Although an evaluation may not have been reviewed by the time of publication for this summary, it is possible that the study will be reviewed at a later date. Please visit the websites found in the footnotes on this page to check for updates.

### WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW<sup>5</sup>

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/22/2020	N/A

### EVIDENCE FOR ESSA REVIEW<sup>6</sup>

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/22/2020	N/A

### NATIONAL CENTER ON INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS REVIEW<sup>7</sup>

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/22/2020	N/A

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<sup>5</sup> <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.evidenceforessa.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://intensiveintervention.org/>

# Investing in Innovation (i3) Grantee Results Summary

Development, 2013-2017

The [\*Investing in Innovation Fund \(i3\)\*](#), established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, is a Federal discretionary grant program at the U.S. Department of Education within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). i3 grants help schools and local education agencies work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community to develop and expand innovative practices that improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, and/or increase college enrollment and completion rates for high-need students.

This summary was prepared by the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Program Dissemination Project. The project is conducted by the [\*Manhattan Strategy Group\*](#), in partnership with [\*Westat\*](#) and [\*EdScale\*](#), with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, [\*Office of Elementary and Secondary Education\*](#), under Contract No. ED-ESE-15-A-0012/0004. The evaluation results presented herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

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<sup>i</sup> “High-need student” refers to a student at risk of academic failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, attend high-minority schools, are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, in foster care, have been incarcerated, have disabilities, or who are English learners. For more information see: [\*Applications for New Awards; Investing in Innovation Fund-Development Grants, 81 FR 24070 \(April 25, 2016\)\*](#).