

Coordinator's Corner

Compiled for 2008-2009



Have you devised a plan to collect evidence for Certification?

To assist coordinators in the creation of the AVID portfolio/crate throughout the year and to help them avoid a big, time-consuming rush in the spring, Brad and I are asking coordinators to begin culling evidence for various Essentials now; we will review the evidence during site visits. Begin with Essential 1. This Essential relates to the 2008-2009 school year's student recruitment. Please read Essential 1 carefully, and be sure to provide evidence for each Level of each Indicator as you move from left to right on the continuum. To obtain examples of possible evidence, visit the KCSOS AVID website "AVID Resources" page to see the "CSS Evidence Document".

How can you produce an effective Certification binder/crate?

Great idea alert! While visiting with Traci Jones, 1st year AVID coordinator and 2nd year elective teacher at Independence High School, I came away with an excellent strategy for collecting AVID site portfolio/crate information during the year. Her system includes one binder, which will be more by the end of the year, whole punch, sheet protectors, lesson plans, and a variety of student work. Each week she creates her lessons plans, facilitates the activities, collects the student work, and places it all in her binder. She does admit it takes time, but she will be done with Level 1 & 2 evidence collection for Essentials 5, 6, & 7 when many sites are doing the "certification scramble".

How do you choose and help your site's tutor lead/coach?

Training Tutors! As coordinators, one of your responsibilities is to assist in the identification of the site's tutor lead/coach. This person must locate college and/or cross-age tutors, facilitate their training, and provide year-long coaching, monitoring, and support in the quest to increase the academic and personal strength of AVID students. (See *Tutorial Support Curriculum Resource Guide* page 15 for a more detailed description.) As with last year, the expectation is that sites train their own tutors. You have training options.

Embed the training within the AVID class with the tutors present.

Train the tutors outside of the AVID class throughout the year.

Combine the two.

At this point, the county tutor trainings are being limited to tutors from new schools, teachers from all schools, and college tutors from organizations like AmeriCorps. Brad and I strongly suggest that any new teacher to AVID or elective teacher who has not participated in tutor training attend. The training will ensure that you are equipped to conduct collaborative tutorials, provide you with tools to meet Essential 8: Level 1 certification requirements of 16 hours of tutor training, and provide classroom resources for refining the tutorial process.

*Have you scheduled your Site Team Meetings for the year? How often do you meet?
What is on your agenda?*

For a site team to be effective in creating and maintaining a successful AVID program and effecting change on a campus, the team must meet regularly to discuss planning and logistical issues and awareness of access issues to rigorous curriculum and advanced courses. To some sites, regularly may be once a quarter (Essential 11, Indicator 3, Meets Certification) or once a month (Essential 11, Indicator 3, Routine Use). Whatever you decide, schedule your meetings for the year now so Site Team Members can calendar them. If you are unsure of what to place in the agenda, you cannot go wrong with discussing an objective from the site plan. Additionally, the AVID Region 8 flash drive has a Site Team Meeting planner with suggested topics to discuss and critical questions to ask entitled “2008-2009 Site Team Meeting Planner”. Oh, yes! Be sure to invite Brad and me to your meetings. We would like to join you if our schedule allows.

Have you scheduled your guest speakers?

Frequently, AVID Coordinators should invite guests to speak at their school. The guest can include locals stars like your administrator, selected teacher on campus, and staff that currently are taking college courses. Another option may include friends or student’s parents. Begin scheduling the guests now and only one a month so you don’t feel overwhelmed by the project. Lakesha Ray, the coordinator at Stonecreek Junior High School, created many documents to facilitate the guest speaker process, which are located on the AVID flash drive in the Management folder.

Are your tutorials Not AVID, Tutor Centered, Student Centered, or Collaborative?

Now is the time for the tutorial lead at the site to observe each elective class tutorial using the Tutorial Process Observation Checklist on page 137 of the Tutorial Support Curriculum Resource Guide. The result is a baseline for identifying successes and challenges in every component of the AVID tutorial process. Then, each elective teacher presents the completed rubric to the AVID class, and the class as a whole can identify its tutorial goals for the next quarter inspiring student, tutor, and teacher accountability. If your tutorial lead is unable to visit the AVID classrooms or you are the tutorial lead and elective teacher, either ask another member of your staff who is familiar with AVID to visit or complete the observation checklist yourself.

How should we cultivate a college-going culture on our campus?

Every AVID school responds to that question differently. First- and second-year sites may see expanding school-wide in their future, but focusing on their elective class is paramount, while third-year sites and beyond are in the throes of grappling with this question. As an AVID coordinator, your job is to lead your Site Team in identifying the avenues with which you create a college-going culture on your campus. An AVID site in Riverside, Norte Vista High School, has a unique way of addressing college with all of their students called “College Talk”. Once a month during SSR time, all teachers are provided with a college-related topic from the AVID coordinator to discuss with their classes. This activity provides a simple way to infuse college vocabulary and anecdotal information by the teacher. “College Talk” topics are located on the “Best Practices” page of the website.

What evidence can be culled now?

As coordinator, one of your responsibilities is to cull the evidence for your site portfolio or crate. Now is the time to collect evidence for Essentials 5, 6, 7, and 8. At your next Site Team Meeting, ask the members to bring various WICR activities, sample lessons, and examples of Cornell notes from their elective and academic classes. Divide the exemplars into writing, inquiry, collaboration, reading, and tutorial stacks, and then place them into the appropriate Essential and Indicator. You will be well on your way to completing your portfolio

Do all of your AVID site team members have defined roles and responsibilities?

For a Site Team to effectively collaborate on issues of access and equity and support students in a rigorous curriculum, all members must have defined roles and responsibilities. Many Site Team Members, even at the spring Certification meeting, wonder where they fit in to the AVID program at their site. Now, many possible answers exist to why this occurs; however, communication will be this message's focus. As a coordinator, facilitating the discussion on roles and responsibilities falls on your plate. Begin by asking teachers to support the AVID program's implementation and operation by participating in the student selection process (Essential 1, Indicator 3), providing examples of Cornell Notes and WIC-R strategies from their classes (Essential 5, 6, and 7), organizing and/or participating in field trips or fundraisers, locating guest speakers, or attending AVID training and sharing information with their department. As evidence in the AVID portfolio or crate, the coordinator should create a document listing each Site Team Member's roles and responsibilities. So you do not have to recreate the document, we have included a blank and sample document entitled "Site Team Members' Roles and Responsibilities" for your use. Both are located on the AVID flash drive provide to all sites at Summer Institute or at the beginning of this school year.

Do you allow the elective teachers to vertically articulate the AVID curriculum and horizontally articulate with core academic teachers?

As a coordinator, it is your responsibility to assist the elective teachers in vertically articulating their lessons and units. The purpose is to create a curriculum that scaffolds learning while preventing gaps. To begin this process, ask each AVID elective teacher to identify and place on the left side of a sheet the skills he/she wants the incoming AVID students to have mastered for that grade level and on the right side of the sheet what he/she will ensure the students will master by the time they leave that grade level. For the sites where the teachers move grade levels, you may choose to do this activity as a group. When complete, place the sheets next to each other in grade level order. Identify gaps or major overlaps; adjust expectations as needed.

Now, while using the AVID curriculum books, the *Region 8 Curriculum Continuum*, and a representative from the math, English, science, and history departments to ensure horizontal articulation, identify specific strategies, lessons, and units to be completed in each grade level for Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, and Reading. This activity should be completed even if you are one teacher teaching all grade levels. This will provide the current and upcoming elective teachers with specific grade level objectives. In addition, this will assist in providing evidence for multiple Essentials, specifically Essential 5, Indicators 1 and 3.

Are you documenting informal and formal conversations for your AVID portfolio?

Many of your conversations regarding access and equity and collecting and analyzing data to drive instruction occur in an informal way. You have conversations with the counselor in his/her office or with a Site Team Member at lunch time. With evidence collection time looming, now is the time to make those conversations more formal so you do not have to write multiple reflections on those informal conversations. To assist, I will provide you with topics to discuss at Site Team Meetings and the Essentials to which they relate. Also do not hesitate to utilize the “Critical Questions for AVID Site Team Planning” located in this year’s *Summer Institute Participant Handbook* on pages 169-179 or on the Summer Institute flash drive to guide the discussions. Some topics to discuss are refinement of the recruitment process and interviews (Essential 1), the process for identifying and selecting AVID elective teachers and Site Team Members (Essential 2), analysis of AVID data (Essential 9), analysis of performance enrollment and/or staffing data to promote access to advanced courses (Essential 9), how standardized test data is used to inform instruction and policy to open access to rigor (Essential 9), identifying AVID Site Plan progress (Essential 10 and 11), and problem-solving of access issues and student success in a rigorous curriculum and advanced courses (Essential 11). Choose one or more of these to discuss at Site Team Meetings, and take notes. Those notes will be the formal evidence to keep in your Certification portfolio.

Do your AVID students participate in meaningful service to the community?

Many colleges and universities consider community service such a reliable predictor of post-secondary success. Meaningful service to the community, especially in the form of service learning, aligns well with AVID principles and philosophy. True service learning requires that the service provided connect with the curriculum in significant ways. For example, litter is an environmental problem that many students like to address. A recycling project could tie service to the math curriculum by requiring students to maintain graphs reflecting the quantities and value of recyclables collected over time. The social studies connection could include a map with the placement of recycling receptacles, the language arts connection could involve a letter to the editor about pollution, and the science connection could ask the students to research the harmful effects of pollution on the environment and publish a letter in the school newspaper. Pages 164-169 in Implementation for the Middle Level and pages 188-193 in Implementation for the High School Level include information regarding AVID and service learning.

To what extent is your Site Team providing AVID awareness to the staff and faculty?

When you send AVID student recommendations to the staff, do they return with failing students or students to be “saved”? Is the principal aware of your site data, AVID data, and your own student data like algebra completion or college-going rate? Essential 11, Indicator 7, Level 1 states that the Site Team should provide at least AVID awareness information to other staff members or faculty. Many schools have planned or are planning professional development and will achieve, at the minimum, Level 1 certification by providing the staff with AVID instructional methodologies on staff development days. So, as the AVID Coordinator, if you have not organized an awareness, which could be as simple as a short presentation at a staff meeting or as detailed as including AVID methodologies as part of the school professional development plan with Site Team Members doing the training, now is the time.

Are you ready to look at recruitment for the 2009/2010 school year?

Yes I hope! Add as an agenda item to your next Site Team meeting an evaluation of last year's student recruitment, and identify any areas of refinement, and adjust your recruitment plan accordingly. Next, coordinating with your scheduler, create your timeline for all of your components of recruitment, and divide the responsibilities amongst your Site Team. For sites with a new or small Site Team, this is your chance to include new members. Ask them if they will be a part of the interview team or review applications. Also do not do this work yourself. Many counselors at middle and high schools assist with recruitment by visiting feeder schools and providing an AVID awareness session or locating student data to ensure the selected students are from the middle.

What is the process used in identifying and selecting AVID elective teachers and AVID Site Team members?

Essential 2, in Indicators 4 and 5, recommends that each site provide evidence of the process used in identifying and selecting AVID elective teachers. If your site has not completed this task, as a Site Team, you must detail the procedures and timeline used for selecting AVID elective teachers and Site Team members. Just as you have requirements for identifying AVID students and tutors, you should have requirement for identifying characteristics for elective and Site Team members. Some schools have created rubrics while others provided a list of characteristics.

Have you been thinking about recruitment for the 2009-2010 school year?

Excellent! Time flies, doesn't it! As Essential 1, Indicator 3 states, the "student selection processes are developed by the AVID site team prior to the student selection process." So include your site team, no matter how small, and start planning.

As the student recruitment section states in Implementing & Managing the AVID Program curriculum book, "One of the keys to the success of an AVID program lies in choosing the right students to participate." Slighting the recruitment process or the recommendations may result in the wrong students being selected or receiving a "Not AVID" for one or more indicators in Essential 1.

So using the recruitment timeline one pages 15-16 in the high school Implementing book and the recruitment plan on page 48 in the middle level Implementing book will provide you with a roadmap to successful recruitment.

Also, please take note that your AVID portfolio or crate for the 2009 AVID certification should include information regarding the AVID students currently enrolled in the elective classes and not the students you will recruit in the next few months.

Have you analyzed your AVID data?

The deadline for submitting AVID data has come and gone, and now is the time for coordinators to print copies to analyze with the site team to improve AVID program implementation. During this conversation, take notes. Those notes provide the needed evidence for **Essential 9, Indicator 2**. During analysis, you may notice that you recruit far more girls than boys which could drive the 2009/2010 recruitment. Also you may become aware that your program struggles with retention, and as a result you spend time brainstorming strategies to keep students in the program. For sites with small site teams, this may be a conversation with only a few people. That is fine. The key is that you share the information with the team to allow for many points of view and realizations. A useful website access prior to the analysis is <https://data.avidcenter.org/>. This site provides multi-year reports for data and certification to track trends and identify patterns.