School’s Model Program/Practice

Advancement Via Individual Determination-Shifting Mindsets and Building Pathways

Etiwanda Intermediate School's vision is based on building meaningful relationships with students and families, delivering rigorous curriculum tailored so all students can be successful, and using relevant resources to stimulate multiple learning styles. With academic, social and emotional development at the forefront, all students will feel supported and confident to continue their passion for learning. With the school colors of green and yellow, we are known as the “Emerald of Etiwanda” where students and teachers are eager to come to school.

Etiwanda Intermediate has a history of high academic achievement. Our staff is innovative, dynamic, and always striving to meet and exceed the needs of our students. We have made consistent growth in both ELA and Math. According to the California dashboard, we performed at the “high level” and continue to show growth. Etiwanda Intermediate’s unduplicated (Free and Reduced, English Learner, and Foster Youth) student population is 44% which prompted our focused attention to help support our at-risk students. We wanted to capitalize on our efforts to help this significant group so all students would benefit. Our school’s vision and mission are deeply ingrained in our district’s motto of “Excellence in Education,” and although our school was doing well academically, we knew there were some areas we needed to improve. To build on our academic success as a school and to gain momentum on an upward trajectory for our students and families, our school’s leadership team decided to explore the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, in an effort to minimize and ultimately eliminate educational disparities. We found that a small number of students on campus were not meeting the desired educational outcomes. These students were struggling with organization, appeared disengaged from school, were unable to manage their school and home-life, and were floundering academically. After our leadership team reviewed our school’s data, we decided to implement the AVID program to remove barriers to students’ success and to meet our students’ needs.

AVID is a school-wide systems approach that is also in line with our school’s vision. The goal of the AVID program is to maximize school-wide learning, increase student and parent engagement, create a positive culture and climate for learning, close the achievement gap, as well as create a college-minded atmosphere. The AVID program also provides professional development and collaborative structures for learning. AVID is unique to Etiwanda Intermediate School, as we are the only school in the district who has implemented an AVID program. Our program is certified as we have met the standards necessary to achieve the positive outcomes associated with implementing an AVID program school-wide. The AVID program focuses on systemically implementing strategies and requires the entire staff to use AVID school-wide instructional practices and other best instructional tools to ensure students are prepared for college and beyond.
Our journey on the AVID path started in 2015 when our Principal sent six teachers, one Academic Advisor and our Vice Principal to AVID’s Summer Institute, which is a three-day event where school teams go together to receive training in various AVID strands. The purpose of the Summer Institute is for the AVID instructional/leadership team to receive professional learning in AVID methodologies and strategies to implement the AVID program. The Institute focuses on shifting the mindsets of educators to a more equitable student-centered approach. The Summer Institute also trains educators in the opportunity gap, sharing with educators that historically there has been an unequal or inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities in education based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ELL for these groups so the shift in mindset is to systematically incorporate strategies that will help prepare all students for college, careers, and achieving a successful life. Inspired by the collaboration, discussions, and knowledge of the tenets of AVID, our AVID group was prepared to take back not only the information we learned, but the excitement of bringing this program to our students and staff. An AVID site team was created that consisted of teachers from each grade level and subject area, an Academic Advisor, and administrator. The site team worked together to implement the AVID program. The AVID site team evolved to include a School Counselor and members of our administrators’ leadership team. Etiwanda Intermediate’s AVID program began with two AVID elective classes, one in 7th and one in 8th grade. After one year of implementing our AVID elective, we saw first-hand the benefits of incorporating the strategies of this program with a small sample of students. We believed the strategies and skills the students were learning in our AVID elective could be used to improve the academic trajectory of all of our students. The AVID team worked in conjunction with our Riverside, Inyo, Mono, San Bernardino area (RIMS) AVID coordinator to work towards implementing AVID strategies school-wide.

The AVID site team determined the best way to bring AVID school-wide was to encourage teachers to participate in professional development through AVID’s pathway trainings. The idea was that teachers who attended the trainings would buy into our mindset of ensuring success for all students by incorporating AVID strategies. The year after implementation, we sent several teachers to AVID trainings, and the response was infectious. Teachers came back from the AVID trainings saying that they could not wait to incorporate the AVID strategies the next day, and because of their excitement, other teachers were consistently asking to attend an AVID training. Our school has trained over fifty percent of the staff, and there is a list of teachers who are patiently waiting for their turn to attend the Summer Institute or other pathway trainings. Our professional development plan calls for us to send a specific number of teachers to AVID trainings each year until we have successfully trained all of our staff members in AVID strategies. Teachers who have gone to the AVID trainings have learned strategies in critical reading, focused note-taking, Socratic Seminars and Collaborative Study Groups. Teachers have incorporated these techniques into their curriculum across the grade levels. Upon returning from their trainings, they share these techniques and collaborate to develop these strategies at their bi-weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings for use across the grade level. The application of these strategies has helped to increase the rigor of our curriculum and student engagement. Additionally, we
highlight a new Writing, Inquiry, Comprehension, Organization, and Reading (WICOR) strategy in our AVID Minute, which is a part of every staff meeting.

Our leadership team developed a budget to implement our AVID program. We used funding from our general fund as well as funds set aside for our unduplicated pupils. We allocated funds in our SPSA (Single Plan for Student Achievement) grant, which was reviewed by our School Site Council (SSC). Our SSC team is very supportive in allocating funds to our AVID program since they see first-hand the results of bringing AVID school-wide to our students.

The AVID program has embedded teacher and administrator professional development, shifting the mindset of professional development to one of perpetual curiosity, growth, and honing of skills learned. AVID believes in incorporating researched-based best practices and does not believe in the one size fits all approach or that only AVID strategies work; instead, AVID believes in embracing strategies that are proven to engage and connect students to a love of learning. Our RIMS AVID Coach visits a minimum of twice a year to observe our AVID elective teachers and coach any other teacher on our staff who would like feedback on the use of AVID strategies.

The Etiwanda School District prides itself on building a strong instructional framework for teachers which helped propel our school to move with ease in incorporating some of the AVID strategies school-wide, such as WICOR. Our teachers had already adopted the idea of writing across the content area, so it was a smooth transition to assist teachers in implementing not only writing across the content area but incorporating inquiry lessons and collaboration amongst students. Students are taking Cornell notes and focused notes in math and science and are working together in groups to answer questions to real-life problems.

Our school has implemented school-wide organizational practices, such as Backpack Rescue, a program to assist students who have demonstrated difficulty in keeping their backpacks and binders organized. During Backpack Rescue, AVID students sit with students and show them how to organize their backpacks. Students have to pass the “shake test,” to prove that their binders are properly organized. Our Academic Advisor runs Backpack Rescue every trimester. All students are given planners in the beginning of the school year to help students keep track of their assignments. Students also use three ring binders as an organizational tool. Our School Counselor and Academic Advisor provide school-wide resources for students and teachers, such as goal setting workshops, student created videos, and trimester reflections so that students understand that learning is a process. AVID requires a shift in the mindset of students from being a grade-based mindset to a learning improvement-based mindset.

The philosophy of the AVID program is to utilize rigorous, research-based strategies to close the achievement gap and prepare all students to be college and career ready. The goals of this program support our school vision which focuses on
developing all students academically, socially, and emotionally. This is accomplished by shifting the focus to a community of educators who are working collaboratively to build pathways to better academic achievement for all students. Teachers understand that the principles of AVID are not just for a targeted group of students, but are strategies needed to propel all our students to work to their maximum ability. Furthermore, we felt that parents needed to work in tandem with our school community in order to have the commitment we needed to bring AVID schoolwide. Our AVID team created parent engagement nights to help parents learn about the AVID strategies of focused note-taking, goal-setting, critical reading, Socratic Seminars, Collaborative Study Groups, and organizational skills that were being incorporated into the school so they could connect how the program would benefit all students. Parent presentations focused on shifting the mindsets of parents from thinking the AVID program was for students who were at risk, or in need of additional support or resources, to a mindset of a program that incorporates skills in which all students could benefit.

School-wide AVID has made it possible for students to have increasing access to early college and career exploration and planning. Community members see first-hand the results of bringing AVID school-wide, as our students are seen working cooperatively to host events such as our annual College and Career fair and work with our Academic Advisor to assist students on campus with organizational skills in our school wide Backpack Rescue program. Our parents support the AVID program by allowing their students to participate in early practice college entrance tests such as the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT). Students in grades seven and eight can take the PSAT and receive feedback on their strengths and weaknesses as well as receive feedback on skills necessary for college study. Students taking the PSAT are better prepared to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in high school because they are more familiar with the type of questions and directions they will encounter on the SAT. Our teachers have set up all students on the Khan Academy website so students can get personalized study plans and work on skills that they need to improve. Providing schoolwide access to resources like the Khan Academy provide pathways for students to reach their full potential.

Each trimester, all students are asked to reflect on their learning and look for ways to make improvements. All teachers provide students with time to reflect on their learning using a trimester review presentation. Students are asked to look at their grades, study habits and review how they used their time throughout the trimester to assist them in working to their full potential. Students are taught that failure is not a negative, instead we shift our students' mindset to view failure as an opportunity to learn and grow. Students begin each trimester with goal setting using the Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic/ Relevant, and Timely (SMART) goal method. The School Counselor and Academic Advisor provide ongoing presentations to students on goal setting, time management, and organization in a tiered approach. Presentations are always available for the entire school population, but classroom workshops, small group, and individualized sessions are incorporated to meet the needs of all our students.
Our instructional staff also incorporates the AVID strategy of reflection across grade levels and subject areas. Teachers worked together in professional learning communities to review student achievement data and work together collaboratively to plan interventions to meet the needs of the students. Students are provided additional support in our Universal Access (UA) period, which is a class with a homogenous group of students leveled for focused, targeted instruction. The UA period ensures students are given the tools to put them on a pathway to reach benchmarks. Our UA classes are dynamic and incorporate WICOR strategies to increase students’ reading and writing skills while teaching them how to work collaboratively.

The AVID program is a program for all students, but also serves as a program to benefit unique student populations in the learning community. Our AVID students serve as peer mentors who work along with the staff to incorporate support for any student on campus in need of assistance in academics, social emotional, or behavioral support. Our school invites students who are struggling with academics to work with peer mentors from our AVID elective class, California Junior Scholarship Federation (CJSF) students, or our Associated Student Body (ASB) link crew members to foster a collaborative spirit in our students where they understand the value and power in helping each other for school success. All of the programs we have on campus have incorporated the concept of community building and working for our collective good. Our school’s vision of building meaningful relationships is apparent throughout our school community. All students are seen as leaders on campus and we foster that mindset by using the AVID systemic teaching strategies to educate our students to work together. The AVID program is aligned with our school-wide philosophy of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), our school administrative team along with staff members proactively teach students how they are expected to behave on our campus.

AVID is not a standalone program. It is a program that is inclusive and makes the case for incorporating equitable practices that eliminate achievement and opportunity gaps for students. High expectations are set for students on how to behave on and off campus. Students receive Gotcha tickets or Random Acts of Kindness Awards when they are showing that they understand the behavioral expectations set by the school community. Students are encouraged to make connections on campus by joining any of the many programs the school has to offer. Our School Counselor works in conjunction with the teachers to ensure the social-emotional and behavior needs of students by using students to act as mentors in social skills groups such as games with the counselor to help support students who struggle to make and maintain friendships on campus. Student leaders host a club called Cub Connections to connect students who feel disconnected using friendly strategies they learned in AVID. They also incorporate engaging cooperative learning structures in class such as Kagan to help 8th grade students make great connections with the 6th grade students. AVID practices are demonstrated school-wide as AVID students help run lunchtime activities, help administrators to distribute incentives for students, and by greeting students on Motivational Mondays along with our Student Leadership. The students love to see their classmates in front of the school on Monday’s with motivational signs and listening to the beats of our EIS drumline. This also supports the social-emotional development of
our students as the drumline plays a different tune to welcome students back to a new week of school. Students developed unique partnerships with non-profit organizations and led donations drives that have benefited our surrounding community. Through these leadership opportunities they have developed socially and emotionally and are becoming positive role models for their peers.

The AVID program is aligned with Goal 2 of our district’s Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) which states that the schools within our district will provide all students with a rigorous instructional program that prepares them to innovate and problem solve, collaborate with others, and communicate their ideas effectively; and reduce the disparity in academic performance between state identified groups of students.

The AVID program provides a system for students to access rigor and student support because the program requires a system of grade level vertical and horizontal articulation with teachers including feeder schools to ensure students throughout the school are college ready. Systems are put in place for teachers, administrators, and support staff to implement, monitor, and adjust academic support structures. These systems ensure students develop deeper levels of understanding and are able to understand rigorous work. Teachers regularly collect and analyze common district-wide diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment data. Teams use their Professional Learning Community (PLC) time each week to collaborate with teachers in their grade level/subject area to discuss students’ success and areas in need of support, inform each other on classroom instructional practices, and work together to monitor student progress and achievement. Academic support structures are provided for students in need of additional support such as after school homework lab, mentoring, tutorials and collaborative study groups which are a key component of the AVID program. Administrators conduct classroom walk throughs and collect evidence of students using AVID strategies in all classes. Students are given multiple opportunities to engage in community service or service learning projects to extend their learning and fostering a love of working together collaboratively.

Etiwanda District’s LCAP Goal 2, Pupil Outcomes, addresses the need to work with students who are chronically absent or have behavioral concerns which put them at risk for suspension or expulsion by providing a School Counselor and an Academic Advisor. Both our School Counselor and Academic Advisor work with at-risk students to remove barriers to academic achievement. This is attainable by coaching students individually and/or in groups, meeting with students to create individual learning plans, and making personal connections with students who are chronically absent from school. Our School Counselor and Academic Advisor apply AVID strategies to connect at-risk students to the community by working with their parents, inviting them to parent nights, workshops, and exposing them to the many parent education opportunities our school provides. Our School Counselor and Academic Advisor monitor the achievement of all students using our district Attendance, Behavior, Course Grades (ABC) Report which is an Early Warning System to alert teachers, administrators, and others working directly with students who are not on track and need assistance getting back on a path to
success. Multi-tiered interventions and supports are implemented to address behavioral concerns of students and our school’s special education team, administrative team, school psychologist, School Counselor, Academic Advisor, teachers, and parents work together to develop a plan for student success.

Regular student attendance is celebrated on campus in a variety of ways to promote pupil engagement and ensure students are receiving valuable instruction. Etiwanda Intermediate has communicated the attendance goal of 97% to all stakeholders through weekly announcements, newsletters, and social media. Attendance incentives have been implemented to encourage attendance with monthly BBQ lunches provided by administration and perfect attendance awards presented at each grade level.

The AVID program has served as a catalyst for change on our campus. We have adopted a program that has proven to produce AVID strategies and other best instructional practices, to ensure college readiness. The AVID program has allowed us to shift our mindset as a school that embrace the whole child perspective where students feel safe, supported, engaged, connected and happy. The AVID program has allowed us to encourage students to Advance Via their Individual Determination as we shift mindsets and build pathways to student success.

Implementation & Monitoring of Model Program/Practice

The AVID program requires continuous monitoring and assessments of the program in an effort to ensure the tenets of AVID are being followed with fidelity. Our AVID site team begins the year with our AVID site plan which has goals that we wish to accomplish for the year based on data and the needs of our school. AVID also requires that AVID certified sites collect data on the following: demographics, enrollment by grade level and gender breakdown, special populations data (Economically Disadvantaged/Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch), AVID elective class availability, staffing information, college tutors hired, funding source for the program, cost to maintain the program on campus, college preparatory course sequence, courses of rigor, grades, and attendance. The AVID program has four domains: Schoolwide Instruction, AVID Schoolwide Systems, AVID Schoolwide Leadership, and AVID Schoolwide Culture which serves as the framework for the AVID program. Our school collects evidence to produce at the end of the year to certify that we are staying on the AVID path by following the program as outlined. At the end of each year our site team meets to write up the strengths and areas in need of improvement for our program.

Our regional AVID Coordinator comes to our school to evaluate our program’s effectiveness using the AVID Coaching and Certification Instrument (CCI). The purpose of the CCI is to support continuous improvement and fidelity and is used as the tool to identify if our staff is implementing the AVID program as intended. In order to demonstrate our program’s effectiveness, we sit down each year as a site team along with our coordinator to review the evidence collected throughout the year so that we can determine our status as an AVID certified site or a non-AVID certified site. Evidence is
collected from each domain to insure we have a strong instructional program that incorporates WICOR strategies (Writing Inquiry Collaboration Organization Rigor) and systems are embedded to support students that are data driven. Data is analyzed so that we ensure that we are providing outcomes that all of our students are college and career ready. Professional development and professional learning communities are an integral part of the AVID program and we provide evidence to prove that we work collaboratively with our AVID elective teachers, school leadership team, teachers, and other faculty members to receive professional learning in AVID strategies, methodologies, and structures. We have invested funds to send our physical education staff to AVID Pathway trainings and workshops to ensure we were reaching all areas of the teaching staff. Our physical education team use AVID structures to connect with our students during physical education and to show students that AVID can be used in every subject.

Preparing our students for the future is of the utmost importance to our school community. We have two college and career electives, an elective in financial planning and we weave college and career exploration throughout the curriculum. Students begin the year with goal setting and planning and are consistently asked to review their goals and reflect upon their learning. Each trimester our staff guides students through a trimester reflection workshop so students understand learning is a process. Our students complete interest surveys, take college virtual tours, participate in college and career fairs and are taught a district adopted college/career curriculum. Our site has a college environment atmosphere and visitors would notice right away as we have college flags displayed all over the school and a designated “college spirit day” where students and staff wear college attire. To further instill a college bound atmosphere, we have a themed college and career week that culminates with a Career Fair that has more than fifty representatives from our surrounding community to help our students explore college and career pathways.

Etiwanda Intermediate is building pathways to student success by consistently engaging parents and the community to work together to maximize positive outcomes for our students. We have an active School Site Council, Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), and parents who work hand in hand with our school community each and every day.

**Results of the Model Program/Practice**

Etiwanda Intermediate continually monitors various data sets so any necessary adjustments can be made. The decisions made as a school are driven by the data we analyze and it allow us to use it both quantitatively and qualitatively. It is important to identify strengths, patterns, and deficits where we need to make improvements.

Maintaining the school vision of a whole child perspective, we look at the development of our students socially, emotionally, and academically. According to our parent survey results, 90% of families as satisfied with the well-rounded curriculum we provide as a school and 93% believe that high expectations for student achievement are
communicated. Ninety two percent of families indicated that they would recommend our school to others. Our student survey results reflect high levels of satisfaction in a variety of areas as they relate to other schools in the district which include: their school wants them to succeed, they know what type of academic as well as social emotional supports are available, teachers make class interesting, and that they would recommend this school to others.

District diagnostic assessments are administered three times annually. Each testing window provides valuable information on student progress towards the annual growth target. It also provides an opportunity to evaluate the need to make adjustments to our program. These adjustments include a tiered approach that affect all facets of the school. At the administration level we look at intervention programs and enrichment programs to adjust accordingly. Teachers look at diagnostic data to analyze domain-specific data to determine deficits for each of their students. In addition, they monitor students’ mid-year growth to make adjustments to their instructional plan. Teachers use this information to determine what to focus on during small group instruction. They also have specific students they focus on and incorporate many of the AVID strategies such as goal setting, organizational skills, study skills, and increased parental involvement. Three-year trends in our diagnostic reading growth data reveals the average score gain of 18 points exceeding the target growth of 14 points which equates to 133% of the yearlong target growth. Similarly in math, our students grew on average of 17 points which exceeds the target growth of 12 in the three-year trend analysis. This equates to 143% of the yearlong target growth in math. Having a commitment to the whole child and implementing AVID school-wide has rendered positive results on the state assessment as well. The three year trend analysis on the CAASPP reflects 11% improvement in students’ proficiency on or exceeded standard in language arts and 10% in math. These tools allow decisions to be made with a complete picture of what the students need.
Language Arts Growth Analysis - iReady and CAASPP
2017-2018 School Year

Math Growth Analysis - iReady and CAASPP
2017-2018 School Year

English Language Arts
Green
31.2 points above standard
Maintained 0.8 Points

Mathematics
Green
11.9 points above standard
Increased 7 Points

Chronic Absenteeism
Green
4.3% chronically absent
Declined -1.2%

Suspension Rate
Green
0.9% suspended at least once
Declined -1.6%
All stakeholders at the school site have been dedicated to the school’s vision of finding with a foundation building genuine rapport with students where the whole child is always being considered so all students feel supported and confident to continue their passion for learning. Our AVID program is the conduit to achieve all facets of our vision to make this a reality for our school culture. Our success with our quantitative and qualitative data is attributed to all our efforts associated with implementing the AVID program with a staff that in passionate about their work and consistently working to meet their students’ needs without compromise.

We believe the middle school years are quintessential in the lives of our students as they set off on a successful trajectory to high school and beyond. Etiwanda Intermediate has a united purpose. We take great pride in providing a culture that engages all students from all backgrounds. The staff takes personal responsibility in cultivating a climate where children can thrive. When students enter our school with different skills, knowledge, abilities, experiences, and social learning history, it is our mission to maximize student engagement and learning by systematically and purposefully meeting our students’ needs with a whole child perspective.