

News release



Everett Public Schools

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North Middle School to be national *demonstration site* for AVID

Only five such schools in Washington; fewer than 150 in the world

On Tuesday, Feb. 8, a team of educators will visit North Middle School in Everett Public Schools to determine the school's qualification to be designated a *National AVID Demonstration Site*. If so designated, North will be only one of fewer than 150 such demonstration schools in the world and will be a location other educators visit to learn about and to see educational excellence in action.

The *Advancement Via Individual Determination* (AVID) program has been in place at North Middle School since fall 2006. AVID is one of the district's initiatives launched to foster a "college-going culture" and is among one of the programs the district credits as helping to increase the number and percentage of students successfully graduating from high school. In 45 U.S. states and 16 countries or territories, AVID is helping more than 400,000 students make post-high school education a plan. AVID demonstration schools go through a rigorous application process and onsite evaluations to qualify for visits by educators interested in seeing the power AVID has to inspire students.

The methods used by teachers and students in AVID are proven to improve how students perform in classes and how they interact with others. In its application to become certified as a *National Demonstration Site*, North Middle School was able to document the impressive greater success rate of AVID students in language arts, reading, history and math as compared to students not enrolled in the program. "While our AVID students do better in classes than others, every student in the school is positively impacted by the AVID culture," notes Principal Kelly Shepherd. "AVID teaching methods work – they work for students and they work for staff. Our first AVID teachers and their students were contagiously enthusiastic. The AVID spirit has caught fire here at North in such a way that the AVID way of teaching and learning is helping every student achieve more and aspire to be successful in middle school, in high school and beyond."

Nationally and worldwide, AVID students range from fourth-grade through high school. The system is credited with turning thousands of underperforming students into confident college-going scholars. In Everett Public Schools, AVID is in place at Everett, Cascade and Sequoia high schools as well as at North Middle School. Eisenhower Middle School and H.M. Jackson High School are slated to begin AVID in fall 2011.

North is the first in the district to seek to become a *National Demonstration Site*. AVID Executive Director Jim Nelson notes the significance of being selected. "Schools chosen as demonstration sites have proven their ability to successfully implement the AVID academic elective course and take the strategies schoolwide to affect all students. North was selected as a demonstration site because it has infused the system seamlessly throughout the school and is an excellent model for others.

“It is a tremendous honor to be considered as a demonstration site, and we are proud of our program and our school as a whole,” beamed Shepherd.

To illustrate just how excited students are about the futures they now see possible as a result of AVID, Shepherd told the following story:

On the last day of school, after all of our students had been dismissed for the summer, one of our eighth-grade students, who in the past has not been one who has thought much of a college education, ran several blocks to school to turn in his College Bound scholarship application. He knew it needed to be completed and postmarked by the end of his eighth-grade year, and he didn't have a stamp at home to mail it. This student now recognizes the value of a college education. That recognition is a reflection of the work done by all the staff at North to create a college-going culture.

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