

AVID expands, students grow \$100,000 grant from MVLA

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Ruth Herrera-Flores is the first in her family to go to college. Coming into high school her freshman year, she had little to no knowledge of the college admissions process. With support from her AVID teacher and tutors, Ruth is given assistance with the classes she should take in coming years, free enrichment programs over the summer, and free SAT courses.

"I come from a low income and immigrant family. Since my parents are not familiar with the college application process or the steps to fulfill the requirements in order to apply, it makes it hard for me because I am not able to receive that kind of support from parents. AVID provides me with that support," Herrera-Flores said.

With the expansion of the number of students in AVID, as well as new services and opportunities to students with a \$100,000 grant from the MVLA foundation, more first generation prospective college students will have the same opportunities to ease the admis-

sions process.

According to an email from Superintendent Jeff Harding, the school plans to expand its four sections of AVID to eight, one additional section for each grade level, "as soon as the enrollment warrants the growth."

"We'd also like to enhance the learning for AVID students by offering more dynamic experiences within the program," Harding said. "In the future, I'd like to see greater exposure to the professional world for AVID students through internships or mentorships."

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AVID is designed for students that are potential first generation college graduates and maintain the determination and work ethic

to meet this goal. Steven Kahl, the junior class AVID teacher, clarified that the program is "not for remediation or motivation to help students develop determination to be college graduates."

"They have to already come to us with that determination. As long as it's an appropriate new group of students coming in, we'll be fine with that expansion," Kahl said.

Kim Rogers and Lee Casem, AVID department coordinators, explained how the grant is intended to support current AVID students with more trips to businesses and colleges, a new internship program, or test fees and test prep scholarships.

The AVID department at MVHS is working with LAHS AVID coordinators to use the grant money as effectively as possible.

"The money will be used to support our students at both schools," Casem said. "It's a district-wide support system. We work in conjunction with the AVID coordinator at Los Altos to make decisions that will best serve our populations at both schools."

Rogers further explained how AVID is "not an at risk program."

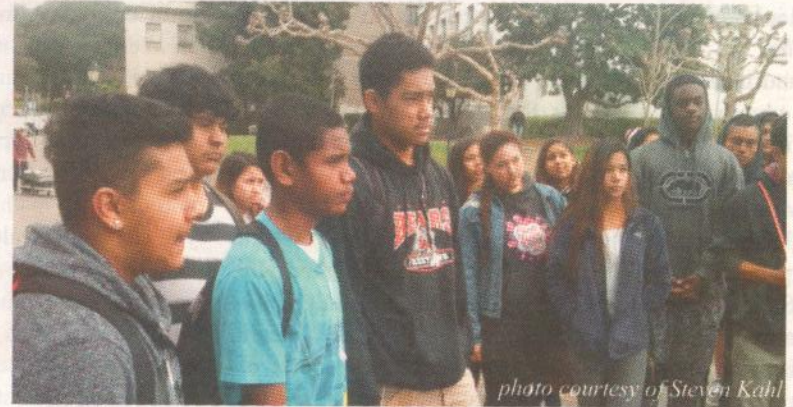


photo courtesy of Steven Kahl

AVID: Students tour UC Berkeley to learn about the college process.

Rather, when students might have a lack of extra assistance at home with homework and other activities, AVID can give that necessary assistance and ease students' difficulties in any aspect of the college process.

Casem also elaborated on the goals of the AVID department in the next few years.

"I think we want to make sure that all the kids that should be in AVID are in AVID, while still maintaining the priority of getting the right students," Casem said. "These students are forging that path for the first time in [their families] and there's not someone else who knows the way and can tell them 'you can do it, of course

you're going to go to college,' which is the kind of environment a lot of students here grow up with."

Marco Torres, a sophomore in the AVID program, explained how AVID has been an amazing experience for him, and how the people within it have become his second family.

"There were various times where I wanted to quit some classes but AVID was my support and helped me through it," Torres said. "The expansion sounds like an amazing opportunity for all students, it's definitely going to help students see more options and routes that they can take."

