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AVID GRADUATES' TRANSITION TO COLLEGE

by

KATHRYN CYBELE LEVERETT

B.A., Psychology, Brown University, 1993
M.A.T., Social Sciences, Brown University, 2004

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Education
Educational Leadership**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May 2021

DEDICATION

I have been an AVID educator for most of my career. When I attended my first AVID Summer Institute in 2007, I found my community — the AVID family. I became a teacher because I wanted to connect with students, and teaching AVID is the purest form of that connection I have experienced. The educators with whom I have had the privilege to work in the intervening years have confirmed that connection is the most important part of teaching; the part that truly matters.

This work is dedicated to AVID graduates and their AVID teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AVID Graduates' Transition to College was a dozen years in the making. Before commencing this doctoral work, I taught AVID in the public schools for ten years. As each cohort of my students graduated, I wondered what the cumulative effect of all those years together in the classroom would be. What was their experience once they arrived on a college campus?

Through the Educational Leadership program at the University of New Mexico I was able to conduct this exploratory study to address that question. Over the past four years, the faculty and students have challenged and guided me in pursuit of that goal. I would like to acknowledge their dedication and support.

To my committee chair, Dr. Allison Borden: you are my pedagogical hero. You modeled the best practices of the K-12 classroom in supporting the rigorous work of statistical analysis. Your dedication to your work goes beyond the highest standard, and I am grateful that it extends to your doctoral students. Thank you for your wisdom. To Dr. Arlie Woodrum: you redefined my perception of how a qualitative voice can sound. Learning to listen is a valuable skill; telling someone's story is an artform. Thank you for sharing your expertise. To Dr. Tyson Marsh: you pushed me into areas of modern research. I am inspired to turn my findings into action. Thank you for your guidance. To Dr. Timothy Bugno: you provided an historical context for this work and support for the many steps involved. Thank you for your patience. To my cohorts of classmates: thank you for the conversations, collaboration, and camaraderie.

AVID is a family, and like any AVID teacher, I have an AVID family that encourages and inspires me, including my colleagues at AVID Center: thank you for teaching and guiding me. I am so proud to stand beside you in this work. To Mary Massey and Dakota Goldberg: thank you for showing me that great leaders recognize, support, and cultivate greatness in others. To Ernesto and Anya Cruz: thank you for co-parenting the AVID classes of 2010-2014 and expanding my understanding of ‘family.’ To Denise Campbell, Valeri Angus, and Dr. Channell Wilson-Segura: thank you for taking me under your AVID wings and helping me to fly. And most importantly, to my AVID graduates from the classes of 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, and 2016 — especially to Amanda, Leslie, Luis, and Ray— you all are the reason I continue to do this work. Thank you for inspiring me each and every day.

I am a third-generation educator, but I never would have become a teacher if it were not for my mother. To my mom, Sarah Leverett: thank you for telling me your students’ stories and talking about your innovative classroom. You inspired me to search for a connection to the work, and to the students. To my best friend, Wenonah Elms: thank you for showing me how exciting History and research really are. You are the scholar I aim to be.

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ABSTRACT

Graduates of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program have higher college-going and persistence rates, even in New Mexico where they face serious educational barriers as first generation, low income, students of color. In this exploratory, phenomenological study, a mixed methods approach was employed to answer Research Question 1, *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?*

In consideration of Research Question 2, *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?* Tinto's Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College is aligned to AVID's Framework to understand how students navigate Tinto's Social and Academic Systems, leading to successful transition and persistence in college. Analysis of qualitative data support the use of the aligned framework with corroborating themes. The data suggest that graduates found Student Agency and Opportunity Knowledge to be more helpful than Rigorous Academic Preparedness.

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CHAPTER 1: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

New Mexico continually ranks at the bottom on national metrics regarding progress and prosperity, and in 2018 it came in dead last. That year, New Mexico ranked 50th in child prosperity, 51st in prosperity for working-aged men, 50th in employment, and 51st in food security (Center for American Progress, 2018). Those rankings reflect the fact that roughly 20% of the state lives in poverty, which for a family of four was an income of \$25,100 or less according to the 2018 federal poverty guidelines (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2018). Twenty percent represents a population equal to that of Albuquerque, the state’s largest city of approximately half a million people. Poverty takes an enormous toll on families, and nowhere is it more evident than in education, where New Mexico ranked 50th in high school graduation (Center for American Progress, 2018).

Problem Statement: College Persistence

Later that same year, the headline for Education Week’s State Highlight Report read, “New Mexico Earns a D on State Report Card, Ranks 50th in Nation,” (Education Week, 2018). In its *Quality Counts* analysis of states’ performance in education, Education Week found New Mexico at the bottom for K-12 achievement as measured by math, reading, high school graduation rates, and national exam scores. Particularly discouraging were the results in the *Chance for Success* index where New Mexico ranked 51st in School Years — measures of achievement in pre-K through postsecondary years. In 2021, New Mexico continued to receive a failing grade of D+ on the Chance for Success measure. In fact, it was the only failing state, even the middle of a pandemic (Education Week, 2021). If “education has become a prime instrument through which governments seek to create equitable societies” (Burger & Walk, 2016, p. 696), then the government is failing New Mexico.

Associated outcomes for New Mexico’s adults in postsecondary attainment are not much better. New Mexico ranked 46th in workforce indicators (Education Week, 2018) and 48th for adults who hold a college degree - associate’s or higher (Center for American Progress, 2018). This is even more concerning in New Mexico given that nationally Hispanic Americans rank lowest in terms of degree completion with just 13% holding a bachelor’s degree as compared to 16% of African Americans, 24% of Non-Hispanic white Americans, and 36% of Asian Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Latino students will represent over 20% of American K-12 students by the year 2020, and yet they are the ethnic group “least likely” to achieve an undergraduate education (Oseguera et al., 2009, p. 24).

Despite these statistics, college enrollment continues to increase for students of color (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2019), and for Hispanic students it is at a record high. According to a report from the Pew Research Center, nearly half — or 3.6 million — Hispanic high school graduates were enrolled in college in 2016 (Gramlich, 2017) which represents a 180% increase in less than 20 years. Many of these students are among the first in their families to attend college. This momentous step requires academic preparation, knowledge pertaining to college access, student empowerment, and community support. There are several college readiness programs to aid students on this journey and one of them, growing right alongside college enrollment, is Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

AVID is a college preparation program designed for first generation college students. Students must qualify, apply, and be accepted into the program where they typically remain throughout their secondary years. AVID enrolls nearly half a million secondary students (AVID Center, 2019) in an elective course for grades 6-12. Nationally, Hispanic/Latino

students make up approximately 52% of AVID enrollment (AVID Center, 2019). In New Mexico, the rate is considerably higher at 72% Hispanic/Latino (AVID Center, 2019a). New Mexico's population is heavily Hispanic — 49% as compared to only 39% in Texas and California (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019) — and given the state's rankings in poverty and education, it is essential that AVID students are thoroughly prepared to find success on a college campus. In order to ensure that success, it is crucial that AVID programming be the most informative, supportive, dynamic, and rigorous programming it can be so that more Hispanic students attain college degrees, improving their earning potential, and overall prosperity. Students are counting on AVID's success to propel their own success.

To prepare students for college, AVID develops curriculum aligned to standards for schools to implement through an elective course in the secondary grades (AVID also has an elementary component that is schoolwide in nature). The AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework) which supports the secondary elective course is based on three outcomes, or essential skill sets, for students: Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency (Appendix A).

To build Rigorous Academic Preparedness, AVID imparts five transferable skills within the elective class: writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading (WICOR). In addition, AVID accelerates its students into rigorous courses, such as Advanced Placement, in order to gain access to challenging curriculum. To do well in these courses, AVID affords students a Socratic-style tutorial twice weekly to strengthen their capacity in content areas, as well as to increase their collaboration and inquiry skills.

Opportunity Knowledge encompasses everything from identifying potential career aspirations to going on college trips to setting aspirational goals. By refining and reflecting

on their personal attributes, skills, and interests, AVID students learn how to distinguish among the types of colleges in order to determine their best match. AVID teachers ensure that students prepare for and take the ACT/SAT, help them with college applications, assist with scholarship searches, and walk them through the FAFSA, a typical roadblock for first generation college students.

Along with college knowledge, AVID emphasizes skills and mindsets (Nagaoka, 2015), which help students to develop their own agency. Critical thinking, goal setting, and reflection are foundational pieces of the secondary curriculum. By looking at the future while considering past performance, students “develop, demonstrate, and maintain motivation” as well as “demonstrate persistence, flexibility, and adaptability” as defined in the AVID Anchor Standards in Appendix B (AVID Center, 2019a). Equally important, AVID builds relational capacity in its students by creating classrooms “characterized by energy and comfort, where students feel mutual ownership in the expectations and learning within the classroom” (Bendall et al., 2015, p. 5). In embracing the whole student, AVID helps to “internalize self-efficacy,” (Davis Poon, 2018, p. 2) allowing students to access a postsecondary world their parents know little about.

The Current State of College Transition and Persistence

Transition to College

As students transition into college, they adjust many aspects of their lives, most importantly their academic and social lives. Some studies measure that transition in positive and negative affective trajectories (Larose et al., 2018; Rogers et al., 2018), which are “sequential pattern[s] of affective states that change over time” (D’Mello, 2012, p. 131). These studies suggest that students go into college with a positive affect, which decreases

over the first semester as they encounter stress related to academic, social, and emotional adjustments, such as feeling homesick (Thurber & Walton, 2012). In their study, Larose et al. (2018) used Tinto's Interactionist Model (Tinto, 2010) as a framework, assigning personal antecedents to students and hypothesizing their impact on the trajectories. Prior anxiety in high school was related to "at-risk trajectories" (p.705) in all three areas, lowering the odds of graduating from college. There were "largely similar" trajectories in adjustment for both male and female students (Conley et al., 2014, p. 205).

These affective trajectories are generalizable to college students as a whole, but do not take into account a student's racial or ethnic background, college-going status, or socio-economic circumstances. Considering how these important factors impact college transition and persistence is critical to understanding the role that AVID plays in preparing its students for positive adjustment trajectories.

Students of Color

By the time they transition into college, Latino, African American, and Native American students have confronted more obstacles in terms of college preparation and application than other students. They are less likely than their Caucasian and Asian peers to be qualified to apply to a four-year college, which involves taking the correct high school courses and college-entrance exams. For example, only 35% of Latino students, and 33% of African American students complete four-year college requirements as compared to 50% of Caucasian and 67% of Asian students (California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, 2015). One study suggests that students of color are "often met with subordination and racism," which impacts their participation in the "pipeline to college" (Welton & Martinez, 2014, p. 218). Another reminds administrators that they have a "responsibility to

ensure that [urban] students have access to and are encouraged to engage in coursework that provides them with the foundational knowledge that will ensure success in postsecondary education” (Reid, 2008, p. 258).

Even college-qualified students can struggle with a complex application process, especially when they do not encounter supportive counselors or have knowledgeable parents and must therefore “figure out everything on [their] own” (McCoy, 2014, p. 161). Then once accepted to college, some students of color encounter a phenomenon known as “summer melt,” which is when “college-intending” students fail to enroll in the fall (Castleman et al., 2014, p. 321). Research exposes several circumstances that can lead to summer melt including financial (scholarship) gaps, high school GPA or credit requirements, course scheduling, miscommunication with the college, and limited college knowledge (Rall, 2016).

One way to stave off a negative adjustment trajectory and successfully transition to college is for students to get involved with one or more organizations on the campus. “Black and Hispanic students who are more involved in formal social activities not only attain higher grades but are also significantly less likely to leave college,” stated Fischer (2007, p. 155). Another key to successful transition for students of color is family support, as it contributes positively to a student’s “sense of belonging in the new environment” (Hurtado et al., 2007, p. 880).

In New Mexico, the majority of students are students of color. According to the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, approximately 49% of the population is of Hispanic or Latino origin, 37% is white (Non-Hispanic), 11% is Native American, 2% is African American, and 1% is Asian. Understanding what Latino students experience and what supports they need to transition and persist in college is foundational to their future success.

Hispanic/Latino Students and College Transition. One study conducted by GEAR UP, a college awareness program, suggests that lack of information about college is a major barrier for Latino students and their families (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Concern over the cost of college and confusion about the application process both “profoundly affect” their college going potential (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). Getting families information about college applications and financial aid processes, such as FAFSA, early-on, and arranging for campus visits to state colleges could impact their overall ability to support their children in attaining college degrees.

Considering what helps Hispanic students transition into college life is important to encouraging their persistence, regardless of the type of college in which they enroll. The key to success for one group of Latinas was connecting with support systems (Gloria & Castellanos, 2012). Developing relationships with people “from whom they could gain support, find refuge, and feel viewed and validated as students and as Latina/os on campus” (p. 89) helped them and their parents feel comfortable about their transition to college. Another study noted that “connection to their cultural identity was an important starting point for developing relationships and support” (Clayton et al. 2019, p. 143). That sense of connection was sustained by developing networks of peers and professionals on campus with whom they could identify. Such support is crucial to helping students cope with college stressors, as Hispanic students are more likely to suppress or endure stress “due to their respect for family” or *familismo* (Lardier et al., 2019, p. 14). Incorporating *familismo* into the college experience as a culturally responsive measure can increase students’ and families’ feelings of belonging “from home to campus and visa-versa” (Gonzales, 2019, p. 937).

Most Latino students begin their postsecondary study at a community college (Krogstad, 2016), meaning they must make two transitions to eventually complete their bachelor's degree at a four-year institution. The statistics on this type of postsecondary transfer rate for first-time degree-seeking students are historically abysmal, as exemplified by the National Students Clearinghouse Research Center's report on the 2012 cohort. Only 20% of students transfer from a 2- to a 4-year university (Shapiro et al., 2017), and of those fewer than half of them attain a degree at all — only about a third for low income students (Fain, 2012). The Latino students who do successfully transfer to four-year universities are shown to implement strategies that garner institutional, financial, and family support (Harris, 2017). Some communities in New Mexico, including rural communities, have access to four-year degree programs due to articulation agreements in educational hubs such as the Higher Education Center in Santa Fe (Santa Fe Community College, 2020). Future research will determine how successful these collaborative efforts are in boosting undergraduate degree attainment for Latino students.

Immigrant and Undocumented Students. Nearly 14% of the U.S. population in 2017 consisted of immigrants (Radford & Noe-Bustamante, 2019). Of that group of 44 million immigrants, 11 million were from Mexico and 1.4 million from El Salvador, making Latinos the largest immigrant group — approximately 28% of all immigrants to the U.S. (Radford, 2019). Almost one quarter, or 10.5 million, of U.S. immigrants are undocumented, and about 5 million of them are from Mexico (Radford & Noe-Bustamante, 2019).

By comparison, ten percent of New Mexico's residents are immigrants (American Immigration Council, 2017; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019), but more than a third (37%) are undocumented, significantly higher than the U.S. average. Though nearly three-fourths of

DACA-eligible immigrant students had applied for DACA in 2016 (American Immigration Council, 2017), they are still at risk of deportation “even after they have complied with the governments’ requests and met rigorous requirements” (Cadenas et al., 2018, p. 564).

In addition to the risk of deportation, undocumented students encounter other barriers that hinder their college access. They are not eligible for federal financial aid (NASFAA, 2019) or many private scholarships (Kantrowitz, 2020); not even state-based financial aid is offered to them in most states, though New Mexico does offer state aid regardless of undocumented status (NMEAF, 2019). Given these financial obstacles, only 5-10 % of undocumented students attend college, and usually do so at community colleges (Russell, 2011) where more than half of Latino students begin their college experience (American Association of Community Colleges, 2020). This decision is partly based on lower tuition costs, as well as on a desire to remain close to family since undocumented students often contribute directly to the “family economy” by paying bills, providing childcare, or by educating relatives (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010, p. 22). Those undocumented students who do live on a college campus may require additional social, emotional, and financial support from their institutions to be successful (Davidson & Preciado, 2017).

English Language Learners. Among U.S. immigrants, 43% list Spanish as their home language and of those native Spanish speakers, only about a third speak English “very well” (Radford & Noe-Bustamante, 2019). In the highest achieving states, California and Florida, 30% of English language learners (ELLs) in districts receiving Title III funding attain proficiency (ED Data Express, 2017). In New Mexico, that number is only 15% on average. According to the same data source, the math proficiency for ELLs is only half that of all students, presumably due to the language of instruction, not the content itself.

In terms of college readiness, English language learners “experience significantly less academic exposure” in high school (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016, p. 463) and encounter “stigmatization and barriers to educational opportunity” (Umansky, 2016, p.714). ELLs have lower high school graduation rates, which in turn extend to lower college attendance rates (Johnson, 2019). In a longitudinal study that followed an 8th grade national cohort of ELLs for twelve years, only 12% earned a bachelor’s degree (Kanno & Cromley, 2013). One explanation for the educational struggle that ELLs encounter is that:

[S]tudents who must communicate in a second language face a further obstacle. It is often difficult for them to relax or be spontaneous in their learning process. The tension generated heightens the feeling of dissonance between their external reality and their internal world. Hence the connection between experience and language, so vital to the construction of knowledge, is compromised. (Darder, 2002, p. 129)

Despite difficulties with learning English, college students with limited English proficiency can have significantly higher college retention rates due to higher levels of motivation (Fong et al., 2016). This may be attributable to cultural attitudes towards education inherited from home countries or immigrant parents and families.

Rural Students

A third of New Mexicans live in rural areas, including 25% of teenagers. Of those teenagers, 31% live in poverty, approximately 47% are Hispanic, 38% are white, and 12% are Native American (New Mexico Community Data Collaborative, 2018). AVID students in rural areas of New Mexico represent about a third of all AVID students, with a total of approximately 3,700 enrolled for the 2018-2019 school year (AVID Center, 2021). In publications, AVID has called out its service to rural students, stating, “AVID levels the

playing field for minority, rural, low income, and other students without a college-going tradition in their families” (AVID Center, 2007). Similar to their urban counterparts, approximately 82% of rural AVID students qualify for free or reduced lunch. There are more white and Native American students enrolled in rural schools — two times as many white students at 12%, and six times as many Native American students at 26%. There are also more boys in AVID in rural schools, 43% versus 32%.

Rural teens face unique challenges that can have long-term effects on their lives. One national study found rural teens at most risk for tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drug use, as well as carrying weapons and engaging in sexual activity (Atav & Spencer, 2002). For instance, New Mexico had the second highest teen pregnancy rate in 2016 (National Center for Health Statistics, 2019). Though the statewide teen pregnancy rate has fallen to eighth in recent years, in 2018 the teenage pregnancy rate for rural girls was still one-and-a-half times that of girls living in urban areas of the state (New Mexico Community Data Collaborative, 2018). According to the *American Journal of Public Health*, a lack of family planning and education in rural areas is a contributing factor to higher pregnancy rates for rural youth throughout the country (Barna, 2020). This issue, and other risk factors, act together as obstacles for rural youth seeking a higher education.

First Generation College Students

Nearly one-third of America’s college students are the first generation in their families to attend college (Swecker et al., 2013). According to Lunceford et al., (2017), access to and successful completion of postsecondary education continues to be of the “utmost importance” (p. 185) to students from a low socioeconomic status (SES), and/or underrepresented ethnic groups who hope to gain a path to middle class careers. In order to

address the systemic inequity in the U.S., especially with regard to race and economic resources, educators need to develop proactive programming in order to increase their chances of success.

First generation college students face new challenges once enrolled in college: they often need remediation in math and English, they have lower GPAs than students with college-going families (Stephens et al., 2014), and are less likely to matriculate from a two-year community college to a four-year university (Miller, 2013). They are, therefore, less likely to graduate than if they started at a four-year college, which their peers do at a much higher rate (Huerta et al., 2013).

First generation students are particularly at risk during their first years of college when they are nearly twice as likely as their peers to leave school (Stieha, 2010). Even for a student like Alli, a Caucasian, middle-class, non-remedial freshman who made it to college despite her parents' message of "we're not college people" (p. 237), the dropout risk is real. Proactive advising, where the advisor seeks out the student and establishes a relationship, can be a significant benefit to first generation students. Every meeting with an academic advisor increases a student's chance of staying enrolled by 13%.

One study suggests that first generation students were less involved with campus life since more of them live off-campus as compared with continuous-generation students (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). They also "tend to feel less academically prepared for college, earn lower entrance exam scores, and embrace lower educational aspirations than their non-first generation peers" (Franklin & Slate, 2012, p. 178). These factors are part of students' cultural capital, defined by Nora (2004) as academic self-esteem, leadership experiences, extra-familial encouragement, and institutional support. Nora designed survey questions,

shown in Table 1, to ascertain aspects of a student’s perception of their cultural capital. First generation students can perceive lower levels of cultural capital than others whose families have a college-going tradition.

Table 1

Questions from “Survey of Attitudes and Behaviors Influencing College Choice”

Factor	Item
Personal Acceptance	I felt more at home at this university compared to others.
Academic Self-Esteem	I felt confident that I could succeed in the classes.
Personal and Social Fit	I felt that I could be myself at this university.
Family Encouragement	My decision to attend this college pleased my parents.

Note. Source is Nora, 2004, p. 187.

Gender

Women represent almost 57% of all college students (Conger & Dickson, 2017) and are out-enrolling men in every state, (Doherty et al., 2016). Women are not only enrolling in college at a higher rate, but they are also graduating from college at a higher rate. Over the last four decades, the percentage of bachelor’s degrees awarded to women has increased from 40% to 60%, creating a female advantage in educational attainment (Klevan et al., 2016).

Several causes for the gender imbalance are considered in the literature. Research on college preparation in high school suggests that girls are generally more focused on academic achievement including taking rigorous courses, making high grades, and actively planning for postsecondary education. They tend to have better developed non-cognitive skills such as organization, self-discipline and attentiveness, and they tend to ask for help when they need it more often than boys do (Conger & Long, 2013). All of these qualities make for a solid AVID student.

The gender imbalance is a particular issue for AVID as the program mirrors many

college campuses with 59% female enrollment nationally (AVID Center, 2019). New Mexico has even more of an imbalance: 63% female, 37% male (AVID Center, 2019a). A 2017 study conducted on gender disparity within AVID suggests that the AVID elective class itself may “lend itself to female interests more than male interests” by focusing on academic skills such as note-taking and organization, and that different activities may be needed to motivate male students to learn (Watt et al., 2017, p. 386). Boys tend to have different — and sometimes even opposite — learning styles from girls, making it necessary for teachers to use different instructional practices to engage and teach them (Watt et al., 2017).

One of the AVID teachers interviewed in the study noted that AVID “needs to be ‘friendly’ to male students with built-in male-centered lessons and activities” (Watt et al., 2017, p. 379). Sustained enrollment of boys in AVID has been attributed to increasing the number of male AVID elective teachers who act as de facto mentors. In addition, AVID teachers in the study stated that if boys persist into the eleventh and twelfth grade in AVID, their maturity levels catch up to girls’ and they are more willing to pursue rigorous courses and participate in college prep activities.

Low Income Students

According to a Pew Research Center report (2016), the percentage of students living in poverty who attend college has increased 8% in a decade; students from families living on a low income account for approximately one-third of those enrolled in college. Like many other underrepresented students, those coming from low income backgrounds are more likely to enroll in public institutions, though providing financial guidance and application fee waivers can encourage applications to a wider range of colleges (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Low income students are also likely to have fewer opportunities to learn

(opportunity gaps) exacerbating the “deleterious effect of poverty on education achievement at every level of schooling” (Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2018, p. 51).

The government provides some support for low income students, most notably the Pell grant. Pell grants were available to undergraduate students with “exceptional financial need” in a maximum amount of \$6,195 for the 2019-2020 school year (Federal Student Aid, 2020). However, with the cost of private colleges soaring to nearly ten times that amount (Powell & Kerr, 2019), it is not surprising that low income students typically attend public colleges. The TRIO programs are another source of government support for low income secondary and postsecondary students. The program participation income threshold for a family of four for the 2019-2020 school year was \$38,625 or less (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Research suggests there is limited college persistence for underrepresented groups of students, including those from low income families (Whistle & Hiler, 2018), though there are a few exceptions. One anomaly is high-performing, low income students who receive substantial financial aid (often a full ride) from public or private institutions (O’Sullivan et al., 2019). These students face other difficulties related to social capital (e.g., imposter syndrome), but persistence rates at their universities are usually high and they are apt to complete their degrees, especially if they are given additional support such as year-round programming (Renbarger & Long, 2019). Another exception are low income students who see education as a way out of poverty. These students persist, even when they face academic challenges, as a means of attaining socioeconomic mobility (Browman et al., 2017).

AVID Students and College Persistence

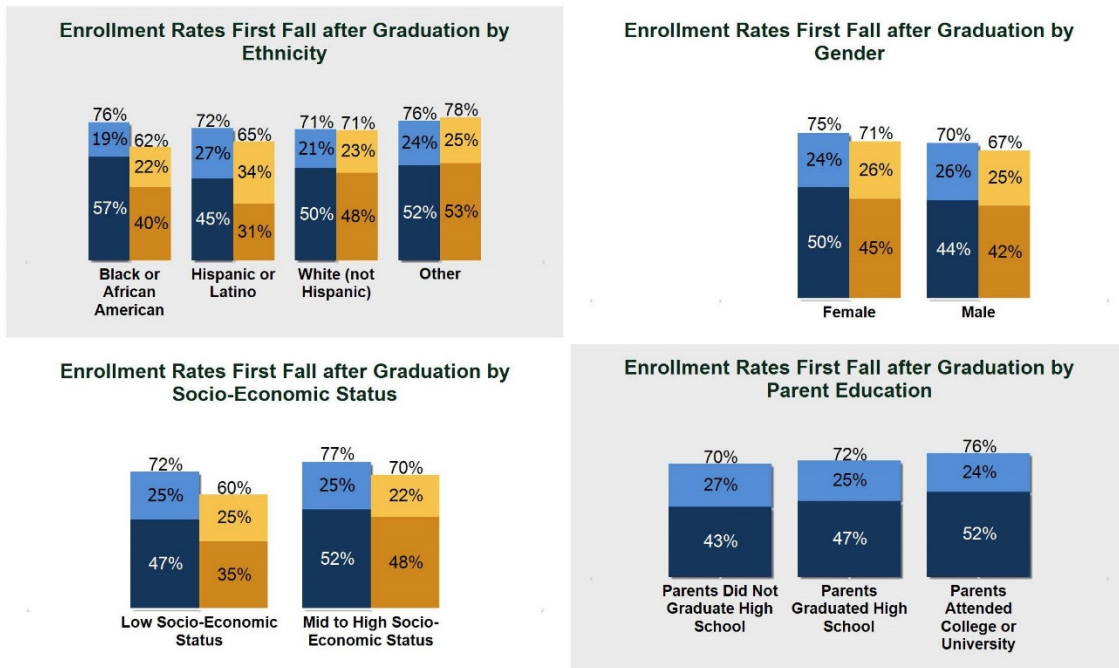
Recruitment and Enrollment of AVID Students. Each year, approximate 69% of American high school students enroll in a two- or four-year college after graduation; for AVID students, the number is higher at 72.5% on average over five years (AVID Center, 2015a, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019c). AVID specifically recruits students who are traditionally underrepresented to close opportunity and achievement gaps by designing curriculum for students who need more support to be college bound — and it is working: AVID students enroll in college at higher rates by ethnicity, by gender, and by socio-economic status (AVID Center, 2018a), as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

College Enrollment of AVID Graduates

73% of AVID Graduates in 2018 enrolled in either a two- or four-year college/university
 69% of the graduates in the United States in 2018 enrolled in either a two- or four-year college/university

■ AVID Enrolled in Four-Year ■ AVID Enrolled in Two-Year ■ USA Overall Enrolled in Four-Year ■ USA Overall Enrolled in Two-Year



College Placement of AVID Students. About a third of AVID students attend two-year colleges (AVID Center, 2019). Two-year colleges play an important role for Latino students, as they are the “only racial/ethnic group in the United States who enroll in two-year colleges at higher rates than they do in four-year colleges” largely because of the proximity to home and the guarantee of admittance (Gonzales, 2012, p. 144). Other factors include the benefits of family support found in many Latino communities (Martinez, 2013), including supporting “students’ desire to successfully transfer to a four-year institution” (Jabbar et al., 2019, p. 274).

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) are defined by Title V of the Higher Education Act as those having at least a 25% Hispanic/Latino student enrollment threshold (U.S. Dept of Education, 2020) and are generally located in states with large Hispanic populations such as New York, Arizona, Florida, Texas, California, and New Mexico (Torres & Zerquera, 2012). In addition, HSIs frequently offer specialized coursework in areas of Hispanic heritage, such as the minor in Flamenco dance at the University of New Mexico (UNM Fine Arts, 2019-2020). UNM is anecdotally the institute receiving the most New Mexico AVID graduates each year, followed by other HSIs such as New Mexico State University and Central New Mexico College.

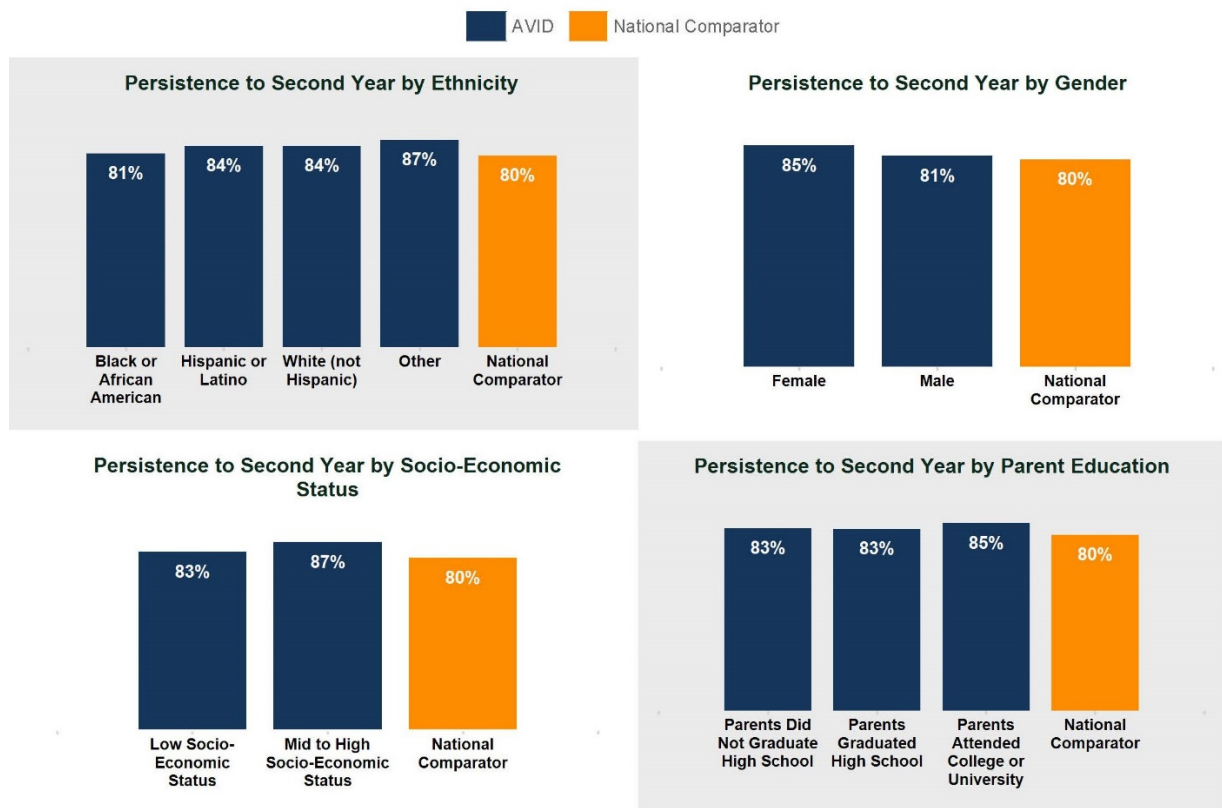
College Persistence of AVID Students. Nationally, approximately 77% of college students persist into their sophomore years at 4-year colleges, and about 54% persist into their second year of community college, though these numbers are lower for underrepresented students and first generation college students (Huerta et al., 2013). AVID students persist at higher rates in both 2- and 4-year colleges. According to *Fall-to-Fall Persistence* reports from AVID Center (2018b), which uses both U.S. Census Bureau and

National Student Clearing House data, AVID students not only showed greater first-fall enrollment rates of all underrepresented groups including racial/ethnic, socio-economic, and gender (male), AVID students also persisted into the next fall term at a rate of 84%, higher than the national comparator, which includes all college students (see Figure 2). This suggests that AVID students persist at higher rates than all other students combined.

Figure 2

Fall-to-Fall Persistence Rates for AVID Students

84% of AVID students who enrolled in college in the first Fall after high school exhibited Fall-to-Fall persistence by enrolling in the next Fall term. The national rate in the U.S. is 80%



Purpose of the Study

Given the poor prospects for students in New Mexico, education is a key component in attaining a better life. For education to play its role in their achievement, it is necessary to

understand how what educators provide to students — particularly in secondary classrooms — helps prepare them for a fulfilling future. The purpose of this study was to better understand the perceived impact that AVID has on its underrepresented students in New Mexico as they transition into college. By focusing on AVID’s College & Career Readiness Framework outcomes, and how they serve students as they transition from high school to college, a better understanding of the benefits and the gaps in the framework emerged. Then, suggestions could be made as to how AVID might accordingly adjust the curriculum to target those areas that most benefit students.

Need for the Study

Up until recently, the explicitly stated focus of the AVID college readiness program has been Academic Preparedness. The academic skill set, WICOR, has been the backbone of curricular development and educator training since AVID’s founding in 1980. Ask most students what they know about AVID and the response will be, “Cornell notes and big binders.” An intentional shift in curriculum over the past few years shows a concerted effort to showcase additional college readiness skills through culturally relevant teaching, critical thinking and engagement, and career exploration.

With the introduction of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework) in the spring of 2019, the focus broadened to include peripheral pieces of programming that were there from the beginning, just not in the spotlight. AVID students have always gone on college trips, hosted guest speakers, and participated in career pathways in their high schools. AVID teachers across the globe have also been activating student agency for decades by instructing students in goal setting, reflection, and self-advocacy. The

CCR Framework emphatically states that AVID prepares the whole student to transition to the next step in college and career.

According to a search on the ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Global database there are over 225,000 dissertations that discuss AVID. A perusal of these works shows that they portray the program as an academic resource for first generation students, an intervention program for struggling students, and sometimes a haven for students who need mentoring, e.g., referring to AVID cohorts as AVID families. Yet none of these studies discuss the varying aspects of the curriculum in terms of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework. Additionally, none of those authors were afforded the opportunity to put their findings to work by improving curricula for the benefit of current and future AVID students.

Studying AVID's impact as a college and career readiness program fits under the umbrella of research on first generation and underrepresented students' transition into and persistence in college. With one in three students enrolling in, but not graduating from, college (Leonhardt & Chinoy, 2019), K-12 educators must instill crucial skills and habitual practices, while encouraging students to own and use their agency, during their elementary and secondary years. Teachers therefore need the most targeted support for instruction in explicit skill sets, building up of emotional and intellectual confidence, and the offering of opportunities to help more students qualify for, transition into, and persist in undergraduate education. This study could lead to new or refined curricula to do just that.

Research Questions

I sought to understand how the acquisition of academic skills, the experience of college and career opportunities, and the development of student agency in AVID students may help them to transition into college. My research questions were:

1. *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?*
2. *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

Study Significance and Relevance

In its own framework for student success, the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research concluded that young adults develop critical skills, attitudes, and behaviors through “developmental experiences,” combining action and reflection (Nagaoka, 2015, p. iii). This is precisely what AVID’s College and Career Readiness Framework supports: students develop their own agency through skill acquisition and opportunities to explore future endeavors. By studying how this framework impacts college transition, AVID can continue to improve its approach to college and career readiness, thereby supporting more students and potentially increasing their persistence in college.

Delimitations

To ensure adequate knowledge of the AVID program, participants in the study were required to have had at least two years of the AVID Elective class, specifically at the high school level. Additionally, participants were limited to being either current college students at New Mexico’s public universities or graduates of northern New Mexico AVID high schools who were attending out of state colleges. Lastly, to account for successful transition into college, participants were in at least their second consecutive quarter of college.

Terms and Definitions: *AVID Students Defined*

Race and ethnicity are factors in AVID enrollment. As part of its mission, the program focuses on students who are traditionally underrepresented on college campuses.

AVID students are also typically the first generation in their families to attend college, and often come from families living on minimal income. Any one of these characteristics would qualify them as underrepresented students.

Underrepresented. The term *underrepresented* first appeared in the education literature in an article in the December 1972 issue of *The American Sociologist* entitled “News and Notes on Minorities and Women.” Here *underrepresented* refers to “blacks, Chicanos, and women.”

The intent of the term *underrepresented* is to be inclusive of all categories of students who are not in the current majority population on college campuses. The Education Trust defines these students as an *underrepresented minority* and includes students who are “Black, Latino, or Native American” in that definition (Education Trust, 2016). In terms of college access and persistence, there exists additional academic discourse and differentiation between students of mainland Asian decent and those of the Pacific Islands, or Asian Pacific Americans (Yeh, 2004). For the purposes of this study, Asian Pacific American students are considered underrepresented.

Students of Color. In the early 2000s, *students of color* began appearing in the titles of educational research studies. Over the last twenty years, however, the phrase’s usage has grown, appearing now in the titles of over 300 educational studies according to a search on the Education Research Complete Database. The generally accepted definition refers to students who are not of Caucasian heritage and who do not identify as “white,” as in this definition from the Multicultural Student Center at the University of Wisconsin at Madison:

We utilize the phrase “Students of Color (SOC)” to intentionally include students who may identify as Black, African-American, Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern,

Pacific Islander, Latinx, Chicax, Native American, and multiracial. (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2019)

Unlike the term underrepresented, *students of color* generally includes students of all Asian heritages.

Hispanic/Latino. There are several terms for students with ancestral roots in Central and South America, as well as pre-colonial Spain. The term *Hispaño* originally referred to Mexicans living in what is now Northern New Mexico (Bustamante, 1982). Though they at first called themselves *Mexicanos*, they later adopted the term *Spanish American* which was “more acceptable” (p. 186) to the higher-class *Hispaños* and the Anglos in the area, establishing “a cultural distance” (p. 186) between themselves and newer immigrants from Mexico. Today, *Hispanic* is widely used self-identifying term for a majority of New Mexicans, though some students whose families emigrated from other countries “tie their identity to their ancestral countries of origin” (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2016, para. 1) and use it as an ethnic marker (e.g., Mexican-American). Others use a broader, pan-ethnic term like Latino, Latina, or the gender neutral Latinx. I will use the terms Hispanic and Latino interchangeably as these are the terms most frequently heard in New Mexico, and the terms used by the Pew Research Center’s Hispanic Trends Project (Lopez, 2013).

First Generation College Students. The literature lacks a common definition for what criteria merit the designation of a first generation college student (Peralta & Klonowski, 2017). In fact, these authors reviewed twenty-four different studies on this topic and found only partial agreement about what it means to be the first person in the family to go to college. They made a distinction between a conceptual definition (which only half the studies

gave) and an operational definition (i.e., how the data regarding a student's college-going status were collected and measured).

To ameliorate the inconsistency, Peralta and Klonowski (2017) recommended the following standardized definition of a first generation student: “an individual who is pursuing a higher education degree and whose parents or guardians do not have a postsecondary degree” (p. 635). This definition is problematic, however, because a postsecondary degree includes an associate's degree, and this degree would not preclude membership in AVID or other college preparation programs such as Upward Bound, one of the three federally funded TRIO programs. Those programs' qualifying definition is “high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree” (U.S. Department of Education, 2019), which also aligns with the Higher Education Act of 1965's definition of “an individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree” (U.S. Department of Education, 1998, p. 3).

Being a first generation college student is not required for participation in AVID, especially if a student meets any of the other criteria for underrepresented status. Nationally, 56.4% of AVID students on average have parents with no college experience at all, which means that others could have some college, an associate's degree, or possibly even a bachelor's or graduate degree (AVID Center, 2015b, 2016a, 2017a, 2018b, 2019d). That said, the most inclusive conceptual definition of *first generation* is what AVID philosophically supports since it allows AVID schools the most flexibility in recruiting, accepting, and supporting “students without a college-going tradition in their families” (AVID Center, 2007). While the operational definition is a student whose parents do not hold bachelor's degrees here, the conceptual definition will serve as the understanding of *first*

generation.

First generation college students face specific challenges in terms of college access and academic achievement: they often need remediation in math and English, they have lower GPAs than students with college-going families, and are less likely to matriculate from a two-year community college to a four-year university. This makes them less likely to graduate than if they had started at a four-year college, which their Caucasian peers do at a much higher rate (Huerta et al., 2013). AVID specifically addresses all of these potential deficits to make students college ready.

Gender. Though the topic of gender is largely considered in terms of enrollment statistics, it is important to discuss the concept of gender identity. Gender identity is defined as “a person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or neither male nor female” (Merriam-Webster, 2020). There is a focus on terminology and an evolving nature of our understanding about gender identity that is not yet reflected in the vast body of research about college students (Janssen & Erickson-Schroth, 2013). Given the available statistical data on college enrollment, the terminology of ‘male’ or ‘female’ is used in their enrollment status listed with a college or university. As it pertains to interviews for this study, graduates’ gender was self-identified.

Low Income Students. “AVID’s mission is to close the opportunity gap by preparing all students for success in a global society” (AVID Center, 2020). As part of its mission to support underrepresented students, AVID particularly recruits students who receive free or reduced-price lunch at school. On average, 62.8% of AVID students are qualified as low income by their districts as compared to only 50.2% of the whole school population (AVID Center, 2019). In New Mexico, both figures are higher with 72.4% of

AVID students on average receiving free or reduced-price lunch along with 61.6% of the general school population (AVID Center, 2019a.).

Colleges have complex ways of defining low income, such as Pell grant eligibility, participation of families in the “bottom quintile” for income, or the Intergenerational Mobility Measure (Hoxby & Turner, 2019). K-12 institutions, however, rely on qualification for the federal Free or Reduced Lunch Program to quantify their students as low income. In the 2018-2019 school year, families of four qualifying for reduced price meals needed to earn less than \$54,427 and those qualifying for free lunch needed to earn less than \$32,630 (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2018). All of those students would be considered low income students by AVID.

Rigorous Academic Preparedness. This first component of AVID’s College and Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework) is defined as “students [who] have the academic skills and can successfully complete rigorous college and career preparatory curriculum and experiences” (AVID Center, 2019e). Rigorous Academic Preparedness is achieved through application of AVID’s WICOR skills (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading) while enrolled in coursework that accelerates learning in middle and high school.

Opportunity Knowledge. AVID defines the next component of the CCR Framework, Opportunity Knowledge, as “students research opportunities, set goals, make choices that support their long-term aspirations, and successfully navigate transitions to the next level” (AVID Center, 2019e). Examples of instructional routines involving Opportunity Knowledge are grade report analysis and goal setting, goal reflection and adjustment, 4- and 6-year plans, research units on college and career, guest speakers, and field trips to college

campuses.

Student Agency. When “students believe in and activate their own potential, build relationships, persist through obstacles, and exercise their academic, social, emotional, and professional knowledge and skills” (AVID Center, 2019e), they are using their agency. Student Agency, the third component of the CCR Framework, is internal to the student, though it is fostered and developed through relational capacity activities such as team building, group and individual presentations, engagement in Socratic tutorials, writing units about identity, and service learning opportunities.

Individual Determination. AVID is an acronym meaning Advancement Via Individual Determination. It is also meant to reflect the true definition of that word as showing enthusiasm, eagerness, or a keen interest in something, in this case education. Students apply to be in the AVID elective class, and one criterion of acceptance is an expression of their own drive and willingness to work hard to academically achieve and fulfill their potential.

Intersectionality. This term, created by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), describes the intersection of multiple areas of discrimination such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation or identity, physical ability, and other markers of social marginalization. In New Mexico, and in AVID in particular, most students embody several identities that increase the number of barriers to their academic preparation. Some of the barriers come from within the institutions of learning themselves, such as negative teacher beliefs about student abilities (e.g., Plata et al., 2017). Other barriers, such as poverty, impact many facets of their development. The lens of intersectionality is considered in relation to AVID students and graduates.

Chapter Summary

Students in New Mexico face many barriers to higher education. Overall, the state is performing poorly on several measures of prosperity, including high school graduation rates. Many students seeking to enter college will be the first generation in their families to do so, meaning they will need additional knowledge, guidance, and encouragement from their schools to support their educational goals. The majority of the state's students are from racially, socio-economically, and culturally underrepresented groups, making their transition to college statistically more difficult. Despite these barriers, students are enrolling in largely Hispanic serving, postsecondary institutions across the state. Their successful transition is bolstered in part by participation in an elective class with a name that speaks to their desired outcomes: Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

AVID is designed specifically to support the needs of students from underrepresented groups as they prepare for college. After nearly forty years, AVID released a College and Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework), which is the focus of a curriculum designed to prepare the whole student for success in college. Graduates' perceptions of the CCR Framework, and how its components helped them transition into college, was the focus of this exploratory study, which was organized around two research questions:

1. *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?*
2. *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

In Chapter 2, AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework is considered in light of the existing literature on college persistence.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

If first generation and other underrepresented groups of students are to transition into, persist in, and graduate from college, their specific scholastic and emotional needs must be met. AVID designs targeted support for underrepresented students through instruction in explicit skill sets and dissemination of knowledge needed for college. AVID also develops its students' social and cultural capital through instruction in purpose-driven behavior, and the intentional formation of bonds between classmates and teachers. AVID teaches the student to self-advocate in order to navigate through the secondary and postsecondary educational systems. Understanding how AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework supports students within the context of the established research on college transition will enable me to make informed suggestions about the structure of curriculum based in that framework.

Research Questions

I sought to understand how the acquisition of academic skills, the experience of college and career opportunities, and the development of agency in AVID students may help them to transition into college. My research questions were: 1. *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?* 2. *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

College and Career Readiness Frameworks

The selected framework used to view AVID's impact on college students' transition has been cited more than 12,000 times in the 45 years since it was first published, according to a search on Google Scholar. Tinto's theoretical model for college persistence has become "the framework that researchers commonly use to guide their empirical tests" (Hurtado &

Carter, 1997, p. 324). I examined Tinto’s framework in detail and then combined it with AVID’s College & Career Readiness Framework to create an aligned framework to explain AVID graduates’ transition to college.

Tinto’s Framework

The foundational framework for college persistence appeared in Tinto’s 1975 article “Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research” (Tinto, 1975) in which he posits "a theoretical model that explains the processes of interaction between the individual and the institution that lead differing individuals to drop out from institutions of high education..." (p. 90). The model proposes two interactive systems that a student must successfully navigate in order to persist in college: the Academic System and the Social System (see Appendix C for the Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College). Persistence is highest when there is perceived balance between these systems.

In the Academic System, grade performance and intellectual development are the keys to academic integration. Grade performance is just as it sounds — the achievement of acceptable grades and maintenance of eligibility within the Academic System. It is extrinsic in nature, a “tangible resource” essential to college persistence, leading to future academic and “career rewards” (Tinto, 1975, p. 104). Intellectual development is the “individual’s identification with the norms of the academic system” (p. 104), allowing the student to evaluate the Academic System.

In Tinto’s model, the Academic System is influenced by goal commitment on the part of the student, who is in turn influenced by family background, individual attributes, and pre-college schooling (Tinto, 1975, p. 102). The intensity of the goal commitment is measured by plans and expectations for college and career — the greater the plans (undergraduate or

doctoral) and expectations (e.g., family's educational experience), the greater the commitment to persist. The influence of a student's family background is supported by prior research on the following topics: level of parent education, family income, student's quality of relationship with parent, parental expectations, advice, praise, and family's expressed interest in the student's college experience (p. 100). Several academic factors are considered part of an individual's attributes such as past academic performance and measured ability, including high school grades and standardized test scores. Additionally, a student's personality traits, such as impulsivity, flexibility, and stability are also contributing factors. Finally, high school facilities, faculty, and the social status of its student body all influence a student's "aspirations, expectations, and motivations" in terms of college attendance (p. 102).

These personal factors equally affect the Social System through their collective impact on a student's institutional commitment. According to Terenzini et al., (1985) the commitment is influenced by "a series of socio-psychological interactions" (p. 320) between students' pre-enrollment characteristics and their experiences on campus. Their research suggests that "a psycho-social anchor" (p. 338) on the campus would serve to improve retention. Additionally, institutional commitment is determined by a student's interest in a particular college, the financial cost of said college, and the time needed to complete a program of study (e.g., associate's, bachelor's or graduate degree) (Tinto, 1975, p. 94). As is the case with goal commitment, institutional commitment is impacted by family background, and particularly by family expectations and income.

Success in the Social System is affected by peer-group and faculty interactions within the college setting. These interactions result in "social communication, friendship support, faculty support and collective affiliation," which are the equivalent of a good GPA in "social

rewards” (Tinto, 1975, p. 107). Social integration is dependent on experiencing “sufficient congruency” (p. 107) with the “values, attitudes and interests” (p. 108) of college peers and faculty as experienced through dorm, class, and extracurricular interactions. Larger universities provide more opportunities for students to find a matching culture or subculture with which to align; however, institutional commitment through social integration happens at every size of institution (p. 117).

Social and academic integration can either strengthen or weaken a student’s goal and institutional commitments, explaining why those commitments are shown twice in the Social and Academic Systems in the diagram of Tinto’s model (Appendix C). The commitments, in effect, weigh on two sides of a seesaw, representing the student’s continuous evaluation of the Systems through their academic and social interactions. Tinto describes this as a “reciprocal functional relationship between the two modes of integration such that excessive emphasis on integration in one domain would, at some point, detract from one’s integration into the other domain” (Tinto, 1975, p. 92). In other words, too much time spent in the library could lead to feeling socially disconnected, while too much time on the party circuit could end in academic probation. Either extreme could impact a student’s decision to either persist or dropout.

While Tinto’s framework is structurally sound and supportive of the literature in 1975, researchers had yet to turn their attention to several important characteristics of today’s college students, such as first generation or English language learner status. Hurtado and Carter (1997) among others (e.g., Tierney, 1992) have criticized Tinto’s original framework for not including race and ethnicity, which Tinto later addressed in a subsequent revision (Tinto, 1993). His original research does address class, however, when speaking of two-year

colleges and their tendency to “reinforce inequality of opportunity” by serving “lower status individuals” (Tinto, 1975, p. 112). This is based on research findings on college quality that a “direct relationship exists between the ability level of the student body of an institution and the expectations individuals will hold for themselves” (p. 113). Towards the end of the article, Tinto suggests his framework may be impacted by future research on college persistence concerning race, urban institutions of higher education, and student and faculty subcultures, some of which he himself undertakes.

Evolution of the Framework

A dozen years after the publication of his framework, Tinto authored a book entitled *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition* in which he blends his original theory with subsequent policy applications intended to help college students to become fully integrated on the campus (Tinto, 1987). He summarizes the longitudinal nature of ‘student leaving’ in an article about the stages of departure based on his book (Tinto, 1988).

Stages of departure. The concept of stages of departure explains the process a college student must successfully go through, particularly in the first six weeks of his college experience, in order to persist. The process is broken into three stages: separation, transition, and incorporation. Separation is described as disassociating from membership in past communities, especially high school and home (Tinto, 1988, p. 443). Transition is “a period of passage between the old and new” (p. 444) where the student has yet to form bonds or acquire the norms of the new community. Incorporation is “establishing competent membership in the social and intellectual communities of college life” (p. 446), though Tinto notes there are no formal ceremonies marking incorporation save the rituals of Greek life. If

students fail to move through each of these stages, they are more likely to drop out of college.

Nested systems. Twenty-five years after he first created his Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College, Tinto revised his framework by incorporating the experience of learning in the classroom into the Academic and Social Systems (Tinto, 2000). Classroom learning, he argued, is the common experience of faculty interaction for all college students, including those who do not live on a college campus (p. 81). In “Part 1: Revising Tinto’s Theory” of the book *Reworking the Student Departure Puzzle*, Tinto claims that as intersections of students and faculty, classrooms serve as “smaller academic and social meeting places” and should therefore be included in the Systems (p. 82).

Additionally, he discusses research on first-year learning communities, showing them to be a “network of supportive peers that helped students make the transition to college and integrate them into a community of peers” (p. 85). Since these communities can exist on residential and non-residential campuses alike, their impact includes students at all types of colleges and covers everything from participation in learning to making commuter campuses “more knowable places” (p. 86). Ultimately, the creation of a shared learning experience inside and outside the classroom helps students to “bridge the academic-social divide that typically plagues student life” (p. 86), bringing the Academic and Social Systems seesaw to rest in the middle. Therefore, Tinto calls for a reimagining of the two separate Systems into nested spheres with the Academic System “occurring *within* the broader Social System that pervades the campus” (p. 91). He states a need for further research into the “linkage between learning and persistence” (p. 92) to explore the impact that curriculum structure and

pedagogy, such as learning communities, can have on students' transition and persistence in college.

Staying Tied to Community. Another course correction Tinto makes in relation to the “complex web of events that shape student leaving and persistence” (Tinto 2006, p. 1) is to shift towards “students of different gender, race, ethnicity, income and orientation” (p. 3) to better speak to the experience of all students. Here he addresses his stance on the “so-called stages of student departure” from his prior work (Tinto, 1988) by incorporating new research that shows that connection to their home communities is part of the puzzle of students' persistence after all.

A Conceptual Model of Persistence Through Students' Eyes. Finally, in his most recent work, *A Model for Student Motivation and Persistence* (see Appendix D), Tinto proposes a conceptual model that seeks to explain the difference between an institution's wish to retain students and the students' wish to persist (Tinto, 2017). His terminology evolved from ‘dropout’ to ‘persistence’ over the course of his work, and this model continues to seek balance through a more detailed view of the Social and Academic Systems. He is quick to state that this model is not a full representation of motivation theory; instead, it reads as a more nuanced understanding of balance for the student, incorporating social and academic integration with ‘self-efficacy,’ a ‘sense of belonging,’ and ‘perception of curriculum,’ all leading to the positive outcome of student persistence rather than that of the dropout decision in his original deficit model from 1975.

His approach is to give the student perspective on factors of persistence, while also proposing institutional responses to address them. For example, the model uses Bandura's (1977) definition of self-efficacy as “a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a specific

situation or at a specific task” (Tinto, 2017, p. 256). As a belief, self-efficacy is learned through experience (p. 257) and it is up to the institution to build, reinforce and maintain that self-efficacy (p. 259) by addressing stereotype threats, offering first-year support, and implementing early warning systems (p. 260). Findings from a study involving 239 AVID students suggested that there were “statistically significant differences in students' self-efficacy based on the number of years in the AVID program (Monachino, 2012, p. iii). Self-efficacy is one factor in Student Agency, one of the three components of AVID’s College and Career Readiness Framework.

A ‘sense of belonging’ concerns membership and community, similar to the social integration of the original model. Tinto warns institutions that “every interaction matters” (Tinto, 2017, p. 261), and it only takes one negative interaction to “alter students’ sense of belonging within the institution” (p. 261). He recommends that a faculty should reflect the diversity of the student body with which it works, and that students’ positive social interactions with that faculty, even outside of class, can shape the campus climate and culture (p. 262). This same sense of belonging is a feature of the “AVID family” (Mendiola et al., 2010, p. 215), which describes the bond developed between AVID students and teachers. In one study on AVID, the climate and culture of the AVID class, atypical at the high school level, “offered some much needed motivation and guidance when achieving academic goals” (Watt et al., 2011, p. 130). This “family-like support” (p. 130) reflects the positive social interactions Tinto is calling on colleges to create.

The “perception of the value or relevance” (Tinto, 2017, p. 258) of students’ coursework and curriculum is equally crucial to persistence, and an echo of the academic integration of the original conceptual schema. The “complex interplay” of pedagogy, text

selection, and learning styles (p. 259) in the student experience needs to feel “inclusive of the experiences and histories of the students they serve” (p. 263) else the institution risks alienating its student body, thereby lowering its retention rates.

Through this model, Tinto asks institutions to see “persistence as a form of motivation” (p. 264) based on students’ *perceptions* of their experiences. If those perceptions are positive on the whole, students will be motivated to persist. If not, the institution will experience the behavioral consequences of students’ social, academic, and ultimately physical, withdrawal.

AVID’s College and Career Readiness Framework

The AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Appendix A) has three components: Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency. This top portion of the framework is “What Students Need” (AVID Center, 2019e). The bottom section, containing four action statements, is “What Educators Do” and is not addressed as part of the framework for this study. Though it is not a part of the framework, ‘individual determination,’ the driving force of AVID students, serves as motivation to persist, and is considered along with the three top components of the framework.

The instructional standards for the AVID elective 6th -12th grade classes are aligned to AVID’s College & Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework) components. Each of the three CCR Framework components is a student outcome supported by subsets of skills. The standards are the same in grades sets of 6th/9th, 7th/10th, and 8th/11th to ensure that all students encounter all standards regardless of whether they enter AVID in 6th or 9th grade. The 12th grade standards are the same as the AVID Anchor Standards (Appendix B) and represent the pinnacle of skill attainment for AVID students. The standards incrementally

increase in rigor across grade levels, supporting students while they develop skills in Rigorous Academic Preparation, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency.

The 3 Components of AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework

Rigorous Academic Preparedness: WICOR. Students are academically prepared when they “have the academic skills and can successfully complete rigorous college and career preparatory curriculum and experiences” (AVID Center, 2019e). In an effort to support all students to be academically prepared for college, AVID builds curriculum around five main academic skills: writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading.

Supporting Theory: Cultural Capital Theory. In his foundational work, *The Forms of Capital*, French sociologist, anthropologist, philosopher and public intellectual, Pierre Bourdieu (1986) invites the reader to imagine a universe with “perfect equality of opportunity...so that at each moment anyone can become anything” (p. 241). He states that such a universe would necessarily be devoid of capital, “a world without inertia, without accumulation, without heredity” (p. 241) for it is capital, in all of its forms, that “represents the immanent structure of the social world” (p. 242) and the chances for success of its capital-bearing inhabitants.

Bourdieu generally defines capital as labor accumulated over time reproducing or expanding itself with the potential to produce profits (p. 241), yet he goes on to provide more than this standard definition of economic capital. Of the types of capital he defines — economic, cultural, and social — it is cultural capital that is tied to education. Bourdieu distinguishes various types and states of cultural capital that allow for self-improvement: the embodied state, (p. 244), acquisitions of “legitimate competence” in symbolic capital, (p. 245), and ultimately the institutionalized state of “academic qualification” (p. 248), which

recognizes the cultural capital of the certificate bearer as having accumulated capital through the investment of time spent acquiring knowledge. Running through all these definitions is a tacit understanding that families with a college-going tradition have a head start, that their children receive a “hereditary transmission of capital...without delay, without wasted time” (p. 246). Though Bourdieu sticks tightly to class structure, for example pointing out the “visible marks” (p. 245) of accents associated with social class or geographic origin, he also opens the door for a future time when a student’s education will not be limited by a parent’s ability to pay, but will instead allow the student to “share in profits which scarce cultural capital secures in class-divided societies” (p. 245). In other words, education can allow for upward mobility, and a college degree is the symbol of the time spent and skills acquired that awards cultural capital regardless of class (i.e., low income or first generation college-going status).

WICOR. The five WICOR skills are applicable in any content area and at any grade level. AVID teachers use instructional strategies to teach the WICOR skills (see Table 2). For example, note-taking is a strategy to increase reading and writing skills, as well as an organizational strategy for content material. AVID is well known for its use of Cornell Notes, a note-taking system developed in the 1940’s by Walter Pauk at Cornell University (Cornell University, 2020). Cornell notes incorporate organization and summary skills, as well as inquiry skills through the use of questions in the margin (Mendiola et al., 2010, Watt et al., 2011). AVID ultimately transitioned to a Focused Note-Taking system, utilizing more formats than just Cornell Notes, but it still emphasizes this core academic skill. Note-taking is a major component of the curriculum, emphasized in weekly binder checks.

Table 2

Academic Strategies from AVID: WICOR

Strategy	Type of Strategy
Focused Note-Taking	Writing
Costa's Levels of Thinking	Inquiry
AVID Tutorials	Collaboration
AVID Binder	Organization
Marking the Text	Reading

AVID considers its strategies a regimen of ‘best practice’ and often touts them as research-based. In addition to note-taking, study and organization skills were considered valuable and still in use by college students (Parker et al., 2013). In fact, Bernhardt (2013) considers AVID strategies so valuable that they are “in one form or another, forms of cultural capital that provide educational advantage to those individuals who develop them and understand how and when they are to be utilized” (p. 213).

The literature on college-level skill development focuses on special populations like students with ADHD (Reaser et al., 2007) or on the issue of learning under the general stress of college life (Shatkin et al., 2016). There is an additional presumption that college students have already developed necessary skills in high school and are now ready to become content-driven experts. The problem for many first generation and low income students is that they are still behind in skills when they arrive on college campuses, and often require developmental coursework as well as ‘college success’ support through TRIO or similar programs (Schuman, 2005). AVID seeks to prepare its students with the deepest and broadest skill sets to tackle everything, from how to talk to a professor, to how to produce perfect APA citations.

One study interested in mapping college skills to high school standards is the Standards for Success, a three-year project sponsored by the Association of American Universities and The Pew Charitable Trusts, and collaboratively conducted by the Center for Educational Policy Research at the University of Oregon, and the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research at Stanford University (Conley, 2005, p. xiii). The Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS) standards are organized by content area, and include universal skills such as critical and analytical thinking, problem solving, incorporating feedback, and coping with “ambiguous learning tasks” (p. 173). KSUS standards and AVID elective anchor standards are compared in Table 3 to show the alignment of AVID curriculum in Rigorous Academic Preparedness.

Table 3

WICOR: Example AVID Anchor Standards

<u>Skill</u>	<u>AVID Standard</u>	<u>KSUS Standard</u>
Writing	Compose a variety of text types (AP.W.1)	Use a variety of strategies to adapt writing to different audiences and purposes... (p. 185)
Inquiry	Use questioning techniques to engage in discussions and think critically about content and concepts (AP.I.1)	Use questions and other strategies to elicit responses from classmates... (p. 234)
Collaboration	Work productively and effectively in diverse teams with diverse perspectives (AP.C.2)	Work effectively in a group to help enhance... learning for themselves and for group members (p. 234)
Organization	Organize information, indicating relationships between ideas (AP.O.5)	Organize ideas to achieve coherence in communication (p. 228)
Reading	Examine key academic and content-related vocabulary to deepen comprehension of texts (AP.R.3)	Understand vocabulary and content, including subject area terminology, connotative and denotative meanings, and idiomatic meanings (p. 181)
Research	Cite evidence and support claims (AP.I.10)	Identify claims in their writing that require outside support or verification (p. 186)

Writing. Students’ precollege writing — as measured on college entrance or placement exams — must attain a given college readiness marker in order for students to place into credit-bearing coursework in most institutions (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2018). Though some research disputes the correlation between test scores and student academic progress (Burdman, 2012), stating that the “border between college-ready and not-college-ready is blurry” and standardized tests are too “blunt” of an instrument (Hassel & Giordano, 2015, p. 58), high school teachers and students must nevertheless work to ensure writing competency across subject areas, particularly in English. To be successful in a first-year college course, a student should have “a well-oiled writing process in place to help him/her proceed through future college writing assignments” (Burdick & Greer, 2017, p. 95).

AVID embeds weekly writing in the forms of note-taking, reflective summaries, and quickwrites (short, timed responses to a prompt). There are also several major writing units within each grade level, requiring students to apply brainstorming, research, outline, drafting, editing, and publishing skills. Finally, curriculum for a long-term research paper in the junior and senior years was especially designed for AVID by a college professor who taught first-year foundational college students at a large state university. Throughout the structure of the 446-page research curriculum book she incorporated “the necessary tools for college readiness and success” (Johns, 2009, p. ii) that high school students would need to master in order to avoid having to take her class in college.

Inquiry. Inquiry, also known as questioning, analysis, or critical thinking, is a valuable skill in both college and career. Asking questions, particularly well-crafted questions, can lead to clarification or even revelation of important facts or understanding.

“Effective problem solvers know how to ask questions to fill in the gaps between what they know and what they don’t know. Effective questioners are inclined to ask a range of questions” (Costa & Kallick, 2004, p. 24). Costa developed a framework for questioning that allows students to address complexity through levels — three levels to be precise.

In the student resource, Costa’s Levels of Thinking and Questioning (see Appendix E), task verbs are sorted into level 1, 2, or 3 depending on the amount of effort needed to respond. Level 1 task verbs (e.g., list, label, define) involve information that is ‘on the page’ and only require copying. Level 2 task verbs (e.g., analyze, compare, contrast) require the student to read ‘between the lines,’ and Level 3 task verbs (e.g., hypothesize, evaluate, synthesize) require the student to work ‘off the page’ to create new meaning. Organizing tasks by level of difficulty allows the student to move into higher level thinking and questioning. “Structuring questions in this way provides students the support they need to formulate high-level inquiry questions that lead to deep understanding while allowing them to remain in control of their own learning” (Barker & Holden, 2017, p. 40).

Collaboration. Collaboration, known in the literature as cooperative learning, is a global pedagogical approach to learning “in every subject area and from preschool through graduate school” (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 365). Collaborative grouping promotes conversation and problem solving, and several meta-analyses have shown that students “achieve higher learning outcomes than students working on a task individually” (Tran et al., 2019; van Leeuwen & Janssen, 2019, p. 71).

AVID emphasizes collaboration in its twice weekly Socratic-style tutorials. During this period of collaborative inquiry, groups of no more than seven students work with a tutor to try to resolve problems in their academic classes. Soller determined, “Skill in learning

collaboratively means knowing when and how to question, inform, and motivate one's teammates, knowing how to mediate and facilitate conversation, and knowing how to deal with conflicting opinions" (2001, p. 44). Over their years in AVID, students hone these skills in preparation for college study groups where all of their academic and cooperative process knowledge comes together. Through tutorials, and other collaborative structures such as helping trios, numbered heads together, and WICOR partners, students practice vital communication and interpersonal skills they will use throughout college and into their careers.

Organization. The correlation of organizational skills to academic success is reported in research on students who are lacking those organizational skills — students with ADHD (Breux et al., 2019; Langberg et al., 2011). In these studies, intervention frameworks such as HOPS (homework, organization, and planning skills) or OMTP (organization, time management, and planning skills) are successfully applied to students who struggle with completing assignments, losing work, meeting due dates, and prioritizing tasks.

One indication about the importance of student organization is the number of tools created to address it: calendars, planners, binders, tabs, folders, labels, and pencil pouches. All of these tools, whether physical or digital, are associated with academic success and their required use is assessed during a weekly binder check for every AVID student. AVID is well known for its binder system as a pivotal organization tool for secondary students, yet organizational thought is an equally important skill for college-bound students. One area where this skill is put to twice-weekly use is on the tutorial request form. In the 'critical thinking box' on the form, students graphically represent their understanding of an academic topic, showing what they know as another display of organizational skill.

Reading. Like writing, testing into reading at a college-level is required if students are to bypass noncredit bearing courses. Reading is a complex and nuanced skill that students develop — from decoding to fluency to expertise (The Edvocate, 2019) — until they are “mature readers [who] have the combination of reading skills, habits, and dispositions required to be engaged and successful in college, career, and life” (Thomas et al., 2018, p. 729).

To support reading as a core function of learning, AVID teachers employ a three-phase critical reading process: activate, engage, extend (Allen et al., 2019, p. 6). In the *activate* phase, teachers and students determine how an expert in that subject would approach the material and then attempt to ‘read like an expert’ by adapting that lens. In the *engage* phase, students mark the text by dividing it into sections, writing questions in the margin, and circling key academic vocabulary they must define. They are asked to visualize the text, sometimes drawing diagrams or images to support their understanding. In the *extend* phase, students move beyond the text to complete a related assignment, employing one or more of the four academic thinking skills: apply, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize. Through this active reading process, students are able to access rigorous content and take meaning from complex texts.

Opportunity Knowledge: Advancing College Preparedness, Building Career Knowledge. Opportunity Knowledge is developed as “students research opportunities, set goals, make choices that support their long-term aspirations, and successfully navigate transitions to the next level” (AVID Center, 2019e).

Supporting Theory: Social Cognitive Theory. Social cognitive theory states that people’s lives are shaped by personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants, also

known as the triadic codetermination process of causation (Bandura, 1986). In other words, “human functioning is a product of intrapersonal influences, the behavior individuals engage in, and the environmental forces that impinge on them” (Bandura, 2018, p. 130).

The three agentic properties of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001) are forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness. Forethought is the act of planning, setting goals, and determining a future that adapts present behavior. Using forethought, a student can set an intention to achieve a goal heretofore unattained, such as attending college. Self-reactiveness leads people to monitor their behavior against the goals they set for themselves in the way that students use assessments and grade reports to measure their progress. Self-reflectiveness is applied metacognition, a thorough comparison of plans to progress that allows for positive course corrections; “through reflective self-consciousness, people evaluate their motivation, values, and the meaning of their life pursuits” (Bandura, 2001, p. 10).

College Knowledge. First generation college students face specific challenges in terms of college access related to their cultural capital. Cultural capital, first defined by Bourdieu (1986) and acquired through Rigorous Academic Preparedness, consists of the knowledge and opportunities that are passed from one generation to another. Lacking knowledge about college can be detrimental to those students wishing to pursue a postsecondary education; unless those students are in an AVID school.

In AVID schools, students begin to learn about the college-going process as early as elementary school. In order to develop a “college-going culture” (AVID Center, 2020a, para. 2) kindergarten classes each adopt a different college, learning the fight song and sporting their school colors on spirit days. They also learn academic habits, communication, and self-

advocacy skills “in an age-appropriate way” (para. 1) in order to close the opportunity gap “before it begins” (para. 2). There is a sense of urgency to AVID’s mission because, as far as the data are concerned, there is not a moment to lose:

Nationally, only 32% of students in the Class of 2001 were found to be college ready, with significantly lower rates for black and Hispanic students. This suggests that the main reason these groups are underrepresented in college admissions is that they are not acquiring college-ready skills in the K-12 system, rather than inadequate financial aid or affirmative action policies. (Greene & Forster, 2003, p. 1)

In AVID, all the “college knowledge” (Venezia & Jaeger, 2013) that students need to be successful is incorporated into the curriculum, including the skills listed in Table 4 that are often found lacking in first generation college students. Each of these potential barriers are addressed in the AVID elective through college trips, guest speakers, family workshops, and daily lesson plans. AVID students have shown time and again that given Opportunity Knowledge, they can access, and be successful in, even the most rigorous college setting.

Table 4

Skills Often Found Lacking in First generation College Students

Skill	Reference
Academic vernacular or vocabulary	Conley, 2014
Applying to college	Goyette, 2008
Applying for financial aid	U.S. Department of Education, 2017
College persistence	Adelman, 2004, 2006; DeAngelo et al., 2011
Critical thinking skills	Kilgo et al., 2018
Researching different types of colleges	Bowen et al., 2009
Rigorous coursework i.e., honors, AP	College Board, 2012
Taking a college entrance exam i.e., ACT or SAT	Toutkoushian et al., 2018
Tracking and maintaining a high GPA	Conley, 2005

Cultural Capital Theory Applied – Community Cultural Wealth. According to more recent educational research, cultural capital refers to the perception of support and encouragement from students’ families and community upon which a student could draw to influence their desire to attend college and to formulate a support system (Nora, 2004). Cultural capital is similarly defined as students’ perception, aspirations, and cultural values related to college choice as they begin college (Cerna et al., 2009).

Yosso (2005) goes further and defines six forms of capital that collectively describe community cultural wealth, and “call[s] into question white middle-class communities as the standard by which all others are judged” (p. 82). Moving away from Bourdieu’s theoretical cultural standard and towards one supported by Critical Race Theory, Yosso proposes that aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital can be used to measure wealth in communities of color. Drawing on the work of dozens of educational researchers as support, she curates definitions for each form of capital. Aspirational capital is “the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers” (p. 77), while navigational capital represents “skills of maneuvering through social institutions” (p. 80). Both aspirational and navigational capital align to Opportunity Knowledge as students “make choices that support their long-term aspirations, and successfully navigate transitions to the next level” (AVID Center, 2019e).

Using the forms of community cultural wealth as a research framework, Huber (2009) found that not only did they apply to the undocumented Latinx students in her study by acknowledging their strengths, but they also “can be used to reframe deficit perspectives of Communities of Color in educational research” (p. 711).

Advancing College Preparedness. Along with AVID, there are two other state and national college preparatory initiatives that are specifically designed to assist first generation and low income students on the path to college: TRIO/Upward Bound, and GEAR UP. These programs offer a structured approach to getting more youth ready for, and into, college.

TRIO. TRIO is a set of three federal programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Special Services for Disadvantaged Students) that started in 1964 when President Johnson signed the Education Opportunity Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Since then, it has turned into a cluster of programs that include support for veterans, students with disabilities, and students of color seeking graduate education as McNair Scholars. TRIO programs are federally funded with yearly awards to states; in 2010 the budget was \$904 million (Roach, 2013). According to the U.S. Department of Education, students who have participated in TRIO's Student Support Services program are "more than three times as likely to earn a bachelor's degree compared with their peers who received a Pell Grant without TRIO services" (Jean, 2011, p. 1).

Upward Bound is perhaps TRIO's best-known program. Its goal is to "increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education" (U.S. Department of Education, 2019, para. 1). Through funding provided to state universities, Upward Bound offers services to high school students who are first generation and come from low income families, or from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. These services include tutoring, academic counseling, mentoring, cultural enrichment activities or trips, and work-study programs. In addition, high school students are offered courses in core subjects in Saturday school and summer stay programs on university campuses. Out of the \$270 million national

budget for Upward Bound, New Mexico received \$2.6 million of which \$480,000 was granted to the University of New Mexico. Nationally there are 810 programs reaching a total of more than 60,000 students (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

In writing about her experiences with the program, one Upward Bound student discussed how the academic courses and tutoring helped her maintain her high school GPA. The summer stay program at a nearby university not only showed her how much she would need to study during her “free time” outside of class, but it also helped her get used to being away from her family and start “relying on residential advisers and administrators to provide guidance” (Graham, 2011, p. 34). Because of the time she spent on a campus, her actual transition to college was less intimidating. Once enrolled in college, she found common ground with other Upward Bound graduates who were “also working at being successful in college” (Graham, 2011, p. 36).

GEAR UP. Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP) is designed to increase the number of low income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP awards six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools (at least 50% of students on free or reduced lunch). In New Mexico, GEAR UP schools serve an entire cohort of students beginning in seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school graduation. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low income students (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

GEAR UP partner schools are expected to promote: (a) information to students and parents (e.g., appropriate information on college preparatory courses, cost of college attendance, financial assistance, and different programs of study), (b) individualized

academic and social support to students (c) parent involvement in education, (d) educational excellence, (e) school reform, and (f) student participation in rigorous courses (Bausmith & France, 2012). There is a high level of fiscal accountability, along with heavy documentation of school wide promotional efforts such as college fairs, inspirational speakers, reading initiatives, and parent nights.

One study involving 173 GEAR UP high schools showed interesting results around PSAT and Advanced Placement testing. With the implementation of the GEAR UP program, participation in these tests increased, but the schools' baseline test scores did not change. This is notable because one might expect a decrease in test scores when "the additional students being assessed are likely not the typical college-going students who are higher achieving and more motivated to go to college" (Bausmith & France, 2012, p. 244). What this indicates is that those students were prepared for the exams, and presumably more prepared for college than students in schools without GEAR UP.

This finding aligns with other studies that suggest that students participating in GEAR UP programs tend to "outperform their peers who do not participate in GEAR UP programs in terms of academic indicators (e.g., GPA, SAT, PSAT)" (Lunceford et al., 2017, p. 187) and that GEAR UP helps to "level the playing field in higher education" (Sanchez et al., 2018, p. 344). In a study comparing AVID and GEAR UP 10th grade students, both groups were found to have high levels of college knowledge, though the AVID students were better academically prepared, perhaps because they enrolled in more advanced courses (Watt et al., 2007). When AVID students also have the support of GEAR UP, they benefit from the best of both programs, especially with respect to their Opportunity Knowledge. This is the case in New Mexico.

GEAR UP serves 11,000 students at 25 schools all over New Mexico (New Mexico Higher Education Department, 2017). The grant typically encompasses a high school and its feeder middle school. A GEAR UP coordinator works at both schools to promote a college-going culture by engaging in all the required elements of the grant including push-in programs to target skill gaps. These programs bring in undergraduate or graduate mentors to provide assistance to teachers by working with students during class instead of after school. By incorporating the mentor, they hope to build community and deliver ‘college knowledge.’

One study asked students to rate the most effective of the GEAR UP elements and the results were that college tours and fairs (at 40% effectiveness), SAT and Regents preparation (at 26%), tutoring (at 27%), and financial aid workshops (at 20%) had the greatest impact on their academic success and college aspirations (Morgan et al., 2015). The students in the study felt that GEAR UP helped to get them through high school, prepared for and on to college, and showed them that adults cared about their future. In fact, one of them was so affected by his participation in GEAR UP he said this in his interview:

GEAR UP kept me out of jail. I wasn’t so tempted to hang out in the streets because I had a place I could call home. It always made me feel like I belonged . . . It helped me grow mentally and emotionally. I have a family in school I can run to at any time.

(Morgan et al., 2015, p. 602)

There are tens of thousands of educational professionals who answer the call to support these deserving students. Dr. Arnold Mitchem, a career administrator and passionate advocate of TRIO programs, called his program directors “proxies for the poor” (Roach, 2013, p.12). Another ardent supporter soberly stated, “It’s hard to pick yourself up by the bootstraps if you have no shoes. Postsecondary education is the only systematic way out of

poverty” (Jean, 2011, p. 2). Perhaps the best example is AVID’s founder, Mary Catherine Swanson. Her creativity, experimentation, and *individual determination* is why AVID exists. The reason it thrives today and supports a million and a half students is because of her ability to both embrace critical feedback, and allow AVID to transform through years of growth in educational best practice and training. It remains the largest nonprofit organization supporting the needs of underrepresented students, alongside its federal partners GEAR UP and TRIO. With their support, first generation college students have what they need to succeed.

Building Career Knowledge. In his foundational work on career development, Super (1980) establishes three major tasks that adolescents must complete in order to attain self-concept: crystallization, specification, and implementation. During crystallization, students are deciding if their career interests involve postsecondary training or postsecondary education.

One international study looked at career preparation of high school students. Their data suggest that many students “have a poorly developed idea about their abilities, career goals, or the characteristics of the job market that awaits them” (Xiao et al., 2018, p. 835), making it difficult to determine which path might fit them best. Yet other studies suggest that the choice is no longer binary: “unlike those receiving the job-training placements of prior reform generations, today’s high school interns are not consigned to a vocational track that steers them away from college” (Murillo et al., 2017, p. 237).

An article from *Education Weekly* states that since the report ‘A Nation at Risk’ was published (Healy, 1984), the education pendulum swung from college and vocation towards a ‘college-for-all’ model (Gewertz, 2011). Now, it is beginning to settle somewhere in the

middle with a rise in career technical education (CTE) as a viable path for many students across the country, according to an article in the Los Angeles Times (Jacoby, 2013). CTE typically involves postsecondary education that can take the form of a certificate or an associate's degree or even a bachelor's degree. A study on the impact of changing high school requirements in Arkansas to include six CTE courses found the following:

[T]he link between CTE course taking and enrollment in college suggests to some degree that these courses may help to strengthen the school-to-college pipeline for many students. Importantly, we also see positive relationships between CTE course taking with employment and wages. (Dougherty et al., 2019, p. 440)

Thus, the perception of vocational education as an inferior track for less academically inclined students is beginning to change into one of applied learning that includes rigorous academic preparation.

In a larger body of work that defines a “New Learning Paradigm,” Kivunja “argues strongly that it is essential that students be explicitly taught the skills of critical thinking and problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, as well as creativity and innovation” (Kivunja, 2015, p. 1). In a comprehensive equation of skills needed for the 21st century [$JR21CS = f(TCS + LIS + CLS + DLS)$], Kivunja combines jobs and academic skills together with metacognition, career and life skills, and digital literacy. From this equation emerges a picture of an adaptable, self-directed leader able to work effective in diverse teams due to their social and cross-cultural skills — a picture of an ideal employee. He laments the lack of necessary curricula to support the development of such skills, yet were Kivunja to analyze the standards taught 6th grade through 12th grade in the AVID elective, he would recognize all the qualities of an AVID graduate.

A careful review of the AVID Anchor Standards, which are set at the 12th grade level, reveals a graduate who has developed the desirable skills set forth by industry and education alike. In particular, the standards related to building career knowledge (see Table 5) are realized through opportunities within the AVID classroom, school, and district. By engaging in the AVID elective curricula over four or even seven years — which includes guest speakers and goal setting — and following the career pathways offered in many comprehensive high schools, AVID students can gain enough exposure to career options supported locally and nationally to make critical decisions about their next steps after high school.

Table 5

AVID Anchor Standards: Opportunity Knowledge Subset

Subset	Standard
Building Career Knowledge	Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills and interests related to career readiness and career selection (OK.BCK.1)
Building Career Knowledge	Apply understanding of potential careers in areas of personal interest to career goals (OK.BCK.2)
Building Career Knowledge	Develop skills and attitudes related to career readiness (OK.BCK.3)
Building Career Knowledge	Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals (OK.BCK.4)

Student Agency: Student Empowerment, Leadership of Others. When “students believe in and activate their own potential, build relationships, persist through obstacles, and exercise their academic, social, emotional, and professional knowledge and skills” they exercise their agency (AVID Center, 2019e).

Supporting Theories: Agentic Perspective of Social Cognitive Theory and Social Capital Theory. There are two supporting theories for Student Agency that act as a

foundational subset of beliefs and skills that students work towards both individually and collectively.

Agentic Perspective of Social Cognitive Theory. Human agency is a founding principle of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). There are three modes of agency within this perspective: individual agency, proxy agency, and collective agency. Individual, or direct personal agency includes “cognitive, motivational, affective and choice processes through which it is exercised to produce given effects” (Bandura, 2001, p. 13). AVID students exercise their personal agency through ‘individual determination’ to succeed. It is the most direct and controlled path of action.

Proxy agency, on the other hand, must be utilized when little or no control over an environment or body of knowledge is to be had. Here the individual must turn to a person or organization that can negotiate access or secure resources on their behalf. First generation students reach their goals by exercising the proxy agency of college access programs like AVID. They rely on the expertise of teachers and counselors to guide them in attaining the necessary knowledge to matriculate into college.

Collective agency is perhaps the most powerful mode as it compounds individuals’ intentions through synergy. Research on teams, systems, and organizations exercising collective agency suggests that a strong belief in their own efficacy produces stronger results and higher levels of perseverance through obstacles (Bandura, 2001). In working cooperatively, groups “pool their knowledge, skills, and resources and act in concert to shape their future” (Bandura 2018, p. 131). Hundreds of thousands of AVID students do this every week in Socratic tutorials, as well as every year as they prepare for college. In this endeavor,

collective agency produces the most visible results as nearly forty thousand college-ready AVID seniors graduate every year.

As a foundation to agency, Bandura originally proposed self-efficacy, the perception of a person's ability to cope with the circumstances of a given situation based on their skills (Bandura, 1977). Perception, or "efficacy expectations," determine "how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences" (p. 194). Self-efficacy is a central belief necessary to enact agency.

Social Capital Theory. Social capital, penultimately defined as "a title of nobility," at first seems ridiculously unattainable for those in social classes with respectively fewer "connections" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243). Yet Bourdieu's full explanation of social capital boils down to a simple maxim: membership in a group provides the benefits of a mutually secured network, enhancing one's capital. Since everyone is a member of a group, regardless of social class, everyone is tied into a network of benefits. Some groups are transformative, igniting "feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship" (p. 249), while others are more transactional, perhaps focusing on the accumulation of economic capital. Though some social capital is inherited and "symbolized by a great name" (p. 250) or title, it can also be acquired through possession of the modern equivalent of 'doctor' or 'executive.' Where cultural capital relies on time and accumulated effort, social capital can be acquired more rapidly, exemplified in the class-diverse success of entertainers, athletes, or millennial CEOs. One caveat to the social capital of a group is its membership's willingness to accept the oversight of an "institutionalized delegation" charged with "expelling or excommunicating embarrassing individuals" (p. 251). This is especially important if the embarrassing individual "exercise[s] authority in the name of the whole group" (p. 252).

Education and Agency. It is difficult to argue with the results of research suggesting that children of educated parents achieve more academically than children with less educated parents (e.g., Burger & Walk, 2016). Even within their own research aiming to suggest otherwise, Burger and Walk’s data showed lower achievement of students with “low-educated” parents, and higher achievement of students with “high-educated” parents (p. 702). However, when it comes to how agency impacts education, the data is not quite so striated. In fact, their data suggests that agency is independently exercised by individual students and not tied to their parents’ educational levels, providing evidence that “children who possessed higher levels of agency displayed better educational performance” (p. 703) and that “child agency can be considered as a resource that benefits children across social classes” (p. 708). Some call this agency grit (Duckworth, 2016), others call it willpower; AVID calls it individual determination. If agency were correlated solely with parent level of education, there would be no AVID.

In the years since grit came to be seen as an educational imperative, some researchers have challenged the notion that students need to get tougher, and — seeing grit as a deficit model — have instead posited its use as a tool for maintaining the socio-political narrative of individualism while masking systemic oppression, including within educational systems (e.g., Webster & Rivers, 2019). The need to navigate educational systems using grit, agency, or individual determination speaks to the very nature of those systems as foundationally biased toward dominant groups. “Grit is an overly simplified answer to entrenched problems, requiring students to adapt to a broken system and failing to engage with the core causes of educational disparities,” argues Tewel (2020, p. 147) to educators who implement deficit pedagogies with “only the best of intentions” (2020, p. 138).

Those opposing the use of grit as a means to blame students for not achieving acknowledge its usefulness as motivation for students who are able to use their own determination to endure hardship. However, they propose that if students were taught to use their collective agency to dismantle — instead of having to navigate — oppressive systems, profound change might be realized. For example, when students of color encounter an “authoritative White narrative” instead of a culturally inclusive curriculum, they could identify the issue and ask for a “meaningful history” to help them understand their own lives (Sleeter & Zaval, 2020, p. 40). This use of agency could benefit both students, educators, and the school system at large.

Agency and Social Capital Applied. Because they thought to apply to a college preparatory program to begin with, AVID students could be said to have greater agency. That initial display of self-efficacy is not enough, however, to carry students through a potential seven years of unwavering focus on achievement, improvement, and preparation for a goal they can scarcely define at the outset. In fact, without self-efficacy, students can become disengaged during the transition from middle school to high school resulting in lower GPAs and attendance (Anderson et al., 2019). To assist in this transition, Anderson et al. advise middle schools to “prioritize the development of personal agency” (p. 205) in their students so that they can continually reinvest in themselves — in their academic possibilities, their goals, and their ability to do what they set their mind to. Pairing that action with Academic Preparedness and Opportunity Knowledge leads the vast majority of AVID seniors, 92.8% on average, into college (AVID Center, 2019).

Agency may also account for the percentage of students who will not remain in AVID, or those who will complete the program and choose a path other than college; on

average, 3% of AVID graduates join the military or attend a technical college (AVID Center, 2015c, 2016b, 2017b, 2018c, 2019f). In other words, the individual choices made when a student exercises their agency, or when that agency pulls them in a familiar direction rather than continuing down an unknown path, are unpredictable. Of course, some of these decisions are made due to lack of academic performance, which could be tied back to a lack of agency, or possibly to social class. However, Chin and Phillips (2004) argue that even children have inherent agency “from their talents to their temperaments,” (p. 201) which allows them to make their own decisions.

AVID works to create a college-going culture in a “family” cohort where students typically loop from grade to grade together with the same teacher. This design is supported by social capital theory, which posits that students’ social networks support them during their transitions from secondary to postsecondary education (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). In alignment with Bandura’s proxy agency, Cerna et al. (2009) define social capital as follows:

The relationships a student has with key figures that may provide them access to resources and knowledge pertinent to college enrollment and degree attainment, specifically the relationships with his or her parents, with high school faculty and staff, with mentors, and with his or her peer groups. (p. 131)

Social and Cultural Capital Applied. Returning to Yosso’s forms of community wealth (2005) from the literature review on Opportunity Knowledge, further alignment can be made between the CCR Framework and social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital as defined in Table 6.

Table 6*Yosso's Forms of Community Cultural Wealth*

Forms of Community Cultural Wealth	Definition	Alignment to AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework
aspirational	"The ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77)	Opportunity Knowledge
navigational	"Skills of maneuvering through social institutions." (p. 80)	Opportunity Knowledge
social	"Networks of people and community resources." (p. 79)	Student Agency
linguistic	"Intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style" (p. 78)	Student Agency
familial	"Those cultural knowledges nurtured among <i>familia</i> (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition" (p. 79)	Student Agency
resistant	"Knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality" (p. 80)	Student Agency

Note. Aspirational and navigational capital are discussed on p. 48.

As an example of this alignment, Liou et al. (2009) interviewed Latinx students at two comprehensive, urban high schools about community cultural wealth, using Yosso's definitions as a framework. Since the schools lacked a structured approach to college readiness, the researchers wondered how and where students were obtaining the essential information they needed to pursue higher education and maintain an aspirational culture. Using their social capital, Latinx students availed themselves of social "high-stakes information networks" (p. 539) established through churches, sports, and community organizations to acquire knowledge and maintain motivation.

One student gained information through social capital from one of his teammate's

parents, stating, “I like their advice because I see they have become successful” (p. 543). A few others found that leaning on the church community had “helped me be a good student” (p. 544) and that the friends at church “keep each other in line,” (p. 544). A strong cultural identity helped some students to invoke resistant capital when facing prejudice in academic settings, such as AP classes. This instance of capital, coined by Liou et al. as “marginalization as motivation concept” (p. 546) was employed by a Latina student when a white student questioned her ability because of her ethnicity. She told him that “he shouldn’t be so stereotypical and that we can be smart, too” (p. 547). This sense of pride was fostered by familial capital, which was reported by many of the students interviewed. One student credited her mother for teaching her about self-advocacy. “She makes a lot of phone calls and asks about the kinds of programs that exist to get me the help with schoolwork and the information I need to get to college” (p. 549) even though her mother did not finish high school herself.

Communities of color in schools that “inequitably structure their access to high-stakes information” (Liou et al., 2009, p. 545) rely on community cultural wealth to steer students towards higher education, but that should not be their only support. AVID implicitly or explicitly addresses most of these forms of capital. For example, AVID makes an explicit connection between purpose-driven behavior and the peer support defined as social capital. AVID’s “philosophical orientation” (Bernhardt, 2013, p. 203) encourages meaningful relationships between students and among their teachers, school personnel, and families. Connecting all of their communities brings the greatest advantages in terms of “facilitating both intellectual and affective growth” (p. 203). Bernhardt further argues that AVID students are provided with “highly valued forms of cultural capital” (p. 206) that “confer both status

and power” (p. 209). He explains that cultural capital develops over time and ultimately changes the way a student thinks and acts, particularly in areas that require navigating school operations through self-advocacy. If the college-going culture of the AVID elective class moves schoolwide, it might broaden the influence of inclusive forms of cultural capital by combatting some negative aspects of peer pressure in high school, for example ‘disidentification’ with academic success for minority males (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009).

Broadening the measurement of cultural capital beyond inherited advantages or time spent acquiring knowledge (Bourdieu, 1986) allows both social and cultural capital theory to account for specific aspects of Student Agency. For example, Cerna et al. (2009) affirm that both social and cultural capital assist in understanding “different aspects of a student’s college experience — namely, access and persistence decisions” (p. 134). Wells (2008) also shows a link between social and cultural capital and persistence. Some of these decisions are influenced by high school peer group interaction. Social and cultural closeness among teenagers can positively influence their college persistence, especially as it propels purpose-driven behavior. For Latino college students, the authors attribute that purpose-driven behavior specifically to community service, but the idea that students continue to exhibit positive behavior because those patterns previously conferred cultural capital with their peers is a revelation in the world of college prep.

Social and cultural capital can also be found in college communities where students are able to take advantage of ties to their home cultures. For example, creating and supporting small study groups that also participate together in cultural activities can strengthen persistence behavior. Even sheer numbers of students can influence college persistence since “Mexican American male students have better odds of receiving their

degree if they are surrounded by more Latina/o students on campus” (Cerna et al., 2009, p. 145). Conversely, one study noted that a ‘dissonance’ between home culture and campus culture can lower degree completion rates for Latino students, as well as that social and cultural isolation can lower performance “regardless of strong academic backgrounds” (Oseguera et al., 2009, p. 34).

Student Empowerment. Teaching others to empower themselves may sound counter-intuitive, yet it was what Paulo Friere spent his life doing. As an educator who saw teaching literacy to others as an act of emancipation and enfranchisement (Stromquist, 2014), his influence on the pedagogy of teaching cannot be underestimated (Fowler, 1998).

Recognizing the contextual richness of students’ lives and viewing their experiences as an asset in their education went against the deficit model of the “banking concept” of education wherein teachers make deposits into students’ empty minds (Friere, 1993, p. 53). Echoing this dismissal of students’ personhood, Darder, in her writing about Friere, concurs:

Students are socialized and conditioned into passive roles that debilitate, and can eventually annul, their sense of social agency within schools. Consequently, the very real and present physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of students are generally ignored or rendered insignificant, which facilitates efforts to obtain their obedience and conformity to the dominant culture of the schooling process. (Darder, 2002, p. 97)

While Freire’s work may seem too political a viewpoint for an apolitical college preparation program, the founding of AVID was an act of audacity in the eyes of some. In 1980, Mary Catherine Swanson was an English teacher at a high-performing public school that was experiencing white flight while integrating their student body under federal scrutiny

(Freedman, 2000). She fought the disapproval of fellow faculty members by establishing an elective class for the low income, students of color, and English language learners who would soon be arriving from all parts of the city. Swanson encountered even more hostility when she insisted on placing her AVID students in honors and AP classes so that they would experience the same college preparatory rigor as their wealthier peers. She received funding to bring in tutors from the nearby University of California, San Diego to work in small groups conducting Socratic tutorials. She pushed her students while supporting them, and 100% of the first AVID class were accepted to four-year colleges. Slowly, over the course of a decade, Swanson won over the faculty and won recognition from the state of California for AVID's success with underrepresented college students. In 2020, AVID celebrated forty years of sending students to college.

AVID teachers now replicate Swanson's work in thousands of schools around the globe. In addition to academics, these teachers work with students to expand their relational capacity, transforming cohorts into families. They get to know their students' families and hold workshops to teach them about the college application process. They help students learn to advocate for their needs with other teachers, counselors and administrators to "self-monitor and seek help when necessary" and "demonstrate self-awareness strategies and skills," which are two of the AVID Anchor Standards in the student empowerment subset (see Appendix B). "Empowerment is a process that we as individuals must willingly and freely undertake for ourselves" (Darder, 2002, p. 110); AVID students spend years developing this ability to exercise their own agency in college and in life.

Leadership of Others. There are multiple models of leadership, for example, instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987), and servant leadership (Greenleaf,

1977; Van Dierendonck, 2011), and even some models addressing followers or learners (Berger, 2012; Drago-Severson, 2007; Kegan, 2000). But these theories are aimed at adults, and despite some crossover, students are still in a developmental phase and need their own leadership styles. When searching under youth leadership, again multiple models are cited: one based in knowledge, affect, and interpersonal relations (Ricketts & Rudd, 2002), and another with an “authenticity framework” based in empathy, trust, and commitment (Whitehead, 2009). The one best aligned to AVID’s standards for leadership of others is Sherif’s (2019) model, which integrates personality development theories with ethics (see Table 7). The literature for this model includes five domains of youth leadership: cognitive, motivational, affective, behavioral, and ethical.

Table 7

AVID Anchor Standards: Student Agency Subset

<u>Subset</u>	<u>Standard</u>
Leadership of Others	Demonstrate integrity and ethical leadership, including online (SA.LO.1)
Leadership of Others	Pursue leadership opportunities and hold leadership positions (SA.LO.2)
Leadership of Others	Manage and resolve conflict with others (SA.LO.3)

AVID students are afforded many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. The best opportunity to build their affective leadership occurs during twice-weekly collaborative tutorials in which students work together in small groups with a tutor to address particular points of confusion which are presented by one group member after another. The role of the tutor can even be played by a peer, adding another opportunity for leadership of others. These tutorials are designed to prepare AVID students to be active participants in, and valuable contributors to, college study groups, and have the added benefit of working on effective leadership within a small group of peers. Students in these groups must be prepared

to be vulnerable and to admit that they do not understand something while yet staying open to new learning. This practice fosters a high relational capacity which the students work on in stages during their years in AVID. They must also address and resolve any conflict in the group in order to engage in productive problem solving. At the close of tutorial, they self-reflect on how they might improve next time.

As a college preparation program, AVID encourages its students to participate in leadership positions within school clubs, organizations, and athletic teams. The list of high school activities that is a staple of college applications is sometimes the driving force behind this recommendation, but the benefits of involvement in a pursuit of passion go far beyond an entry on a form. Involvement in student activities connects to the cognitive, motivational, and behavioral domains of leadership. Cognitively, students define their leadership roles within different clubs or teams. They are motivated to achieve in personal realms of interest, and are behaviorally driven to participate. Volunteering, for example, can impact students as much as the communities they serve. Reflecting on this impact on the participants in a study of youth leadership, Harris and Beckert (2019) elaborate:

Passion for a cause, confidence, and both direct and indirect support from positive networks and mentors played important roles in how [participants] overcame obstacles and demonstrated grit. In addition to having meaningful societal impact, the experiences of leadership emergence prepared our sample for a life of continued engagement. (p. 120)

Ultimately, student leaders find a voice when they have adequate modeling and support, developing into “their own authentic selves” (Owen, 2012, p. 33). Freire called on teachers to “assist students to connect more deeply with their own critical capacities, in order

to explore the world and understand themselves more fully” (Darder, 2002, p. 93). AVID teachers heed this calling, frequently creating new leadership opportunities such as an AVID student site team or student council, classroom roles, and senior/freshmen buddy systems. Through these structures, students learn ethical decision making, communication skills, empathy, and role modeling.

Developing agency through leadership and empowerment serves students in any setting — be it classroom or boardroom, personal or professional, group or individual — allowing them to build social capital in high school, college, and beyond.

Alignment of the Frameworks

After reviewing the full components of both frameworks, aligning the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework) to Tinto’s Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College (1975) and Model for Student Motivation and Persistence (2017) establishes a structural lens through which to understand AVID graduates’ transition into college. The Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID is presented in Appendix F.

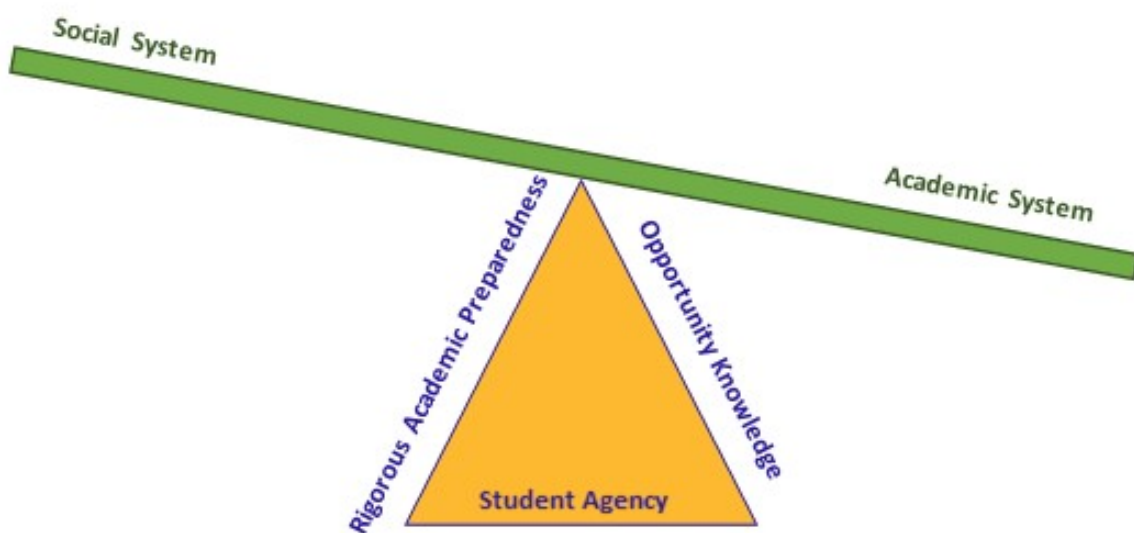
Using their Rigorous Academic Preparedness, students make academic goal commitments through positive grade performance and intellectual development, leading to integration into the Academic System and ultimately to persistence. Opportunity Knowledge includes students’ family background, individual attributes, and pre-college schooling, as well as myriad college and career opportunities to which they are exposed during their time in AVID. These experiences inform their self-efficacy, permitting goal and institutional commitment and persistence. Student Agency encompasses self-efficacy (a student’s perception of their ability to use their skills to cope with new situations) as well as peer and faculty interactions. Through positive interactions, they develop a sense of belonging which

leads to social integration, and allows for institutional commitment and persistence.

Another way to conceptualize this alignment is a representation of the forces at work during AVID graduates' transition into college (see Figure 3). Tinto's Social and Academic Systems, which students must balance to successfully transition into college, are depicted here as opposing ends of a seesaw. The three components of the CCR Framework act as a fulcrum to the seesaw, supporting students so that they can balance the Social and Academic Systems as they transition into college.

Figure 3

AVID's CCR Framework as the Fulcrum to Tinto's Systems Seesaw



Chapter Summary

Tinto's established Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College (1975) serves as the foundation for understanding how AVID graduates transition into college (Appendix C). A summary of his intervening work shows incorporation of race, gender, and ethnicity into the originally class-based concept. When combined with his original schema, Tinto's more recent Model for Student Motivation and Persistence (2017) updates his overall approach to

align with current research in the area of student persistence (Appendix D).

The AVID College and Career Readiness Framework (Appendix A) consists of three components: Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency. These components represent what students need in order to successfully transition to college and career. When AVID's framework is combined with Tinto's conceptual models to form an Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID (Appendix F), it serves as the fulcrum on which AVID graduates balance Tinto's Academic and Social Systems (see Figure 3).

Rigorous Academic Preparedness is acquired when, "students have the academic skills and can successfully complete rigorous college and career preparatory curriculum and experiences" (AVID Center, 2019e). The WICOR skills (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading) are developed in rigorous courses and supported in the AVID elective. These are considered necessary for college preparation (Conley, 2005) and are represented in the literature under corresponding research topics.

Rigorous Academic Preparedness is supported by Bourdieu's cultural capital theory (1986) where capital is attained through the acquisition of knowledge, defined in educational terms as a state of "academic qualification" (p. 248). Additionally, it aligns to Nora's perception of community support and concept of academic self-esteem (2004), allowing students to feel that they "could succeed in the[ir] classes" (p. 187).

Rigorous Academic Preparedness is aligned to Tinto's Academic System, through which the student applies academic skills to access and find success in the Academic System.

Opportunity Knowledge incorporates college preparation and career knowledge, and is exemplified when "students research opportunities, set goals, make choices that support their long-term aspirations, and successfully navigate transitions to the next level" (AVID

Center, 2019e).

Opportunity Knowledge is also supported by social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). Through use of forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness, students set goals and monitor their progress, making necessary adjustments to keep them college bound. Using critical race theory, Yosso (2005) defined additional forms of community cultural wealth, including aspirational and navigational capital, which support a more inclusive definition of cultural capital and help students to reach their long-term goals.

Opportunity Knowledge is aligned to Tinto's Academic System. Opportunity Knowledge represents the sum of the students' exposure to the possibilities of postsecondary education, allowing them to make goal and institutional commitments based on their skills, interests, and experiences (Tinto, 2017).

Student Agency is exercised when "students believe in and activate their own potential, build relationships, persist through obstacles, and exercise their academic, social, emotional, and professional knowledge and skills" (AVID Center, 2019e).

Student Agency is supported in the literature by Bandura's agentic perspective of social cognitive theory (2001) as well as Bourdieu's social capital theory (1986). Three types of agency — individual, proxy, and collective agency — are regularly employed by AVID students. Individual agency is exercised through individual determination; proxy agency is exercised through the AVID teacher and other supportive adults; collective agency is used during AVID tutorials as students "pool their knowledge, skills, and resources and act in concert to shape their future" (Bandura 2018, p. 131).

Collective agency overlies Bourdieu's theory of social capital, which states that membership in a group provides mutual benefits (Bourdieu, 1986). Social and cultural capital

together allow for greater college persistence (Cerna et al., 2009; Wells, 2008) especially when students mix social and academic activities within the same groups of people. Another form of agency, student empowerment, encourages students to value their experiences as an asset and take the necessary action to improve their own lives (Friere, 1993). Once empowered, students may lead others, especially around causes about which they feel passionately (Harris & Beckert, 2019).

Student Agency enables the student to navigate Tinto's Social System, seeking positive peer-group and faculty interactions, and leading to institutional commitment. Individual determination aligns to motivation, and in turn leads to persistence.

The alignment of Tinto's evolved models of college transition and persistence to AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework creates a lens through which to view AVID graduates' transition into college. Solidly grounded in theory, the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID makes it clear that "in addition to providing access to rigorous curriculum, AVID supports students by strengthening academic and social skills that will help prepare them for college" (Watt et al., 2011, p. 123).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

Phenomenology

Phenomenology comes from the Greek word *phaenesthai*, to flare up, to show itself, to appear, and is constructed from *phaino* meaning “to bring to light, to place in brightness, to show itself in itself, the totality of what lies before us in the light of day” (Heidegger, 1977, pp. 74-75). The term is associated with philosophy, education, and qualitative research. As an empirical research method, phenomenology has much to do with sorting, coding, and searching for patterns, though it ideally would “let a phenomenon (lived experience) show itself in the way that it gives itself while living through it” (van Manen, 2017, p. 813). However, since the researcher is probing prior experience, then phenomenology’s aim is to retrospectively bring to our awareness the “living meaning of this lived experience” (p. 813).

I designed the research as a phenomenological study of graduates of AVID from New Mexico. Phenomenological research “describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon” (Creswell, 2013, p. 76). The consciousness of their experience creates their shared reality, both subjectively as individuals and objectively as a group. The purpose of this type of research is to distill the reports of individuals down to a “universal essence” of the common experience, or phenomenon (p. 76). The researcher, through investigation with subjects, allows that essence to reveal itself and to represent the common reality of the lived experience.

Transcendental Phenomenology

This common reality, or essence of the shared experience, is revealed through textural description (the ‘what’ of the experience) and structural description (the ‘how’ of the experience). This is an element of transcendental phenomenology where the researcher

comes to the study with fresh eyes, having “bracketed” herself outside of the study (Creswell, 2013, p. 80). The supposed removal of the researcher’s viewpoint is deemed to allow for the common experience of the subjects to emerge, or at least for the reader to determine if the researcher’s viewpoint has actually been replaced by the subjects’ viewpoint.

The bracketing of the researcher’s viewpoint is known as “epoché,” a term coined by mathematician Edmund Husserl, though it was philosophers such as Kant who developed phenomenology, according to Moustakas (1994). Epoché also comes from Greek, and it means to refrain from judgment. When applied to transcendental phenomenology, it implies that everyday understandings are set aside and “phenomena are revisited, freshly, naively, in a wide open sense, from the vantage point of a pure or transcendental ego” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 33).

Epoché

I am currently a doctoral student at the University of New Mexico. In addition, I worked as an educator in public schools for fifteen years and within AVID for twelve years in the following roles: AVID Elective Teacher, Site Coordinator, Staff Developer, and District Director. I am now a Program Specialist working directly for AVID Center. As an AVID teacher, I graduated five cohorts of high school students. In addition to being the main, and for a few years the only, AVID Elective Teacher on the campus, I was also the Site Coordinator. This means I was involved in every aspect of the program from recruiting and scheduling teachers and students, to training content teachers in AVID strategies, to running fundraisers. I closely advised my own students and served as a general counselor to all AVID students. I was a personal mentor to those students who sought out that level of guidance — about a dozen in total over the years.

Research Questions

I sought to understand how the acquisition of academic skills, the experience of college and career opportunities, and the development of student agency in AVID students helped them to transition into college. My research questions were: 1. *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?* 2. *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

Mixed Methods and Pragmatism

Pragmatism is the philosophical stance that supports mixed methods research as a paradigm. In one of his texts on John Dewey, Hickman (2007) argues that philosophy “employs a set of discipline-specific tools in its attempt to come to terms with lived experience” (p. 24) and that pragmatism is “a closely related family of precise theories of meaning, truth, and inquiry” (p. 35). He is referring to the contributions of Peirce (1878), James (1898), and Dewey (1938) to the experimental nature of pragmatic theory — the focus on the “consequences of inquiry” (Creswell, 2013, p. 28) or the outcomes of research.

According to Creswell, pragmatism applies to mixed methods research because the researcher uses whichever methods of data collection best address the research question(s). The purpose of this flexibility is to “focus on the practical implications of the research” (p. 28). Johnson et al. (2007) concur, “partnering” pragmatism with mixed methods in their definition of the paradigm (p. 129).

In order to assess AVID’s effectiveness in promoting college persistence, as perceived by AVID graduates, I used a mixed methods approach to the research. To address my second research question, I employed a student questionnaire (after students had been in

college at least one quarter) as an inquiry into students' perceptions about the AVID College and Career Readiness Framework. In order to ascertain the lived experience or phenomenological aspects of their transition into college, I conducted individual interviews with one-tenth of the students who completed the survey. Additionally, I surveyed AVID teachers in New Mexico at both the middle and high school levels. The goal of the teachers' questionnaire was to discover what role they played in preparing students for their transition into college.

Study Sites

I conducted outreach to three college campuses in northern New Mexico where AVID students are known to attend: UNM, Santa Fe Community College, and Central New Mexico Community College. Most of the participants graduated from northern New Mexico high schools that have AVID including the following: Albuquerque Public Schools, Bernalillo Public Schools, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Pojoaque Valley School District, and Santa Fe Public Schools. With this many districts, there are hundreds of AVID seniors each year that could potentially have participated in the study once they were in college. They all share the experience of having been in the AVID program regardless of where they graduated.

Sampling and Recruitment

The sample for this study consisted of college students who were in at least their second quarter of college, and who participated in an AVID program at least two years in high school, and perhaps also in middle school. There could have been potentially hundreds of participants, but I received 66 valid surveys, and therefore, I interviewed 6 respondents as measure of 10% of that total. Surveys were invalidated for the following reasons: respondent only attending AVID in middle school years, respondent in AVID less than two years in high

school, respondent graduating in the year 2020 and replying to survey before October 2020 (less than one quarter of college, no persistence data), or an exact duplicate survey response was submitted. The total number of responses received was 94.

During recruiting, I emailed the AVID elective teachers who had graduated seniors in recent years. In order to increase the chances of students responding to solicitations about the study, I asked their AVID teachers to send a text or email introducing me and informing them about my study, including a link to the survey. AVID students are typically close to their AVID teachers and are more apt to pay attention to communication from them. This strategy was somewhat successful, initially yielding 40 valid responses.

In addition, I sought permission from the institutional review boards at the aforementioned colleges and universities to distribute my survey electronically. I submitted my study flyer with the survey link and requested it be released to the undergraduate population. Due to the COVID-19 virus and campus closures, I determined that distributing electronic flyers would be more beneficial than posting physical flyers on a campus. I also made social media posts with the student survey link and notified educators and scholarship administrators in New Mexico; some of them shared the posts, leading to more survey responses.

Data Collection Methods

Graduate Questionnaire. I collected quantitative data via an instrument entitled “AVID Graduates’ College Transition Survey” (see Appendix G for the questionnaire and Appendix H for the codebook). The questions reflected experience with curriculum about the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework to measure its specific components of Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency. This

questionnaire consisted of five sections: General Information, Academic Preparation for College, Student Agency, Opportunity Knowledge for College and Career, and Educational Goals. The variables were measured by multiple choice, short answer, and four-point or five-point Likert-type scale question responses.

General Information. In this first section, participants were asked to give general information including the year and from where they graduated high school. There was only one required question in the questionnaire. It asked them if they were 18 or older and consented to participate in the study.

Also in this section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to report their cultural or ethnicity identity. There were additional questions for those who selected Hispanic/Latino/Spanish or Native American. Here, participants were provided choices and a fill-in response option to offer further details about which subgroups best represent them based on categories used by other researchers at UNM (G. Sanchez, personal communication, July 29, 2019). The purpose of these questions was to address New Mexico's population that contains a mix of people identifying as Hispanic and/or Native American, and details about language usage which helped to inform the survey results. Stratifying the data may help to support the different groups of students that AVID serves here in the Land of Enchantment (as well as nationally were AVID to begin collecting these data). AVID's overall Hispanic student enrollment is 52% (AVID Center, 2019), but in New Mexico it is nearly 79% (AVID Center 2019a). Though the percentage of Native American student participation in AVID is lower at 6% in New Mexico (AVID Center 2019a) and approximately 1% nationally (AVID Center, 2019), the structure of the questions allowed for all forms of Native tribal affiliation and Native language to be considered in the responses.

Academic Preparation. The questions from this section aimed to discover the participants' level of academic preparation in high school. I took the language directly from the AVID Anchor Standards as listed in Appendix B (AVID Center, 2019b), except for the questions on strategies and tutoring services. The responses to questions about Anchor Standards were constructed on a five-point scale: not helpful, somewhat helpful, helpful, really helpful, extremely helpful.

Student Agency. The questions in this section were a blend of AVID Anchor Standards language (on the same five-point scale) and additional questions addressing agency, including personal qualities, how often they are in contact with classmates and teachers, and who influenced their college attendance. This section also contained two open response questions, giving graduates an opportunity to express their experiences with AVID in their own words:

If you were to describe your experience in AVID to someone else, what would you say?

What connection, if any, do you have or did you have to your AVID teacher(s)?

I asked similar questions in the questionnaire for AVID Elective teachers.

Opportunity Knowledge. I used AVID Anchor Standards for the first two question sets of this section, but I based the remaining questions in what is considered 'best practice' for AVID secondary programs (i.e., going on college trips). AVID Elective teachers often serve as college counselors, and I designed the questions here to understand what considerations the students made before enrolling in their selected colleges.

Educational Goals. In this final segment, I sought to learn the aspirational goals and the extent of education the participant was considering completing. Tinto stated that "persons who expect to complete a doctoral program would be viewed as more likely to complete a

four-year degree program than would other persons whose expectations stop at the college level” (Tinto, 1975, p. 93). I asked these last questions to ascertain the participants’ perceived surety that they would complete their current educational program.

Teacher Questionnaire. I offered a separate questionnaire to AVID teachers in New Mexico (See Appendix I for the survey and Appendix J for the codebook). The intent of the survey was to help understand the phenomenology of AVID by including the voices of the educators that have such an impact on their students. I emailed the teacher survey link to New Mexico AVID teachers registered on the MyAVID website, which is required of all teachers who receive training. The responses came from thirty-seven middle and high school teachers.

General Information. This section was similar to the student survey, with a few additional questions about whether they grew up in New Mexico. These questions were meant to see how similar the AVID teachers were to their AVID students.

Educational and Professional Information. This section gathered information about colleges attended, years teaching, years teaching AVID, other subjects taught, and educational goals. The intent of these questions was to see if there were any demographic patterns to educators who were selected to teach AVID.

AVID Elective and Professional Learning. The final section of the survey asked about teachers’ experience teaching the AVID Elective. First, teachers provided information on the types of AVID professional learning they had attended and the grade level they taught — middle or high school. Next, and most importantly, this section included three open-ended questions inquiring about the phenomenon of AVID from their perspective, specifically:

What made you want to teach the AVID Elective?

If you were to describe your experience with AVID to someone else, what would you say?

Do you feel connected to your AVID students/graduates? If so, describe how and why you feel connected to them.

Semi-Structured Interviews. I interviewed approximately one-tenth of the AVID graduate survey respondents. Along with their consent for the interview, I included their consent to link their survey responses to their interview record in order to match specific questions based on their patterns of response. I selected interviewees using a random number generator from the pool of survey respondents who indicated they would like to be interviewed. About half of those contacted did not reply. I conducted interviews one-on-one via an online meeting platform due to safety precautions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The overall intent of the interview was to gain deeper understanding of the shared experience of the AVID graduates, and I relied partially on the survey instrument to inform the questions that would best reveal that essence. I wrote the interview questions (see Appendix K) to answer the research questions, and to uncover the “central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2013, p. 163). The questions followed a design put forth by Oishi (2002) that ‘operationalizes’ the objective of the interview, leading to questions developed from those topics since I was trying to answer the Research Question 1 through the interview (*What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transitioned to college?*).

I first operationalized what I meant by ‘lived experience’ and listed the topics of Tinto’s framework: social and academic integration. Then I added two topics from AVID’s College and Career Readiness Framework: Student Agency and Rigorous Academic Preparedness. From there I developed six structured interview questions to address these four topics. I then added two more questions: one that sought to understand the essence of their experience by asking them to describe AVID in 5-6 words, and the other an open-ended

question asking if they wanted to share anything else with me about the topics we had discussed.

The interview sessions began with the interview questions and I asked them of all participants. I allowed room for natural conversations to develop as well. As the researcher, I wanted to preserve a space to be “empathetically human” (Saldaña, 2008, p. 31) when they were telling their stories, especially since a few of the questions sparked an emotional response. Interviews were audio and video recorded for ease of transcription. Individual interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Creswell cautions the researcher to be aware of the “power asymmetry” (2013, p. 173) between the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewer asks questions designed to elicit responses, but the interviewee may not want to give that information or reveal certain aspects about themselves or their experiences. In addition to race, culture, and gender dynamics, I endeavored to be cognizant of my role as a former high school teacher interviewing former high school students in a program that emphasized the teacher’s sagacity and ability to influence the educational trajectory of the students’ postsecondary years. I made sure to express to participants how valuable their insight was in terms of improving AVID implementation, and that I truly appreciated their time and participation. Additionally, I did not ask follow up questions about information the interviewees intentionally left out of their responses. For example, if one stated they were struggling in college due to several family issues, but did not elaborate, I did not ask them direct questions about those issues. Instead, I allowed them to reveal as much of their personal stories as they saw fit to reveal.

Process of Analysis

Phenomenology

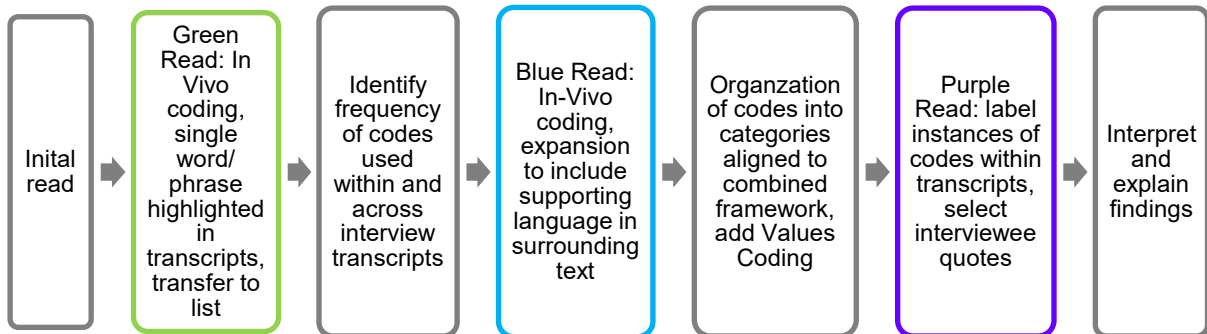
AVID is a phenomenon. Nearly half a million students around the globe are enrolled in the AVID program (AVID Center, 2019), almost 4,000 of them in New Mexico alone (AVID Center, 2019). Through daily participation in the elective class, all AVID students experience two days of tutorials each week, along with binder checks, focused note-taking, and the five WICOR skills. They learn to self-advocate, to inquire, to approach difficult content with a plan and a skill set. Their AVID teachers all attend the same intensive implementation training at AVID summer institutes across the nation. A network of local and regional program managers supports AVID teachers and students by facilitating, encouraging, and ultimately certifying their work. A network of nearly 6,000 AVID schools in a K-12 system all share the mission of “closing the opportunity gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society” (AVID Center, 2020).

Qualitative Analysis

Interviews. Upon the completion of all interviews, I assigned each participant a pseudonym using a random name generator based on culturally appropriate names. I then submitted the video and audio files to an artificial intelligence transcription service (note: names that were visible on the screen during the interview were not visible on the online platform recording). I then reviewed all transcripts against the interview recordings, correcting errors or filling in blanks in the transcript. Next, I coded and labeled the transcripts, following the qualitative data analysis process outlined in Figure 4. Saldaña (2016) states that coding “further manages, filters, highlights, and focuses the salient features of the qualitative data record for generating categories, themes and concepts” (p. 8). In other words, I looked for the essence of their experience. This is part of the phenomenology of AVID.

Figure 4

Qualitative Data Analysis Process



I analyzed the interview transcripts to examine students’ perceptions of what helped them to prepare for and transition into college. I used a combination of Values coding (Saldaña, 2016, p. 7) with labels such as ‘STRUCTURES’ or ‘STUDENT AGENCY’ and In Vivo coding (Creswell, 2013) staying as close to the “exact words” (p. 185) the graduates used to label their experiences (e.g., “RESILIENCE”). I also employed “member checking” (Saldaña, 2008, p. 28) and asked them to assign the label themselves with questions such as, “Do you mean the AVID tutorial process?” and then when the student gave an affirmative response, labeled the response as “TUTORIALS.” I wanted to help the students label their experience while being aware of my subjective viewpoint since “all coding is a judgment call” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 7). See Appendix L, Sample Coded Interview.

During the first round of coding, I conducted an initial read, which means pens down and no marking of the text. Having already reviewed the transcriptions of the interviews, I was adequately familiar with the material, but I still wanted to give myself an opportunity to review it once in its entirety. Then, in what I term the ‘green read,’ I reread, highlighting in green those words or phrases that answer the prompts, and simultaneously gave that phrase an In Vivo code (ex: SKILLS) on a separate piece of green paper. I then compared the pieces

of green paper and gave a tally mark to check the frequency of words or phrases used. At the end of the green read, I analyzed the tally, and those words became the basis of the second round of coding.

With a list of In Vivo codes, I conducted another read of the interviews with a blue highlighter — the ‘blue read.’ I expanded the already highlighted green phases and added phrases while highlighting them in blue. At the end of the blue read, I organized the In Vivo codes into categories and overlaid them with Values coding. I applied these codes as labels in the next round of coding.

During the third and final round of coding, I used a purple highlighter; this was the ‘purple read.’ I read again to place a label in the right margin next to the highlighted text by using the comment feature. Some of the labels were In Vivo codes that one or more students used, such as ‘skills,’ but others were Value codes such as ‘support.’ Additionally during this round, I selected quotes from graduates to support the interpretation of findings for different categories of coding.

I organized the codes into themes and subthemes named for each component of the aligned framework, providing structure to the interpretive coding results of the interview analyses (see Table 8). Because the interview questions (Appendix K) were operationalized from Tinto’s conceptual schema, the themes initially reflected just two categories: academic and social transition. Then I added the three components of the CCR Framework as subthemes. Next, after reviewing the codes, I added two more themes, academic and social transition, and individual determination. As the final step, I organized codes, or elements that supported transition, into categories such as high school and college, and aligned them to the themes and subthemes.

Table 8*Qualitative Themes, Subthemes, and Elements**N=6*

Academic Transition	High School	College
<u>Rigorous Academic Preparedness</u>	grade performance	grade performance
Structures	skill development	intellectual development
	AVID tutorials	study groups/tutoring
	college prep curriculum	office hours
Skills	note-taking	note-taking
	questioning	questioning
	studying/test-prep	studying/test-prep
	time management	time management
	tutorial steps	problem solving
<u>Opportunity Knowledge</u>	classes	courses
	organizations	organizations
	mentorships	jobs
	dual credit	majors
	college visits	graduate programs
Social Transition	High School	College
<u>Student Agency</u>	clubs	clubs
	identity development	identity development
	leadership roles	leadership roles
	relational capacity exercises	building community
	school adjustments	real-world application
	seeking help	seeking help
Academic and Social Transition		
<u>Support</u>	<u>Academic</u>	<u>Social</u>
Peers: in high school	AVID classmates	clubs
	study buddies	friends
Peers: in college	classmates	roommates
	organizations	posse/friends
Adults: in high school	AVID Teacher	AVID Teacher
Adults: in college	professors	AVID Teacher
<u>Money</u>	<u>College Choice</u>	<u>Career Choice</u>
	work study	certificate program
	scholarship	military
	dorms	apartment
	community	society
	graduate school	business
Individual Determination		
<u>Resilience</u>	changing schools	changing majors, changing mindset, changing plans

Open Response Survey Questions. For both the graduate and teacher questionnaires, I coded the open response questions using In-Vivo coding. Words plucked from quotes became codes and then themes, such as ‘FAMILY’, ‘IN TOUCH’, and ‘HELPFUL’. I reported frequencies for each code, as well full quotations from these responses, to support specific theories or discussions in Chapter 4.

Quantitative Analysis

Graduate Questionnaire. I considered all sections of the graduate survey in the results. However, in this chapter I consider the calculations I used to obtain those results, specifically, determining which component of the CCR Framework was deemed most helpful by the graduates. I conducted several calculations in order to arrive at an outcome.

First, I used the assigned points associated with the response category of each increasing level of helpfulness (i.e., ‘0=not helpful’, ‘1=somewhat helpful’, etc.) to determine the highest possible score at each level for the full set of component questions. Then I multiplied the total number of items from each section of the questionnaire addressing the CCR Framework components by the integer representing that level of helpfulness to determine the highest score for that level (see Table 9).

Table 9

Graduates’ Questionnaire: CCR Framework Response Section, Points Calculation

Questionnaire Section	Number of items	0 not helpful	1 somewhat helpful	2 helpful	3 really helpful	4 extremely helpful
Rigorous Academic Preparedness	28	0	28	56	74	112
Student Agency	13	0	13	26	39	52
Opportunity Knowledge	8	0	8	16	24	32

With the range of scores calculated, I computed three new scale variables that included all scores for survey items for that one component (e.g., Rigorous Academic Preparedness) for each respondent so that I could calculate a total score per respondent (i.e., ACADPREPscore, STDTAGNYscore, and OPPKNOWscore). Next, I calculated the frequencies of the participants' responses to the set of component questions, treating the continuous variables (e.g., ACADPREPscore) as a categorical variable to see where the spread of responses lay along the continuum of 0-112, 0-52, and 0-32 respectively. I used the range of scores for the Rigorous Academic Preparedness score variable (see Appendix M) as the set point for the framework, because it had the largest number of questions and the highest reliability score (see Table 10).

Table 10

Graduates' Questionnaire: CCR Framework Response Section, Consolidated Categorical Responses including Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Score

Questionnaire Section	Number of items	0 not helpful-somewhat helpful	1 helpful-extremely helpful	Percent 0 not helpful-somewhat helpful	Percent 1 helpful-extremely helpful	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Score
Rigorous Academic Preparedness Student	28	0-55	56-112	18.2%	74.2%	.980
Agency Opportunity	13	0-25	26-52	15.2%	80.3%	.967
Knowledge	8	0-15	16-32	10.6%	86.4%	.953

After reviewing the output and the spread of scores, I determined that grouping the responses '0=not helpful' through '1=somewhat helpful,' and '2=helpful' through '4=extremely helpful,' and producing a categorical variable (ACADPREPSCOREcoded) would enable me to compare relative helpfulness among the three framework components. I

repeated the creation of categorical variable for Student Agency and Opportunity Knowledge with the same grouping of responses. Finally, I computed Cronbach’s Alpha for each component to test the reliability of the question sets.

I carried out the same process of grouping responses for relative comparison for the ‘helpfulness’ of each of the WICOR skills that make up Rigorous Academic Preparedness. See Table 11 for results.

Table 11

Graduates’ Questionnaire: Academic Preparedness (WICOR) Response Section, Consolidated Categorical Responses including Reliability Score

Questionnaire Section	Number of items	0 not helpful-helpful	1 really helpful-extremely	Percent 0 not helpful-helpful	Percent 1 really helpful-extremely	Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Score
Writing, <i>n</i> =65	4	0-8	9-16	33.3	65.2	.899
Inquiry, <i>n</i> =65	6	0-12	13-24	30.3	68.2	.929
Collaboration, <i>n</i> =65	9	0-18	19-36	24.2	74.2	.953
Organization, <i>n</i> =64	5	0-10	11-20	18.2	78.8	.940
Reading, <i>n</i> =64	4	0-8	9-16	28.8	68.2	.944

I discuss the relative helpfulness of each of the framework’s components and each of the WICOR components in Chapter 4.

Teacher Survey. This instrument required only the calculation of the descriptive statistics. The survey results and analysis are presented in Chapter 4.

Validity

Creswell, in his chapter about standards of validation asks us to consider, “Is the account valid, and by whose standards?” (2013, p. 342). Validity, which is an accepted concept in quantitative analysis, is not always afforded the same standing in qualitative analysis. Creswell presents several ‘options’ to consider based on how other experienced researchers have defined validation for themselves. Some eschew the term all together, while

others add qualifiers in front of the word (e.g., voluptuous validation) (p. 247).

As a novice researcher, I can only assume that my definition of validity will develop over time. My instinct is to answer Creswell's question with corroboration. The account is valid if I hear similar stories from AVID graduates, if themes of their shared experience (the 'essence' of AVID) emerge. This stance seems to align most closely to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) list of synonyms: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability (p. 244). Even with a small response rate, the narrative responses of the participants describing a shared experience are nonetheless valid.

Another answer to Creswell's question would involve data triangulation. Because I used mixed methods, I had the opportunity to collect survey response data from the same people I interviewed, allowing me to "shed light on a theme or perspective" (2013, p. 251). Creswell goes on to say that using multiple data sources to "document a code or theme...provide[s] validity" to research findings (p. 251).

In terms of the study questionnaires, because I used my own questions my questionnaires were not independently validated. I conducted cognitive interviews with AVID graduates who were not participating in the study to get feedback and to recalibrate the instrument. I especially focused on how participants used "retrieval from memory of relevant information" (Willis, 1999, p. 2) in responding to the questionnaire since the majority of the survey questions requires them to do this. I did not attempt to calibrate the teacher questionnaire.

Reliability

In terms of reliability, Creswell (2013) offers the intercoder agreement process where a team of researchers aim to attain 80% agreement on codes and themes. Since I coded

“solo,” as Saldaña discusses (2008, p. 28), my reliability metric revolved around high quality audio and video recordings of interviews.

Creswell also specifically addresses the evaluation of phenomenological research by listing standard questions posed by himself (2013, p. 260) and Polkinghorne (1989). Two of those questions need to be considered under the guise of limitations. First, Polkinghorne asks, “Did the interviewer influence the contents of the participants’ descriptions in such a way that the descriptions do not truly reflect the participants’ actual experience?” (p. 259). This question addresses my ability to take off my ‘teacher hat’ and fully embody the role of a researcher by not filling in the blanks for participants or offering my words in place of theirs. This is part of the reason why I did not interview my own graduates for this study; the potential to unduly influence their descriptions was too great. Instead, I employed the inquiry stance of the researcher.

Secondly, Creswell poses, “Is the author reflexive throughout the study?” (p. 260). Here, he is referring to “the concept of reflexivity in which the writer is conscious of the biases, values, and experiences that he or she brings to a qualitative research study” (p. 216). The ability to write reflexively is connected to the bracketing of oneself at the start of the research. I feel confident that my study of psychology played a significant part in my ability to set myself within the context of the work I have personally done with AVID and the phenomenon of AVID as a national college preparation system.

For the questionnaire’s reliability, I estimated Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient, a “correlational measure of the reliability or consistency of the items in a scale” (Vogt, 2007, p. 90) to ensure that the items measured aspects of the same topic and that it was appropriate to add up items for an overall rating scale. The reliability scores for the CCR Framework

survey items, as shown in Table 10, were extremely high (.980, .967, and .953) indicating a high degree of reliability.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to better understand the AVID graduates' perceptions of the impact that AVID had on them as underrepresented students in New Mexico as they transitioned into college. Phenomenology is the empirical research philosophy employed in this mixed-methods approach to discovering the 'essence' of AVID.

I recruited graduates and teachers from AVID programs in New Mexico using a variety of communications. A sample of 66 students submitted valid responses to a survey instrument (Appendix G) designed to answer Research Question 2: *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

I interviewed six graduates, equal to ten percent of the survey respondents, using an operationalized set of interview questions about their academic and social transition into college (see Appendix K). I operationalized these questions to answer Research Question 1: *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?* I coded the interview responses using a mixture of Values (Saldaña, 2016) and InVivo coding and organized them into themes and subthemes supported by elements of transition (see Table 8). A sample coded interview appears in Appendix L.

I designed a separate questionnaire for AVID teachers (Appendix I) to support the exploration of Research Question 1 and to understand how the teacher influences the students' perception of AVID.

The data I gathered from questionnaires and interviews with AVID graduates and teachers identified the most helpful parts of their experiences with college preparation skills, developing their own agency, and capitalizing on the college and career opportunities AVID afforded them. I align these perceptions to the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework and present them in the next chapter. Using the results, I suggest adjustments to curriculum to improve the shared experience for future AVID students in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The problem of college persistence is resolved with a successful transition into college both in terms of students' social and academic lives, according to Tinto's model (Tinto, 1975). Students' ability to navigate those transitions is supported by their common experiences of AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency). The Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID (Appendix F) is the construct I use to consider my two research questions. I analyzed qualitative results from interviews and quantitative results from the graduate and teacher questionnaires.

Results: Qualitative and Quantitative

Qualitative Results - Research Question 1 *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?*

First, I discuss Research Question 1 through qualitative data. I consider the results of semi-structured interviews with AVID graduates through the analysis of common themes representing the phenomenological essence of AVID. The six graduates I interviewed represent a ten percent sample of the sixty-six survey responses I received from New Mexico AVID graduates. As common themes emerged, I coded them using a mixture of In Vivo and Values coding. I use excerpts from the interviews to support themes and subthemes, which are the results of the analysis.

Qualitative Data Results: Description of Participants

I randomly selected ten percent of survey respondents to be interviewed. Of the six selected, four identified as female and two identified as male. Five self-identified as Hispanic or Latino, and one as Asian. Their pseudonyms are Antonio, Cristina, Marta, Palash,

Stephanie, and Valentina (see Table 12). All except Cristina were considered first generation college students, though her parent attended college in another country and was unfamiliar with the process in the United States. All graduates were in AVID at least two years while attending public high schools in New Mexico, except for Cristina who attended in another state. At the time of the interview, Marta, Palash, Stephanie, and Valentina were enrolled in their sophomore year of college or beyond, Antonio had completed a certificate program, and Cristina was in a doctoral program.

Table 12

Graduates: Descriptive Statistics of Interviewed AVID Graduates

Name (pseudonym)	Self-ID Gender	Self-ID Ethnicity	First Generation	Years in AVID	Years Since H.S. Grad	Type of College
Antonio	M	Hispanic	Yes	4	4	public, in-state, 2-year
Cristina	F	Mexicana	No	3	14	public, out-of-state, 4-year
Marta	F	Latina	Yes	4	3	public, in-state, 4-year
Palash	M	Asian	Yes	2	1	public, out-of-state, 4-year
Stephanie	F	Hispanic, Mexican, Latina	Yes	2	1	private, out-of-state, 4-year
Valentina	F	Hispanic	Yes	4	4	public, in-state, 4-year

Common Themes: The Essence of AVID

In phenomenological studies, the ‘essence’ of a phenomenon is “constructed” from the “textural descriptions of the experience” of a group of people who share a lived experience (Moustakas, 1994, pp. 118-119). I clustered responses to the research questions

into themes, which I integrated into the overall structure of the phenomenon, in this case the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID (Appendix F).

I operationalized interview questions (see Appendix K) to reflect both the aligned framework and Research Question 1: *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?* I organized themes that emerged from analysis of the interview transcripts into themes and subthemes (see Table 13). Themes appear bolded in the table; subthemes are underlined. There are three themes in support of Tinto's college transition framework: Academic Transition, Social Transition, Social and Academic Transition. Under Academic Transition are two subthemes: Rigorous Academic Preparedness (with elements of structures and skills), and Opportunity Knowledge. The subtheme Student Agency appears under Social Transition. Support and Money are subthemes for Social and Academic Transition. One theme, Individual Determination supports AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework and contains the subtheme of Resilience.

Table 13 lists all themes extracted from the analysis of the interview transcripts. Some of the themes have counterparts in high school and college, such as AVID tutorials and college study groups. Others, such as the skill of note-taking, are learned in high school and expanded upon in college. All themes, subthemes, and elements played a role in the graduates' ability to attain success in college.

Table 13

Qualitative Themes, Subthemes, and Elements
n=6

Academic Transition	High School	College
<u>Rigorous Academic Preparedness</u>	grade performance skill development	grade performance intellectual development
Structures	AVID tutorials college prep curriculum	study groups/tutoring office hours
Skills	note-taking questioning studying/test-prep time management tutorial steps	note-taking questioning studying/test-prep time management problem solving
<u>Opportunity Knowledge</u>	classes organizations mentorships dual credit college visits	courses organizations jobs majors graduate programs
Social Transition	High School	College
<u>Student Agency</u>	clubs identity development leadership roles relational capacity exercises school adjustments seeking help	clubs identity development leadership roles building community real-world application seeking help
Academic and Social Transition		
<u>Support</u>	<u>Academic</u>	<u>Social</u>
Adults: in high school	AVID Teacher	AVID Teacher
Adults: in college	professors	AVID Teacher
Peers: in high school	AVID classmates study buddies	clubs friends
Peers: in college	classmates organizations	roommates posse/friends
<u>Money</u>	<u>College Choice</u>	<u>Career Choice</u>
	work study scholarship dorms community graduate school	certificate program military apartment society business
Individual Determination		
<u>Resilience</u>	changing schools	changing majors, changing mindset, changing plans

Interview Question Response Themes. Each of the graduates' stories is an example of a different thematic transition into college. As common themes experienced by most graduates are presented and analyzed in exploration of the phenomenological 'essence' of the AVID experience, each graduate is presented with corresponding evidence of their particular themes of transition into college (see Table 14).

Table 14

Themes Exemplified by AVID Graduates

Theme	Name
Academic Transition	Cristina
Opportunity Knowledge	Stephanie
Social Transition	Marta
Student Agency	Valentina
Academic and Social Transition	Palash
Money	Antonio
Individual Determination	All

Academic Transition Theme. Academic transition consists of grade performance and intellectual development (Tinto, 1975). For these AVID graduates, their academic transition was supported by the themes of Rigorous Academic Preparedness in high school and college, including the sub themes of structures and skills, and Opportunity Knowledge.

Rigorous Academic Preparedness Subtheme: Intellectual Development. Intellectual development is indicated by the student's grasp of the norms of academia, allowing them to step back and assess their place in it. Graduates reported intellectual development in academic areas, generally, but not always, related to their major field of study. Antonio had expected to encounter typical pencil-and-paper exams in his certificate program but reported being initially caught off guard by the nature of the hands-on mechanical tests. The practical nature of showing an instructor the specific parts of a truck was a new learning for him. "I got used to it after the first couple weeks," he stated, assuredly.

Palash selected the most suitable major for his interests and skills having already prepared to concentrate in the sciences in high school by taking dual enrollment courses.

Despite the rigorous nature of his studies, he clearly thrived on the content itself.

I decided to major in chemical engineering. Right now, I've taken three semesters of chemical engineering classes. I love every single bit of it. There's a lot of people, like, I've seen people dropping out of chemical engineering, but I absolutely love that subject — like all aspects of flow rate, volumetric, everything engineering related with chemical — I love that. I feel like the teachers here have made me realize [sic] that I enjoyed this class[es].

Valentina found a new major part-way through college once her intended field failed to engage her. This new direction sparked a passion that put her on a path to a career.

I'm doing secondary education. I'm currently in my fifth year, so I'll be graduating in May. I'm student teaching right now...I was originally a criminology major; didn't like it, wasn't a big fan. And so, I said, "I guess I'll go look into teaching because it's something else that I could be passionate about." And so, I'm going for secondary education with a concentration in language arts.

Marta made a leap forward in her intellectual development once she left high school and found an academic field that spoke to her interest in community-oriented work.

I didn't have a similar experience in high school because I felt like it was just sort of like graduating — you know, getting to graduation. It was never...there's no courses that respond with my current [social work] major in high school, obviously, so it, like, I wasn't expecting that type of thrill for knowledge. In the past, I feel like I was just sort of trying to pass and succeed and do well, and I wasn't really learning and

enjoying what I was doing. So, getting to college and taking courses that I really did start to enjoy has been a major factor of why I continue to stay.

Structures. All graduates credited a variety of supports received in high school and college for their successful transitions into a new academic environment. They discussed AVID tutorials, a twice-weekly structure in the AVID classroom, as the natural predecessor of college study groups, considered by most as “an imperative part” of clarifying or affirming content knowledge. Some accessed tutorial sections with a teaching assistant or a campus center for one-on-one tutoring, especially in difficult subjects (e.g., engineering). One graduate worked as an AVID tutor in a local high school, continuing to incorporate the AVID tutorial process into her own studies as well.

The college preparatory curriculum in AVID was crucial to the success of all six graduates. Like many first generation college students, most stated they had no knowledge of what was involved in applying to college (Goyette, 2008), including taking college entrance exams (Toutkoushian et al., 2018), completing the FAFSA (U.S. Department of Education, 2017), or participating in extra-curricular activities for “more stuff to add to [the] college essay.” Several cited the 10th grade AVID college research project as a pivotal aid in establishing college as a real possibility and “not such a faraway dream.”

All students took advantage of professors’ office hours. One of Valentina’s professors made it mandatory to attend, which helped her to cement a connection to both the professor and the subject, as well as making the process less intimidating since she ended up having three more classes with that same professor. Stephanie went specifically because her AVID teacher told her to take advantage of every opportunity offered on campus. Antonio scheduled extra practice sessions with his instructor to improve his driving skills. Marta

attended professors' office hours "quite often" as well as accessing campus tutoring services. For Cristina, office hours made an impact on her mindset about the academic and the social sides of college:

I think my first year I was always too afraid to go into office hours. But towards the end of the first year, I kind of got a little more courage to meet my professors — who were like uh, amazing! Like they know everything, and I know zero, so it felt weird to be like, "So, you said this thing in class. What does that mean?" And I think that process of like starting to engage more in my academics has really formed the way that I approached academics later too, in getting engaged and making friends and like friend-colleagues, if that makes sense.

The term "friend-colleagues" perfectly demonstrates why the theme 'support from peers' falls under both social and academic transition into college. Structures such as study groups and office hours allow space for a blend of social and academic conversations to develop, helping students to fully integrate into college life (Tinto, 1987).

Skills. Note-taking was by far the most discussed skill learned in AVID with a total of twenty-five mentions in the graduate interviews. Revisiting the information found in class notes, in whatever format it is written, helps to make that knowledge "permanent instead of just fleeting" (Pauk & Owens, 2014, p. 279). Internalizing the skill of note-taking is a goal for AVID students, one that Valentina fully embraced in high school and in college:

Note-taking has always been my favorite thing in AVID just because it helps you look at it in so many different types, like your notes, in a lot of different ways - direct questionings and like when you highlight - it gives you so much like tips on how to take notes [for] your hour-long lectures. You're not just writing every little thing that

they're saying. You can write just what's most important, and you can go back to it and reread your notes. And you're like, "Oh, yeah. I remember what's going on."

Other skills cited by the students are an integral part of note-taking: questioning, test-prep, and tutorial steps. Annotating notes with questions is an expectation of even the youngest AVID students. They pair questions with information within the notes, as well as between the lines, so that they are thinking through the full scope of what they wrote on the page. This questioning technique was originally designed as test-prep to predict what the teacher might ask on an assessment. Antonio used his notes to his full advantage in his commercial driver's license (CDL) certificate program:

But with AVID per se, the notes — learning how to take Cornell notes properly — that helped significantly when I got to CDL school because there are so many tests to take when doing that... because all the teachers taught everything in those tests. But the MVD, they actually allow the usage of notes if you have them. So, that really enabled me to pass the test the first time around and get the permit as quick as I could.

Written and verbal questioning is also a critical component of the tutorial process as students support each other to resolve their points of confusion from their content classes. The link between questioning and thinking is based in research (Elder & Paul, 2004) and supported through Costa's Levels of Thinking and Questioning (Appendix E). Other questioning supports, such as lists of academic task verbs and partial sentence stems, are offered to students to help them learn how to ask targeted questions at all levels, from discovering basic information to challenging preconceived notions.

The Tutorial Request Form (TRF) itself is an inquiry-based document that requires

students to funnel an initial question from class into a tailored question they write and bring to tutorial. This inquiry process of narrowing down where they are actually confused serves them well when encountering rigorous curriculum. It also internalizes the act of questioning, as Palash describes.

The TRF, I think that has also helped us and helped me a bit because I try to organize everything I want to write down, like, what my question is. If I'm studying at night by myself, if I don't know something, I will write those down and write why I'm confused. And then when I go study with my friends, I'll be like, "Hey, I don't understand this. Can you explain to me why this is? What's happening here?" I got that habit from AVID. Then here in college now, I'm not afraid to ask someone if I don't know what I'm doing...I can ask my friend. I can ask the tutor. I can ask the teacher — personally email them and ask them why — like, "Can you help me figure it out?"

Another skill that students reported using in college is also connected to tutorials: the use of problem-solving steps. When a tutorial group has resolved a point of confusion for one of the group members, they go back and record the generalized steps they took to complete the problem. Keeping the steps general (for example, 'isolate the variable' instead of 'subtract 3 from each side'), helps the student use those steps again to solve a similar problem. The useful application of this skill in math and science courses has helped Stephanie to persist in a difficult major:

And then also the steps that we were going over — like the tutorials, like always writing down the steps of what the problem is — that has helped me *so much* in math and my other engineering classes. Doing that has definitely really helped, so much, so

much, I can't stress it enough. Like taking notes is, like writing down the steps of how to solve a problem, is extremely helpful.

Academic Transition Theme: Cristina. Cristina's academic transition to college began as a challenge and ended in triumph. She is the only graduate that had nearly fifteen years in between her high school graduation and her interview. Though she attended high school and college in another state, Cristina was enrolled in a doctoral program in New Mexico. She became part of the study when she received the questionnaire through her graduate school list serve. Though she is not typical of the recruitment group for the study, the essence of her AVID experience helps to show the longevity of the impact of the program.

Because of the distance from high school and college graduation, Cristina had time to fully process her educational experience and AVID's role in it. She was very honest about her struggles in her undergraduate years. Recalling her feelings when she graduated with her bachelor's, she emphatically stated, "I'm done. I'm not doing school ever again." Part of the reason why Cristina felt this strongly was due to her academic transition into college.

It was hard — really, really hard. I didn't know what to expect and I didn't have a major, and so I didn't have like a path that I was on. It felt like I was just kind of thrown into something, and I just did what I thought was right. I think I based a lot of my academic decisions on what my peers were doing, which is not necessarily the best decisions to make. But I definitely struggled until I realized, until I had a defined major and until I had a...something like a goal — an end goal that I was moving towards. My first year, I think I was taking a normal amount of normal classes, so not too many and not too few. And I was doing the work that I thought I needed to be

doing, but I was not doing well, as well as I hoped, academically.

Not only had Cristina done well in high school, and gotten into a prestigious public university, she really enjoyed learning. She welcomed constructive feedback that helped her to improve her skills as she engaged in rigorous courses such as AP. She had felt prepared for college work, but the disconnect between that assumption and where she found herself sophomore year made her consider dropping out. She could not match her skills to those expected by her professors and felt she “didn’t measure up to other people and how they were doing school.”

My second year was really disheartening academic-wise. I was struggling even more so in classes because they were harder. And then social-wise, things turned for the worse, and so I lost a lot of the friends that I had assumed were good friends who I had depended on. And so that year I really — like my grades kept going down, and I wasn't — I didn't quite reach probation status, but I had been a pretty good student in high school, and so having that contrast to high school, I was like, “Maybe I'm just not cut out for college.” And so, I started, like once I realized that the classes were a lot harder, I specifically sought out easier classes because I just didn't think that I could push into them — like really expand my ability to work something out.

This combination of serious academic difficulty and loss of friendship should have cemented Cristina’s educational future if considering only Tinto’s Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College. However, the Aligned Framework Model contains AVID’s individual determination, which Cristina put into action despite thinking that she lacked the “resilience to have faced all of [this] because I had kind of coasted up until college.” Her academic transition truly progressed when, taking some advice from her mother, she found a class that

unexpectedly changed her approach to academics by challenging her thinking.

It happened to be an art class. And so, at that point I was like, “Well, art is different. I've never considered myself an artist, but...” The class I took was very theory-based. I don't understand. I still don't understand how, but it just felt different than, like, paint. It was like, think about these projects and this larger scope of these things. And so, I was like, “Oh! This is really interesting” and something I had never done before. And so, finding the thing that felt that I could do it, but also felt like a challenge, but not in — in a constructive way, not in a challenge way like I have zero clue. It's like... I'm having a hard time, but maybe if I approach it in different ways... I think that was important for me, academically, to stay [in college], is finding that specific thing that helped me kind of click into using my brain more.

Cristina's intellectual development finally found an outlet, in a most unexpected subject. She had rediscovered the academic self-esteem (Nora, 2004) that she had had in high school. With a new mindset, and a new major, Cristina was able to persist. For her, having a goal to focus on, rather than a raft of coursework, helped her to feel motivated. She knew what she wanted; she wanted to finish her degree and be done with school. Her attitude upon graduating was one of resignation.

I did everything I could. I gave it my all, and probably a little bit more because I wanted to do well. But as soon as I was done, I was like, “I've accomplished what I set out to accomplish. I got a degree. It doesn't matter that it's in art. I did it, right?”

With a result like that, how, then, did she come to enroll in a doctoral program a decade later? She had enough time to appreciate her hard-won cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) partly due to a decade's work in the fields of law and education, partly due to

continued support from her AVID teacher, and partly due to reflecting on her intellectual development during her undergraduate experience.

Through those things I realized that I do like education and I do like thinking about things in a deep way. Which led me to return to the idea that like, “Okay, maybe it wasn't academics as a whole; maybe it was just that experience that was hard.”

Now, when graduate school demands start to overwhelm her, and negative thoughts appear, Cristina recognizes them. She is determined to balance her needs and her academics, and this time around, she has the “academic skills and can successfully complete rigorous college and career curriculum” (AVID Center, 2019e). She also has the cultural capital of an undergraduate education. “I survived, and so that means that I could probably do it again, even if it's just as hard.”

Opportunity Knowledge Subtheme. Opportunity Knowledge falls under Academic Transition as it appears on the Academic System’s side of Tinto’s model in the aligned framework. With their Opportunity Knowledge, students “set goals, make choices that support their long-term aspirations, and successfully navigate transitions to the next level” (AVID Center, 2019e). Cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) is also incorporated into Opportunity Knowledge since it includes leadership experiences and personal and social fit on campus (Nora, 2004). Additional theories that support Opportunity Knowledge are Bandura’s social cognitive theory (1986) with the use of goal setting and monitoring one’s behavior and Yosso’s aspirational and navigational capital (2005). Elements within the themes included here are courses, organizations, jobs, college majors, and possible careers.

Students applied their Opportunity Knowledge in both high school and college in myriad ways. Several joined academic organizations that aligned with their interests,

identities, and majors. Palash not only joined a professional organization associated with his major, but he also became its committee head hoping that level of involvement would “boost [his] resume and everything else.” Stephanie also joined a pre-professional organization aligned to her academic major as well as her identity as a woman of color in science.

Antonio, having received a Class A Commercial Driver’s License (CDL), joined a union and secured a job as a school bus driver for two years until he was old enough to obtain the Class B CDL. Marta joined several campus organizations her freshmen year aligned to her interest in social work. Not only did Marta play an active role in these organizations, but her activities on campus also helped her secure a job as a resident advisor, as well as inspiring her to pursue a graduate degree in social work.

Volunteering at [a campus crisis center] has really opened my eyes to how there's an extreme lack of mental health services here in New Mexico, unfortunately. You know, there's a lot of restrictions on who can be a part of a care facility and who can't. There is long lines waiting to have a counselor. A lot of the free services are always backed up. So yeah, I do see quite a need here. And then of course substance abuse is — no one is a stranger to that topic here in New Mexico. It is not unlikely that someone will run across it in their lifetime or know any experience with it. So, I'm really drawn to it. And then, of course, children here in New Mexico — things like poverty and, you know, bad home life, stuff like that like. I'd like to be a part of the solution.

Valentina’s high school AVID teacher recruited her to be an AVID tutor during college which gave her the opportunity to return to her high school and hone her tutorial skills. Her tutoring experiences in different AVID classes showed her how special her own

AVID experience was and the kind of impact the AVID teacher makes on the class. This led her to do some research, which ultimately resulted in her wanting to become an AVID teacher herself:

That's always been something that I've always thought about, too. I did a project on AVID actually, for one my education courses, because I just wanted to learn more about it. Even though I feel like I have knowledge on it, I know knowledge of it for a student version, not a teacher version of it. And so, I got to look into the depths of that. My auntie's a teacher, and so she also has gone to a lot of AVID training, and she speaks highly of it. And then when I'm placed with for student teaching, she's like, "I don't know much about AVID" and things that I have to basically teach myself about a lot of things. Even being an [AVID] tutor what you see like - I don't know, it was just my opinion - but I feel like I had a really great AVID experience. So, seeing how some of these other kids, how much they aren't getting that same education-wise of what AVID is, it's really disheartening because it's such a good course that, if it's done correctly, people can get like the best education out of it, and the best advice out of it.

Valentina intends to use her knowledge of how AVID can and should be taught to "find things that I know can make it run efficiently, and also take the things that didn't work, and if they were good ideas, find ways to make them work in a classroom."

Opportunity Knowledge Subtheme: Stephanie. Stephanie's story exemplifies how Opportunity Knowledge can define, and even accelerate, a student's educational path. Her first high school had a mentorship program where, because of her interest in science, she was paired with an engineer. She learned skills, taught in a summer camp, and completed a

project as an intern. Despite that success, after her sophomore year Stephanie left her charter school for a larger, comprehensive high school, seeking more academic opportunities. In her new high school, she found rigorous classes, extra-curricular activities, AVID, plus other academic benefits her old school was lacking.

I wanted to get a better math education. Plus, they had a lot more AP classes. So, like I took AP Chemistry and AP English and Literature... They give you like a Chromebook; they give you all the sort of stuff to help you succeed. They have a library! Like, we didn't have a library, and so it was really great. And also, I didn't have any idea about NJROTC, but that really helped me stay there and help me succeed... That was also a really great experience, and I feel like I learned a lot from that, and AVID, too. AVID is great.

Once established in her new school, Stephanie began to soak up knowledge, and AVID was her source for information about college. She “really had no idea” what was involved in applying for college, but in AVID class, she started preparing to take the ACT, submitted her FAFSA, and received support writing essays and completing her college applications. As a senior, she went on her first college tour.

I'd only really been to the community college campus, as well as [where my sister went to college], but it was really nice to see that and just getting a tour — I had never been on a college tour before. So, it was really nice just doing more stuff...visiting college campuses really makes us feel like college isn't such a faraway idea. Like, “Hey, there's someone who looks just like you studying in this place.” So, that was really cool and helpful, and also is like a really fun trip, you know, getting to bond with other students.

Then came an opportunity, only open to AVID students, that would solidify her path. A local scholarship organization offered a full ride to first generation college students like herself. A few slots were granted to each area school and the competition was fierce. She applied and was put on a waiting list. In the meantime, she received financial aid packages from other schools and realized that college was financially out of reach. Convinced she had no other options, she found another way to pursue her engineering goals. She decided to join the military.

I think it was like three or five days before the decision day for college and I still had not gotten it. And so, it was a Friday night, and I was about to join the Air Force. So, four days or three days before I enlisted and raised my hand and signed the contract and everything, I got a call from [the scholarship] saying I got it!

Isn't that crazy?! And [my teacher] was always like, she called me right away and she's like, "I told you!" She was like, "You're going to get it. You're going to get it. You just have to wait." And I was like, "I don't believe you, Ms. _____. I should just do something else." But she was right. I waited. And she was like, "I'm so proud of you. I'm so happy!" when she called me; so that was really crazy. She definitely believed in me more than I did. She really helped me so much for [the scholarship], writing for that and other scholarships, so she was really great.

Once in college, Stephanie continued to dive into new opportunities. Along with other AVID graduates, she joined academic organizations in her major to support her understanding of the field and to buoy her spirits.

The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, that has been really big. It's been really nice since I'm a first generation college student. I have the support of other

students. The president of the club is another first generation college student — and just seeing someone who's in the same career path, or is the same age, or also mechanical engineering, and seeing how successful he has been. And seeing how others who are also Hispanics have been going through...

They always host like a bunch of career panels. So, last week, I went to a career panel for Latinas in STEM. I got to hear about them and that's also been really helping me. Because, like, it's really hard; I'm not going to lie. College is really difficult and I'm struggling in my classes. But seeing that they've done it — so, that means I could do it! And that you don't always get it your first try. So, just being able to see that from others who look like me, and who come from the same background as me, is really inspiring me and helps me stay in Engineering because it's a very difficult major and encourages me to continue going and not switch to anything else.

Additionally, Stephanie sought out academic supports such as those available in the learning center on campus: help with time management, test-taking, and tutoring. In short, Stephanie listened to her AVID teachers' advice:

In AVID, they always said to take advantage of every opportunity that you have. So, I did that every, like, almost every day — always going to tutoring for either math or engineering or writing — always taking advantage of that and all the opportunities available.

Stephanie used her aspirational capital (Yosso, 2005) and forethought (Bandura, 1986) to secure a career in engineering even if it meant foregoing college for the military. She used Yosso's concept of navigational capital to move from one school to another in search of better educational opportunities. Additionally, she used self-reactiveness and self-

reflectiveness, parts of Bandura’s social cognitive theory, in joining organizations for Latinas in STEM fields so that she can “support [her] long-term aspirations and successfully navigate transitions to the next level” (AVID Center, 2019e). She is an ideal example of what it looks like when a student embodies Opportunity Knowledge.

Social Transition Theme. Social transition involves interactions with peers and adults on the college campus, which affect the student’s level of institutional commitment (Terenzini et al., 1985). Tinto’s Social System aligns with Student Agency, as students’ social interactions build, and are a result of, students exercising their agency in both social and academic settings. Bourdieu’s social capital (1986) supports institutional commitment through social interactions with peers and adults, as does Nora’s extra-familial cultural capital (2004). Four of Yosso’s (2005) six types of community cultural wealth — social, linguistic, familial, and resistant — might be marshalled to establish a sense of belonging. Finally, Bandura’s three types of agency — individual, proxy, and collective — are all used as students continue to move through the Social System to persist in college.

Social Transition Theme: Marta. Marta began her social transition to college right away during her freshman year. She and her roommate “basically became best friends” and she also became involved in several campus groups.

One organization that I was a part of ... stood for diversity and social justice. We would put on programs in support of students who are identified in some minority sense, I guess. So, anyone who thought that they needed that support was welcomed to join and was welcome to talk. And we've hosted things like seminars where we would talk about — intersectionality was a big important one. And there is also the Women's Resource Center, who we've teamed up with a lot and we did conversations

around stuff in that arena and stuff that we were doing combined together. So, I got a lot of support through that.

Marta attributes a service learning unit taught in AVID to her decision to volunteer on campus.

There was a time in AVID when we did, I think it was the second year, sophomore year, and we did - there was a really big emphasis on volunteer work and through like that volunteer work I had made a lot of friends. And how that sort of transitioned into college is I volunteer currently at a crisis center and that has been a big part of my life. I have made a lot of friendships because of that and it has heavily influenced my social life based on, like, who I hang out with and the type of friends I seek out.

These early supports helped her to find her place on campus. Marta was paired with a mentor in a campus leadership club who would “just help me get through college. They showed me resources on campus.” Eventually her involvement with campus leadership clubs and organizations led to a work study position as a resident advisor. In this leadership role, her job was to build community among residents in campus housing, effectively creating a chance for others to experience their own social transition to college, supporting Tinto’s supposition of the importance of social integration and a sense of belonging (Tinto, 1988).

The on-campus housing life is minimal, but the people who are a part of it seem to really like it. It's mostly underclassmen like freshmen and sophomores...but it's a pretty nice community. I really did enjoy my first two years as an RA and I'm technically like a programmer right now. So, I just put on programs and I don't have residents to attend to which is really nice, especially for my senior year. But yeah, it's really nice. It's a good community to be a part of.

When asked how her social transition had supported her decision to remain in college, Marta gave a response that sums up the whole of her own experience.

I would say my social life has influenced my decision to remain in college because I had grown a lot of connections on campus. You know, I've lived here, and I work here, so a lot of the really good friendships that I have developed have been made because of campus. I would say like 95% of my friendships are because of campus. And so, leaving that would mean leaving all of those friendships and would make me very lonely. So, I decided to, you know - not only decided because of my social life, but it was a part - and building a strong social life and strong connections my first year definitely supported me and helped me through the rest of my college career.

For Marta, a chance to volunteer through a servicing learning project in AVID was a pivotal moment in her career trajectory. She witnessed the power of collective agency, realizing she could “exercise [her] academic, social, emotional, and professional knowledge and skills” (AVID Center, 2019e) as a social worker. Her acquired social and cultural capital will not only benefit her personally, but collectively in the work she will do to support other New Mexicans.

Student Agency Subtheme. Student Agency is a role-specific form of human agency and is the foundation of Bandura's social cognitive theory, which posits that learning happens within a social context (Bandura, 1986). How the student and the college environment interact, along with their past experiences, determines their behavior, and if and how they exercise their agency.

Several students exercised their Student Agency by joining social clubs, particularly those centered around identity. Examples of these included faith groups, clubs for women of

color, and campus leadership associations. Valentina pledged to, and was accepted by, a sorority. Stephanie found comfort through membership in several clubs on a campus where ‘community’ is more than a buzz word.

It was basically a lot of what my AVID teachers were saying, like, join a lot of clubs, join clubs that you identify with. So, that's how I transitioned my social life. And I mean, at first it was hard because I'm so far away from home. But as I joined those clubs and went to the meetings, I got connected with people like me so, it made it a lot more easier [sic].

The relational capacity, or team building, in which all AVID classes engage, aids in the development of Student Agency among AVID graduates. Those activities helped students get to know each other, and more importantly, trust each other since most of them looped with their teachers and the same students all the way through high school. The activities are not designed to necessarily make students into best friends. However, Valentina reported that her class became close and “we were able to just see each other in the classroom or in the hallways and talk.” For Antonio, those exercises helped him to “be a little bit of a more social person” and he even found “those weird, kind of cheesy social things” in college.

Getting your commercial driver's license, there wasn't a lot of 18-year-olds there with me. Most of them were in their late twenties getting their CDL to go be a truck driver. It was kind of hard to interact with some of them, with some of those people, but still they did the same type of activities that we did in AVID [with] the writing down, and the standing up, and saying your name and everything. It's the same thing when you get there, and that's what I really enjoyed.

Palash found his agency in helping others, particularly his AVID classmates. He was recruited into AVID through the National Honor Society, and though he did not fit the profile of a student in the academic middle, he met other AVID criteria, including being an English language learner. Because he was taking dual credit courses at the local university, his content knowledge was advanced and so was his understanding of the college system. His teacher frequently asked him to serve as a tutor during AVID tutorials, as well as asking him to help out during college application workshops.

My teacher would call me a quiet leader. I would not speak up too much, but whenever I'm in my zone, like I'm studying, and someone needs help, I'll just act up and help someone figure something out... Because like I would usually get ahead of everyone and like just do all the SAT stuff, all the application process... We would have these library sessions. I would just go there and just not do anything, and just help everyone around because I've been through the process. [My AVID teacher] would point at me and be like, "Hey, you know what you're doing — just show everyone." She has helped me out... throughout the college process. Also, I have helped her out.

Student Agency Subtheme: Valentina. The way that Valentina represents student agency is through the ability to use her networking skills to literally get work *out* of the work she put *in*. She got hired as an AVID tutor by her former AVID teacher at her old high school after putting in years of twice weekly tutoring herself. She became a coach, also at her former school, after years of participating in sports. Both of those jobs offered financial support for her as a student, but more importantly, they allowed her to establish herself as a leader and mentor in the very community that helped her to develop those leadership skills — a

community where she had extensive familial capital (Yosso, 2005). Exercising her agency proved important to her influential role as a mentor and a tutor.

You always have to be positive with [students] and then at the same time...I was also coaching. Some of the kids were my athletes, so they saw me around more than just tutoring. The kids always knew who I was and I was always around on campus. So, they talked to me like I was very much more so their friend because they knew that I wasn't going to sit there. And I kind of told them how it was, though. It's like, "You have to do your work. You can't do the same things over and over again. You're not going to get anything out of this class if you're going to sit here with a bad attitude the whole time."

She was now able exercise her own proxy agency (Bandura, 1986) for the benefit of those AVID students. Agency also proved important for her role as essentially the lead tutor and a student-teacher in her various AVID classes. She had a certain amount of clout as a former AVID student which yielded her results.

[Some AVID students would] walk over their teachers. They were freshmen and they all thought they knew what they were doing. And it was very hard when we had a substitute come in. And so, I kind of took — not took charge — but I did take charge if we had a substitute in one class to tell them, "We're doing this, we're doing that because that is what we are supposed to do here. That's what we're paid to do. That's what our normal teacher would tell us. So, we need to just stick to our plan and not go off script and let all of these kids hurt us." Because we would go from four tutors at the beginning of the year, we had two by the end. Because they just couldn't handle what the kids were doing. It was just hard. I also feel like I was so close in age with

them, that it was easier for me to connect with them and kind of tell them like, “You need to get it together. We got to get through this. As soon as you're done, you can go back to doing what you were doing.”

More than using her agency just for classroom control, Valentina was flexing her teacher muscles, which she would need in her career as a secondary teacher. At the time of the interview, she had finished tutoring and was doing her student teaching in an AVID school. Though placed with teachers with varying levels of experience (and interest) in AVID, she had already had an excellent role model in her own AVID teacher.

I feel like I always say I’m very influenced by my AVID teacher. I really liked how what he did with us helped us and not just in the curriculum side. We did a lot of team building exercises in our class and we were... all very, very close [even though] we had, like, 40 kids in our AVID class... One thing that always sticks out to me with him is that he always asks us how we are doing rather than - he actually wanted to know. He was never really like, “Okay, you're doing fine. We'll just move on.” It's always like, “Okay, how are you doing?” He got to know us on a very — we also had him for four years, but like even just the first year, he was very just welcoming and open and always wanted to see us succeed. He gave us every opportunity and always told us that he believed in us. So, I think...using those in my every day of teaching, and kind of helping my kids just succeed. And letting them know that I'm advocating for them and I'm in their corner rather than like telling them, “It is what it is.” I want to see them succeed, and I want to be there for them to help them succeed.

Valentina certainly used her Student Agency to build relationships, while believing in and activating her own potential (AVID Center, 2019e). Valentina embodies this definition

of Student Agency and will continue to strengthen her social and familial capital with her future AVID students.

Academic and Social Transition Themes. Some themes, as reported by the graduates, fall under both of academic and social transition, including classroom learning as a component of transition (Tinto, 2000). The academic and social subthemes — support from peers and adults, and money — represent an intersection of experience for students and an intersection of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Academic and Social Transition Themes: Palash. In many ways, Palash had the easiest transition into college, both socially and academically. He excelled academically and was a leader in his social circle, both in his dorm and in his academic department. The ease of his transition had to do with his years-long efforts to prepare for college. Setting himself up for success began during his sophomore year in high school as a new arrival to the United States. He enrolled in rigorous courses, including dual credit, and joined the National Honor Society (NHS). But it seemed as if he was checking off boxes on a list without really connecting to his intentions.

I was like, “I don't know what I'm doing. I'm in this new country. I joined this club and I'm doing these classes. I don't even know why I'm in these classes.

Fortunately, the faculty sponsor for the NHS was also an AVID teacher. She recognized that while Palash was academically motivated with high academic self-esteem (Nora, 2004), he would need guidance to reach his college goals. More importantly, she knew that he needed a community, somewhere to belong. So, she invited him to join AVID.

At first, he struggled to fit in with his peers. He was quiet, did not talk to many other students, and would each lunch alone in the AVID classroom. He recalled, “Junior year I still

wouldn't talk to a lot of people, so I would just go to our classroom during lunch and eat by myself there. Like, I would do that!” he exclaimed, incredulously.

Through the team building exercises and the classroom culture his teacher built, he started to open up. He was thriving academically, which can be a little tough in a class where other students might be struggling, but his expertise gave him a leadership role in tutorials, which was the bridge he needed to connect with his classmates. He exercised his proxy agency to support their learning, and they rewarded him with familial and social agency.

AVID is the only class I had where I genuinely had people who cared about me, and that transition[ed] to college — that I can show people that I care for them and then they care for me. So, that's why I'm doing this interview, because I love AVID so much. It helped me transition from moving to this country, to understanding the culture — everything.

Once he felt at home in high school, fully experiencing extra-familial capital (Nora, 2004), he had no problem transferring those lessons to college. He now knew how to build community, how to join in, how to take a leadership role. In other words, he understood his agency.

Personally, it was very easy for me from going from a U.S. high school to college. I moved to the U.S. in 2016, starting my high school as a sophomore. I learned a lot of things, and I feel like high school made it easier for me to socialize in college. I also had to live in the dorms for my first year and that also really helped me a lot...It was a small dorm called the honors dorm, so I knew everyone; everyone knew me. I was very in closed circle with everyone. So, the transition was not that hard for me.

His academic transition to college went just as smoothly. He had a hiccup his first

year when he selected an extremely rigorous class, but he quickly corrected course by accessing his navigational capital. He used his agency to seek help by attending supplemental instruction sections until he turned his performance around.

Personally, for me it was very easy because I would take a lot of dual credit at University of New Mexico. So, I had that edge out of all other people because I knew how college is going to be like. But also, I think I made a mistake that did not, that was not good for me. In the first semester of college, I decided to take O-Chem...and I really struggled in that.

Then second semester, summer, and right now I'm doing well in all my classes. Like the everything else has been good. I have my grades are good and I still have my scholarship like, and I'm in the Honors College as well. So, I just need to maintain my GPA in order to be an honors college, in order to be in the engineering program the scholarship and everything. Yeah, that's it.

Palash may not have been a typical AVID student in some ways, yet in other ways he represents what a transformative experience being in AVID can be. It gave him a peer group, a mentor, a sense of his own agency, and a place to belong in a new country. It even gave him linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005) as he learned to speak English. It is not surprising that his college transition seemed easy; he had already transitioned through AVID.

Like, just to be honest, AVID was my biggest transition of my life. But, most people join AVID in terms of academics. Mine was for my social, my being in a high school that was new to me. Like for academics, I didn't need AVID, but it was more for just having a community, a sense of community, I believe. That — like, I don't know what else I would have done.

Support Subtheme. Support consists of time spent with, and advice from, peers and adults in high school and college. Some of the support reported by the graduates was more social in nature, and some was more academic. All support was considered beneficial.

Adults in High School and College. Support from adults in high school is often taken for granted. Many students have a plethora of adults to rely on: parents, teachers, coaches, counselors, faith leaders, youth leaders, bosses, mentors, and family members. College has its own support system of adults: professors, deans, physical and mental health directors, center directors, coaches, and librarians. The structures set up to support students, both academically and socially, are intentionally designed to meet their needs, such as one at Stephanie's college.

So, at [my college], they have a lot of support, like a lot of tutoring. They have a learning commons, which is also a place where you can meet with professors or people who are trained to help you like with your time managing skills, or how to get better at test-taking and stuff like that. That has definitely been a great influence to remain there because there's so much support and I know that they're really great at it. Like all my tutors have been super helpful and they've taught me things that I could have probably not picked up in class. So, that just seeing that at [my college] and seeing how they help students is really nice. And also, the professors are great. They're really supportive and you can always ask them anything. You can ask them how your grades are, what they have done in their career. And yeah, that's been a great influence to stay there — just the support and the professors have been really nice and kind.

Time spent in professors' office hours, discussed as an important tool for academic

transition, also had the tendency to form supportive relationships between professors and students. Valentina reported just such an experience.

Office hours have always helped, I think, because it just helps you build that relationship with your professor and getting to know them. They get to know you as well because we only get to see them for so long. I had her for two semesters after that, so a whole year and a half. I really got to know her and she got to know me... if I was really lost I could just talk to my professor. And I feel like AVID has really helped give me confidence in public speaking and talking to my professor. So, I was able to actually put myself forward and out there to not be afraid to go and ask them for help if I needed it.

Palash found support within the “very small and very close” chemical engineering department at his university where “the teachers knows [sic] everyone, the students know each other.” He attributed his affinity for math and science classes not only to the subject matter itself, but to the professors that inspire him. “I love every single bit of it,” he asserted.

Adults in High School and College: AVID Teachers. There was one adult on whom the graduates depended for both academic and social support — their AVID teacher. All graduates reported having a positive, supportive relationship with their AVID teachers. This is not surprising considering that AVID teachers are recruited, just like AVID students, to meet certain criteria, among those to “have the ability to motivate, coach, and counsel students” as well as act as an academician, a collaborator, counselor/college advisor, advocate, communicator, promoter, and change agent (see Appendix N: Characteristics of Successful AVID Teachers).

AVID teachers often loop with their students from year to year, giving them a unique

opportunity to develop relationships with students and have exchanges that are not typical in a one-year course. This builds a culture of continuity for students, as well as one of belonging, as Antonio reflected.

To have that one teacher you have every year that you can go back to at the end of the year and know that you're still going to be in their class next year. That sort of thing really helped me to get through the year — to be with the same people every single year to kind of recap everything — to go through the high school experience together in a way.

Valentina witnessed the dedication of her AVID teacher to her particular cohort. Even after accepting another job at the district-level, he continued to come back to campus to teach them through their senior year. She saw it as a testament to how much he cared for them. “It just has inspired me to want to be a teacher and kind of take that into consideration when I become one,” she said.

Two of the graduates recalled taking refuge in their AVID teacher’s classrooms and recollected how the culture their teachers developed allowed them to feel safe and cared for. Even fifteen years later, Cristina reported the curricular and emotional support she received from her AVID teacher.

I've only mentioned my teacher a little bit, but I think she had a really major role in the way that I saw and approached college. I really wouldn't be able to say exactly how. I know that through the class work that we did together, but also by being like a mentor - not just a teacher, but an actual mentor who cared and listened to me and watched me crying in her classroom a few times. [She] would give me random books that had nothing to do with school, but she's like, “I think you might like this book.

Why don't you read it and like bring it back?" or things like that that were engaging, but not, like, very overtly academic, I guess.

It felt like I had friends who had these long lists of things that they were looking for in college. And I was like, "I just want something simple; like I want to be able to connect." I enjoyed the connection with my AVID teacher so much that I was like, "I need this. This is the thing that I'm looking for in college."

Palash could not speak more highly of his AVID teacher by calling her his "second mom" and "the nicest person ever." He described how she recruited him into AVID from a club she sponsored, and it was clear that he needed the support in order to be college bound.

She's like, "You should join AVID." I was like, "I'm not sure what it is, but I'll look into it." And then I eventually joined AVID. She would talk to me all the time, like, with all my scholarship essays, with college decision — everything. She would just talk to everyone. She was very nice. I would see people from our AVID class who just come to talk to her. If they need to cry, they would cry it out in front of her. Like whatever — everything we did with her. So, we had a special bond with her. I feel like the teacher is the most important part of it. Like if she wasn't there, I probably would have not been in AVID for two years.

Even students with multiple AVID teachers, and therefore limited contact with each one, reported gaining from their relationships. Marta, who had four different AVID teachers, highlighted that "they were all very nice. I did enjoy everyone there." Stephanie, with the least amount of time in AVID *and* two different teachers, still concluded:

AVID was definitely a really great help for me. And, like, talking to Miss _____ and Miss _____ about colleges — they were always there for me: looking over

my general app, my applications, reading my essays, and just having that support really helped me succeed and get into college...Also, hearing about whatever they have to say about their own college experiences makes it seem like not such a faraway dream.

Half the graduates continued to receive social support and academic advice from their AVID teachers even after high school. Palash reported that he texts his AVID teacher and that “she keeps up with me and we talk.” Valentina regularly emails her AVID teacher to report on her progress or to ask a question. She confirmed that any of his former students could reach out to him and that he continually checked in on how they are doing.

We could just email him and be like “Hey, we're really struggling” and he's like, “Okay. Well, you handled this in high school. You can handle it now; it's just on a bigger platform.” So, he was really always supportive of us and just making sure we were okay, and our well-being was okay, rather than just our academic side.

When Valentina herself was really struggling academically, it was her AVID teacher who helped to prop her up.

I've always really liked school. I had a...there's like one time where I had a really hard time in school where I was ready to drop out and just, I didn't really want to do it anymore. And actually, the guy I emailed [was] my AVID teacher. I was like, “I'm really stressed out” and him [sic] and I talked. He's like, “You can do it!”

Cristina's AVID teacher gave them an assignment to name five people they could count on to support them after graduation, and Cristina put her AVID teacher on that list. Of all the names on the list, only her teacher had been a constant support, meeting up with her every few years. When asked if AVID had impacted her decision to continue on in higher

education, she was quick to recall that list and her AVID teacher.

I definitely think it has. I go back to the relationship with my teacher. I think she has been one of my biggest supporters. While I was working after graduation [from] undergrad, we met a number of times and we would just talk about life and the things that I could do, and like the things I was passionate about. She was always very supportive and wanted to continue helping me. It still blows me away that she would — I mean it's been so many years, like almost 15 years since I graduated from high school. She has so many students. Why should she take her time to still talk to me 15 years later? And so, I met with her many times and talked to her about [teaching] and her experiences, what she liked, what she didn't like, how she went about it and like things like that. And so, I think that, for me, would be the biggest push to keep going forward.

Peers in High School: AVID classmates. Peers served as a support for AVID graduates during both high school and college, providing extra-familial cultural capital (Nora, 2004). For some, the friendships they made in the AVID classroom were a part of a larger AVID experience — the AVID Family. The AVID Family, a theme from the literature (Mendiola et al., 2010), is a “phenomenon that results from bonding with AVID peers and teachers” (p. 215). A few of the graduates highlighted this theme in their interviews.

When asked to describe AVID in a few words, Palash replied, “Family. Mom, cuz [sic] I love my AVID teacher. I consider her my second mom. Then, friendship. What else would it be? Understanding. Then, bond.” He went on to describe how his AVID class threw a baby shower for their teacher who was expecting her first baby. She cared so much for them that they wanted to show her care in return.

Valentina echoed the same experience of the AVID family, and having her cousin in the same AVID class made it even more pronounced for her. Not only did she have a cousin in her class, she had several cousins that went to the same high school and then to the same university, expanding even further the concept of the AVID family and expanding her familial capital as well (Yosso, 2005). Many of the friendships she made with her AVID classmates also continued into college as many of them were enrolled in the same university. When asked about the connections she saw between what she did in AVID and her social transition into college, she replied:

Well, obviously the family aspect, like we were saying, just because even the people that like our - my AVID class was very close where I went to school at. And so, like being able to see those people on campuses or like the friendships that I made in there, being able to still build on those relationships even years later. So being able to still see them and talk to them and just catch up or even just like our relationship that we had with our teacher at the time.

Peers in High School and College. Peers also played a role in each graduates' academic and social transition, as well as their persistence. Most experiences with peers were positive, detailing friendships forged in dorms, study groups, and campus clubs. Some friends served two roles: social and academic support, as Palash explained.

One of my friend[s] is like a chemical engineering major as well. We take every classes together and I love studying with a friend — that helps to me and him as well. So, social life is important to be in college — because like education is important, but at the same time you need a break — like once in a while, like in [sic] the weekends. Valentina received academic support within her sorority, as well as from her extended

family. As an element of Greek life, Valentina was assigned study hours as well as ‘study buddies’ to work with — just as she had had in AVID class —to ensure they all kept the required minimum GPA. She also had a pact with her cousins that they would graduate together, and they inspired her to “just keep pushing through.”

As the only graduate far away from family, Stephanie had difficult moments of missing her mom as she transitioned to college life. Fortunately, the type of scholarship she received had some advantages in terms of a support network. Because it was a local scholarship, all recipients were from the same geographic area. Additionally, the scholarship was limited to a handful of partner colleges, in effect creating a college ‘posse’ (Posse Foundation, 2020). A posse is a small group of students from the same high school attending the same partner college, providing social and academic support for each other. A posse ensures you have at least a few people to lean on when homesickness kicks in. Stephanie reported a time when she needed that exact comfort.

Every once in a while, well once because we were really busy, but [my friend] and I made Mexican food. We made food that we're really — that we often eat at home, like home food. So, we made that, and it was really great. So, I know I always have one of them or other people to talk to about my experiences or someone just to relate with, someone who misses home.

A few graduates reported mixed experiences with peers, or a lack of relationships, as impacting their transitions to college. At first, Cristina felt lucky to have several friends from high school attend her same college, creating an incidental posse.

And so, the transition into college wasn't as painful as I imagined because I had, I think there are five of us who had been friends for a while. Maybe not necessarily

close friends, but we knew each other, and so we had each other to lean on. And then having that group of friends, and then being able to like explore outside of that, was really helpful in terms of making friends. And like even if something didn't go right or I was having issues, I could always go back to my friends from high school.

Actually, a couple of them were AVID; one of them was my AVID tutor. So, she and I went to the same school, which I thought was awesome. She was, she's really great. However, those friendships failed to support her later when she could have used them; she almost dropped out as a result of academic and social disappointment.

I went [to that specific college] because I didn't have a lot of other options, but...because of the friendships I made, I realized that it was as good as school as any that I could be in. I lost a lot of friends because of a lot of different social reasons and economic reasons, and so there was a moment where I was thinking of dropping out of school because I didn't have that social support that I had had.

Antonio noted that instead of being reliant on friends, *not* having a social life enabled him to stay engaged with academics and fit a much-needed job into his schedule. Though he stated that he found classmates to socialize with “a little bit here and there,” he mostly “had to restart” since most of his high school friends went to different universities. His postsecondary experience, unique to the group of interviewed graduates, had everything to do with the second subtheme of academic and social transition: money.

Money Subtheme. Recalling that New Mexico is one of the poorest states in the nation (Center for American Progress, 2018), and that currently college expenses are out of reach for many families (Powell & Kerr, 2019), the fact that most graduates reported money as a significant factor in their college decisions is not at all surprising.

Work study, offered through federal financial aid, is “intended to promote college access and persistence for low income students” by making college more affordable for hundreds of thousands of students each year (Scott-Clayton et al., 2017, p. 1). Valentina took advantage of a work study position as an AVID tutor, something Palash was also looking into on his campus since AVID recruits its own graduates to serve as AVID tutors in the school districts surrounding their college campuses.

Marta also had a work study position, but hers offered more than an hourly wage. As a resident advisor, Marta got a work study paycheck and free campus housing. This was a financial boon in more ways than one. First, the cost of room and board at her college was more expensive than in-state tuition, “which is redonkulous [sic]!” she exclaimed. Second, she credited being on campus as enabling her to complete her coursework within four years, which is sometimes a challenge for students living off campus who are more disconnected from the rhythm of campus life in terms of studying, registration, and course selection (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). She had already researched academic stipends with work reciprocity for her graduate degree, as well as selected a master’s program that was “very inexpensive.” Through careful planning, Marta aligned her undergraduate education with a graduate degree and a job waiting on the other side, ensuring she could make a living and embark on a meaningful career.

Unexpectedly, Stephanie received a scholarship at the eleventh-hour that meant the difference between going to college or going to the military. She explained that with two older siblings already in college, and only one parent working, there simply was no money left to support her college plans.

College is just — at the time in my head it just was like, “it's too expensive.” I don't

really have that much money. And I could have gone to the community college, but at least with Air Force I would be able to travel — not like everywhere I would want to, but I would be able to travel — and learn something [by] going immediately into the field that I wanted to learn about. That's what I was thinking. So, when I got the scholarship, I was like, “What?!” It was really crazy. Really, it was really wild. I just couldn't have imagined it.

The college research project that Cristina completed in sophomore year of AVID helped her narrow down all the available options into a “simple” list of “reasonable” qualities.

The school that I thought was the perfect fit for me was one that was in the Midwest. It was a private, liberal arts college...And so, I applied to my dream school, and then because of finances, I couldn't attend.

Cristina's financial situation meant she ended up attending the exact type of college she was trying to avoid: large, public, and in-state. Resigned to going to a college she found less than ideal, she planned to find scholarships and grants during her first year to make up the financial gap need to attend her dream school. As the year progressed, however, she found herself getting more settled in on campus and the idea of transferring “started to slide into the forgotten area.”

Money Subtheme: Antonio. Antonio thought about a range of careers he could have, changing his mind each year while in AVID, contemplating “all the possibilities that I've could possibly want to be.” But when graduation arrived, and his high school friends “went off to universities,” Antonio's options narrowed considerably.

I had a come from a very poor family, so I couldn't afford a lot...There's a lot of things when you graduate and start realizing — because in my specific scenario when

I graduated, I was pretty much booted out of the house. I was forced to get my own apartment and get my own vehicle and start providing for myself.

Prioritizing his immediate need to earn money, Antonio found a community college certificate program that would offer him a trade in a relatively short amount of time. Better still, the cost of the program was fully funded by a state grant. With a work study job, Antonio felt he could support himself while earning his commercial driver's license until "that initial shock of how the world actually works" set in. Though his AVID teacher had introduced a financial literacy unit into the standard curriculum in order to help his students prepare for life after high school, Antonio found himself faced with real problems that he had not anticipated.

It's just simple life things, like when you live in an apartment, there was calculations that I had to make such as whether I did laundry here at the apartment versus at the laundromat - what's faster, what's cheaper? Gas! I never knew you could run through so much gas being an adult. And then also food — food was also a big one, because I think in AVID, financially we planned for like \$200 a month in food. And at the time. I thought that was realistic. But when I moved out in an apartment by myself, I started to realize that was more like \$600 or \$700 a month depending on how much we ate. Because right now, I live in an apartment with three other people to be able to afford rent and everything...Clothes — buying new clothes — because I also didn't realize that we can grow out of our high school clothes. That also caught me off guard when like a couple years ago, I had been living in the apartment for like a year, and all my clothes started to rip and fall apart and things. My mom couldn't help me with anything. She was strapped, too.

The sudden leap into adulthood put Antonio in a difficult financial position for which he was completely unprepared. Not only did he have unexpected expenses, but he was also not fully financially literate, particularly about the dangers of predatory lending.

Like there's a lot more things about debt that I learned outside of AVID that was collections, repossessions. I've made *a lot* of mistakes in my past. I mean, the four years outside of high school so far, I've had one car repo'd. I'm in collections with four other loans, but that's because of bad roommate. I had to keep taking out loans to cover his rent. It was interesting, but there was a lot of things about debt and how it worked that I didn't get. I guess he taught us about credit cards and stuff, but pulling out personal loans, fast loans, payday loans especially, I didn't know could screw me up this bad.

Interestingly, the COVID-19 pandemic helped Antonio to begin recovering his financial losses. Having started a transportation company at just the right time, his service was in high demand due to increased shipping needs. He admitted that, though the pandemic had been “terrifyingly bad,” his business was “blowing up” by receiving many jobs as a result of the pandemic.

In order to attain his goals, Antonio had to realign his aspirational capital to meet his financial needs. He used navigational capital to find a certificate program, and then relied on institutional support (Nora, 2004) for a job and grant funding to cover his tuition. Antonio utilized all of the CCR Framework components by having “the academic skills to successfully complete rigorous college and career preparatory curriculum and experience,” “persist[ing] through obstacles, and exercis[ing] [his] academic, social, emotional, and professional knowledge and skills,” and “mak[ing] choices that support [his] long-term

aspirations, and successfully navigat[ing] transitions to the next level” (AVID Center, 2019e). His unexpected transition highlights how even a relatively short postsecondary education requires the use of a multitude of skills and a variety of capital.

Money was an unexpected theme in the overarching Social and Academic Systems, yet it is a major determining factor in students’ ability to seek a college education at all. The fact that each candidate mentioned money unprompted by any of the interview questions recalls Bourdieu’s original economic definition of cultural capital as labor accumulated over time reproducing or expanding itself with the potential to produce profits (1986, p. 241). Antonio’s postsecondary path may have started and ended with his need to produce profits, but ultimately all AVID graduates aim to have a career supported by their acquisition of knowledge. The expense of that acquisition must fall reasonably within their means, else they risk more capital than they might gain.

Individual Determination Theme. AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. That determination, or grit (Duckworth, 2016), or “resilience” as Cristina called it in her interview, is potentially what sets these students apart from others who might not have persisted in the same difficult situations in which these students found themselves. Whether these students joined AVID because they already possessed determination, or whether AVID developed it, that quality served them all well in their educational pursuits.

Resilience. All participants showed resilience in the face of new academic challenges. Some experienced temporary setbacks when initially faced with the rigorous nature of college courses. Palash felt prepared for college despite selecting a difficult major, but even he “really struggled.” He sought support from peer leaders who had previously taken the same courses and could pass on their “insight” and “questions they had experienced before in

their past classes.” He credits their support, his love of the subject, and the culture of his department which is “very small and very close together” for his persistence. “There’s a good amount of bond there. So, if I love what I’m doing, I’m going to be in college.”

After facing the shock of failing her first college exam, Marta rebounded by putting her AVID strategies to work. She implemented the ‘studying for a week’ protocol where you “retain a little bit more knowledge [each day]” and it worked. She called on those resources again, and on her determination to be the “genuine student” she knew herself to be, during the times when she thought about giving up on her college endeavor.

No one would bat an eye if I decided to leave...Like, no one in my family had graduated from college. So, there wouldn't be any end result of knowing what it felt like to graduate college. So, it would kind of just be like, “Oh well, you didn’t finish and that's fine”...The pressure mostly came from myself, and to having the tools and resources that I learned in high school translate into college really helped me out a tremendous amount. So, I'm very happy that I chose to do it.

Cristina and Valentina both considered dropping out of college until they changed their majors. Unhappy and unfulfilled, they felt disconnected from their courses and did not see much point in continuing down the paths on which they found themselves. Cristina started to feel like maybe college “wasn’t for me” when a mentor stepped in and made all the difference. It was her mother who told her to “just find one course and we’ll figure it out.” A theory-based art class led her to change her mind, and her major. Valentina’s mother also encouraged her by saying, “You're so close to being done that, at this point, don't give up!” It was her AVID teacher, though, who had arguably the biggest impact on Valentina.

He was one of the first people I emailed, and I told him I was changing my major

because he's also, like, a really good reason why I went into the education field...I found courses that I...enjoyed taking. And that semester that I contemplated dropping out, I actually got a 4.0. So, I was very, just, I was impressed with myself, too, because...at the beginning of the semester, you were so ready to be done — like, you didn't want to do anything — and then that semester really just kind of helped push me to keep going forward because I knew that if I don't give up, I'm capable of doing really well...in my academics.

Stephanie first showed resilience in high school when she changed schools to seek better opportunities. She was doing poorly in her classes and could not find the support she needed to succeed. “I knew that if I stayed there, I wouldn't be where I wanted. So, I left.” Her new school had many more opportunities and supports, including AVID which she joined her junior year. Later, she would call on her resilience by giving up her college trajectory in favor of the military when it became clear her family did not have enough money to send all three kids to school.

So, I did a lot of research on what position I would get. I did really good on the ASVAB so that's why I could choose any job that I wanted. So, there is more opportunity than that, and I didn't have to worry about paying. They would pay me to do it.

Once again, when faced with a roadblock, Stephanie worked towards a solution, though fortuitously her full-ride scholarship put her back on the path to college.

For Antonio, it was not until he left high school that he had to call on his resilience to pull him through. While in AVID, he bounced around ideas about what he might like to do in college, yet he had to change tack once he graduated, swapping a college degree for a

certificate program.

My senior year in AVID — the first semester I had a plan, in the last semester I had a plan. But then when I actually graduated, things started happening; it shifted completely... But regardless, I still had to go to college to get certain things, but that was it. AVID really did help me figure out exactly who I wanted to be when I when I grew up, so to speak, but what really solidified what I wanted to be was actually graduating and being out in the real world for a little bit and seeing how weird it is.

But at the same times also seeing how bad of a place it can be if you let it.

Antonio spoke candidly about the loss he experienced: the loss of his home, the loss of his youth, and poignantly for an AVID student, the loss of a world he had expected to be a part of — the college world.

One of the lessons I learned was being an adult is interesting because it's a very bitter world outside of school. Because when you're in school, you're shielded from all this, all the things that are happening in the world and life is pretty much great... I mean, if you go to college, if you go to a university, then you get four more years of, I guess, good stuff. But the initial shock when you first get out of high school, and if you go to a trade or go into the workforce, then that initial shock of how the world actually works, if that makes any sense at all. That's the best way I can describe it.

Life may have taken him by surprise, but Antonio's resilience steered him onto a different path which still allowed him to pursue an education and provide for himself with a steady livelihood. He used his academic skills to achieve success in school and in business.

I started my own transportation company, and since then I've been doing pretty well...the CDL A has really enabled me to do a lot more with the company as

opposed to having nothing... We're still maintaining and everything, still going good with that.

Determination and Agency

Determination alone is not enough to account for the success of AVID students. The high school and college dropout rates in New Mexico raise a question about the role agency plays in persisting in the face of challenge, even when leaving education often leads to greater adversity. Agency, as a partner to determination, can “allow someone to form specific goals as they start to see themselves in a new and improved light” (Kundu, 2020. p. 60). AVID students develop their agency in conjunction with determination, Rigorous Academic Preparedness and acting on their Opportunity Knowledge. In the intersection of all of these structures, skills, and qualities lies the essence of AVID.

The Essence of AVID

I designed one interview question in particular to get at the essence of the AVID experience, asking the graduates to describe AVID in five or six words. The results, seen in Figure 5, create a word cloud where the repeated responses grow larger.

Figure 5

The Essence of AVID Word Cloud



A few responses did not fit into the word cloud, but did align with similar themes. Cristina offered the word ‘respite,’ but then explained further: “It felt like a place of respite from, like — I didn't have to have the answers to things. I could ask stupid questions, and nobody thought I was dumb in class.” Antonio’s response requires its own space. Here, he explains what being in AVID meant.

Let's say, AVID is one of the reasons I actually graduated high school. I didn't have much friends, didn't know much about anything. I didn't even want to try in high school but... I initially tried AVID. I applied in middle school before I got to high school, because some kids came to my middle school and were basically just preaching about how great AVID was. I didn't necessarily know what it was at the time, but I wanted to try it. And when I got into it in middle school and high school, it really helped me, actually, get through high school in general... That was a lot more than six words!

Responses to this, and all of the interview questions, describe an experience that enabled AVID graduates to academically and socially transition into college. They experienced Rigorous Academic Preparedness, sought out Opportunity Knowledge, and exercised their Student Agency. And, importantly, when the transition was most difficult, they called on their individual determination to see them through and persisted in their college goals.

Quantitative Results - Research Question 2: *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

Next, I analyze quantitative data in the form of questionnaire results in a discussion of Research Question 2. I consider both the graduate and teacher surveys, including coded analysis of open response items on both instruments.

Quantitative Data Results: Description of Student Participants

All of the 66 study participants were enrolled in the AVID elective class for two or more years in the New Mexico high schools from which they graduated. Table 15 compares survey respondents to both New Mexico and national AVID students in terms of their ethnicity, gender, and low income status. AVID does not collect data regarding language, though approximately 34% of respondents reported they were considered an English language learner at some point in their K-12 education. Nearly 91% were enrolled as full-time college students with 60.6% attending public New Mexico colleges.

Table 15*Descriptive Statistics of Student Participants vs. New Mexico and National AVID*

Descriptive Statistics	Study, n=66	N.M. AVID	National AVID
Low income	77.3%	72.4%	62.8%
First generation for college	69.7%	62.6%	56.4%
Gender			
Male	16.7%	36.6%	41.0%
Female	81.8%	63.4%	59.0%
Non-Binary	1.5%	--	--
Ethnicity			
African American	1.5%	2.8%	16.4%
Asian	6.0%	1.4%	5.6%
Hispanic/Latino	75.8%	78.4%	51.8%
Native American	1.5%	5.8%	1.0%
Pacific Islander	0.0%	1.2%	1.0%
Two or more races	9.1%	0.0%	4.0%
White, non-Hispanic	6.1%	10.4%	20.2%

Note. New Mexico school ethnicity data do not include multiple race categories. N.M. and U.S. percentages based on 5-year average (2015-2019).

Common Curriculum: The Essence of AVID Instruction

Though quantitative in nature, I designed the student survey instrument in this study to reveal the experience of AVID's College and Career Readiness Framework (CCR Framework) through the daily curriculum used in the classroom. A national curriculum for the AVID elective, consisting of daily lesson plans for each grade level 6-12, is made available to all AVID teachers and covers all AVID elective standards as aligned to the CCR Framework. To ensure coverage of all three framework components, I clustered survey questions into the following sections: General Information, Academic Preparedness for

College, Student Agency, Opportunity Knowledge for College and Career, and Educational Goals (see Appendix G).

Student Survey Section Results. I wrote the questions for the three CCR Framework sections of the questionnaire directly from the AVID Anchor Standards (Appendix B) associated with that component of the framework with the intent of answering Research Question 2: *What are the graduates’ perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?* The questions asked about the general helpfulness of skills taught through the framework curricula using a Likert-type scale. Figure 6 shows the common structure of survey questions asking about relative ‘helpfulness’ of certain framework components. See Appendix G for the full questionnaire and Appendix H for the codebook.

Figure 6

Questionnaire Section: Rigorous Academic Preparedness – Writing

WRITING: how helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Compose a variety of texts (essays, papers, blogs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analyze a writing task (prompt or assignment)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take notes and use them as a study tool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Summarize and Reflect to solidify your learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In order to calculate the relative helpfulness of the three components of the CCR Framework, I compared questionnaire responses for the sets of questions designed to assess each component, as I presented in Chapter 3.

Once the calculations were complete, I could compare the relative helpfulness of each of the framework’s components (see Table 16). The data suggest that both Student Agency and Opportunity Knowledge were found to be more helpful than Rigorous Academic Preparedness by the AVID graduates responding to the survey. Considering that all teachers in a school are addressing Academic Preparedness of students, it is not surprising that the two components addressed only in more targeted settings, such as AVID, would stand out in the minds of the students as being more helpful than improving reading or writing skills.

Table 16

Graduates’ Questionnaire: CCR Framework Response Section, Consolidated Categorical Responses including Reliability Score

Questionnaire Section	Number of items	0 not helpful-somewhat helpful	1 helpful-extremely helpful	Percent 0 not helpful-somewhat helpful	Percent 1 helpful-extremely helpful	Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Score
Rigorous Academic Preparedness	28	0-55	56-112	18.2%	74.2%	.980
Student Agency	13	0-25	26-52	15.2%	80.3%	.967
Opportunity Knowledge	8	0-15	16-32	10.6%	86.4%	.953

This is not to say that students found that AVID did a poor job of teaching academic skills since more than half of the respondents indicated that they found academic instruction ‘really helpful’ through ‘extremely helpful’. When I analyze the Rigorous Academic Preparedness survey items through the same process of determining the range of scores and then grouping responses into the same two categorical variables, the results show that over two-thirds of graduates found instruction in each of the five WICOR skills to be ‘really helpful’ through ‘extremely helpful’ (see Table 17).

Table 17

Graduates' Questionnaire: Academic Preparedness (WICOR) Response Section, Consolidated Categorical Responses including Reliability Score

Questionnaire Section	Number of items	0 not helpful-helpful	1 really helpful-extremely	Percent 0 not helpful-helpful	Percent 1 really helpful-extremely	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Score
Writing, <i>n</i> =65	4	0-8	9-16	33.3	65.2	.899
Inquiry, <i>n</i> =65	6	0-12	13-24	30.3	68.2	.929
Collaboration, <i>n</i> =65	9	0-18	19-36	24.2	74.2	.953
Organization, <i>n</i> =64	5	0-10	11-20	18.2	78.8	.940
Reading, <i>n</i> =64	4	0-8	9-16	28.8	68.2	.944

In the same Academic Preparedness section of the survey, I asked graduates which of the strategies from AVID they were still using in college. The results in Table 18, indicate that at least half of the graduates still use most of the strategies. Since these are skills used by successful students, it follows that AVID graduates would also put them to use having been trained, some of them, to employ those skills since sixth grade.

AVID is well known for its use of a large (3-4 inch) binder and structured notes, such as Cornell notes. Therefore, you might expect high use of these trademark strategies in AVID graduates. However, the AVID binder, which received a low continued use rate, is a secondary organizational tool that supports a daily schedule of classes where frequent assignments and associated materials are exchanged between students and teachers. This model of organization does not fit a college schedule of twice weekly classes with fewer assignments. On the other hand, notes are extremely relevant in college with its many lecture-based courses (Parker et al., 2013), making sense of the 62.1% of graduates that reported using them still.

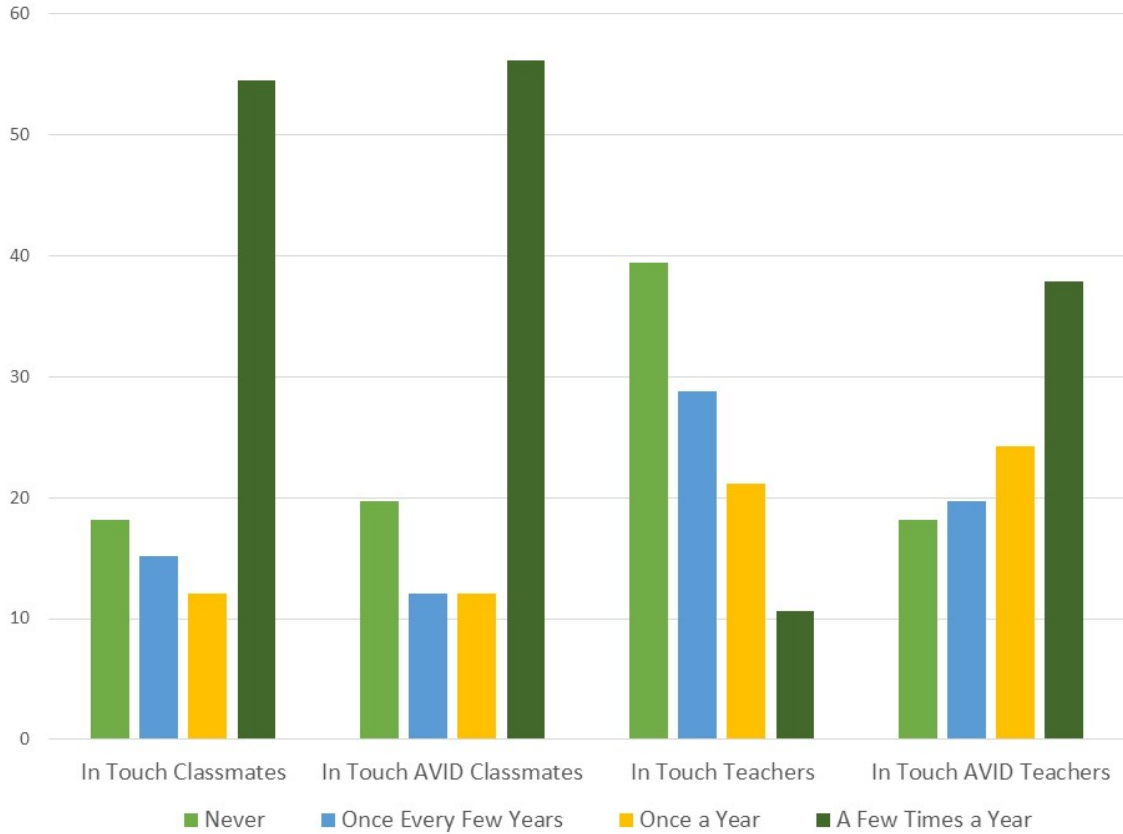
Table 18*Graduates' Questionnaire: Continued Use of Strategies Taught in AVID Curriculum*

Strategy	Still Using
Agenda/Planner, including electronic apps	92.4%
AVID Binder	10.6%
Backwards Mapping (starting with end date, breaking down assignment)	37.9%
Cornell Notes or Focused Note-Taking	62.1%
Costa's Levels 1-3 of Thinking/Inquiry (Costa's house)	15.2%
College Study Groups (like tutorials without the tutor, no TRF required)	53.0%
Graphic Organizers (ex: Venn diagram, T chart, KWL, mind web)	27.3%
Marking the Text/Critical Reading Strategies (circle key words, underline claims, write in margins)	74.2%
Time Management (estimating time for a task, balancing studying and social life)	81.8%
Physical or Digital Organization Filing System (folders, crates, jump drives, online storage)	63.6%
Interactive Notebooks (notes on the right, how you understand/process them on the left)	37.9%

The AVID family, another of AVID's well-known phenomena (Mendiola et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2013; Watt et al., 2011), was described in the graduate interviews and appears in the survey results as well. Graduates reported being in touch with AVID classmates at a slightly higher rate than other classmates (see Figure 7). Where the marked difference lies is in the reporting of being in touch with their AVID teacher. Nearly 38% of graduates reported being in touch with their AVID teacher 'a few times a year' compared to only 10.6% who said the same of other teachers. Similarly, 39.4% reported 'never' being in contact with their other teachers, whereas only 18.2% said they are 'never' in touch with their AVID teachers. As previously stated by the interviewed graduates, the AVID teacher can play a significant role in the lives of AVID students, continuing to offer them advice and support long after graduation.

Figure 7

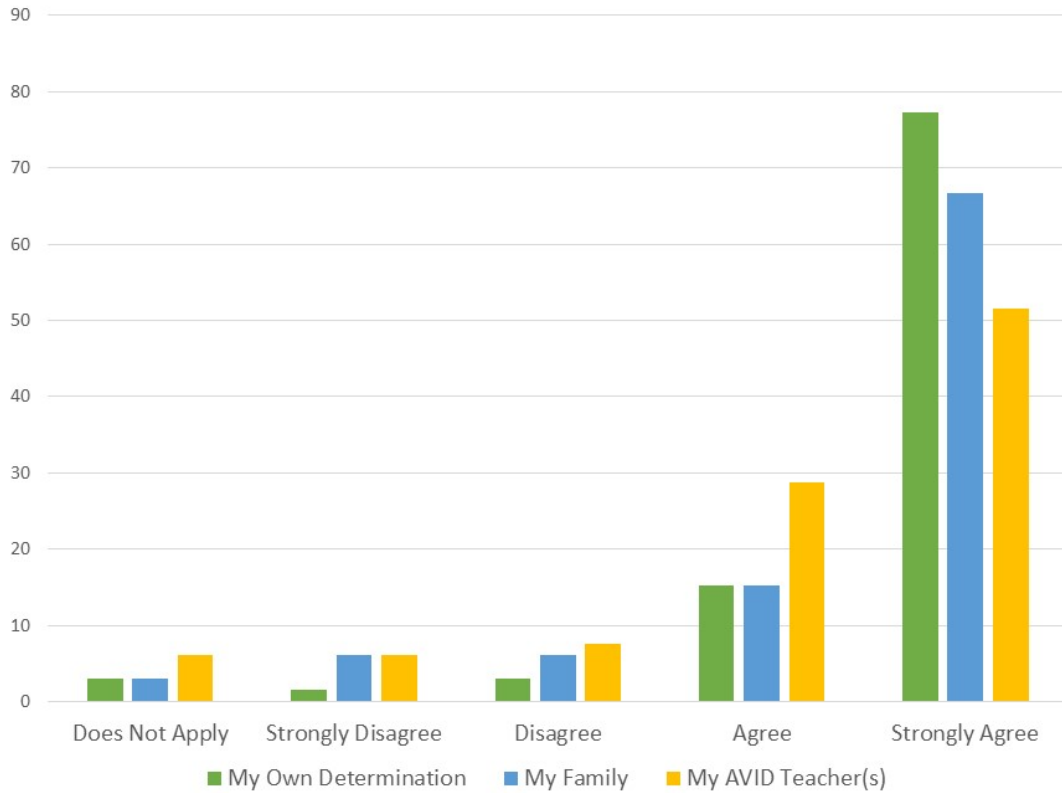
Graduates' Questionnaire: How Often Graduates Stay in Touch with Classmates and Teachers



Influence from the AVID teacher, and participation in AVID in the AVID class, helped students decide to attend college after their many years of preparation. Their families' influence came second to their own determination, yet AVID played a larger role than any other school entity including counselors, coaches, classmates, friends, or other teachers, as depicted in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Graduates' Questionnaire: Who Influenced Students Decision to Attend College?



In Table 19, I compared AVID national rates of postsecondary plans with New Mexico results for the class of 2019, showing similar results. New Mexican AVID students attend college at approximately the same rates as other AVID students. When I combine two-year and four-year college rates for the class of 2019, the data indicate that nearly 89% of AVID students decided to attend college over technical trade school enrollment or military enlistment (AVID Center, 2019g), whereas the national rate of immediate college attendance is only 69% (NCES, 2020). These data suggest that AVID students attend college at higher rates than non-AVID students. This data is especially important in New Mexico considering the many obstacles that students encounter in terms of educational outcomes for the state.

Table 19

AVID Senior Data Reports for New Mexico and Nationally, Class of 2019

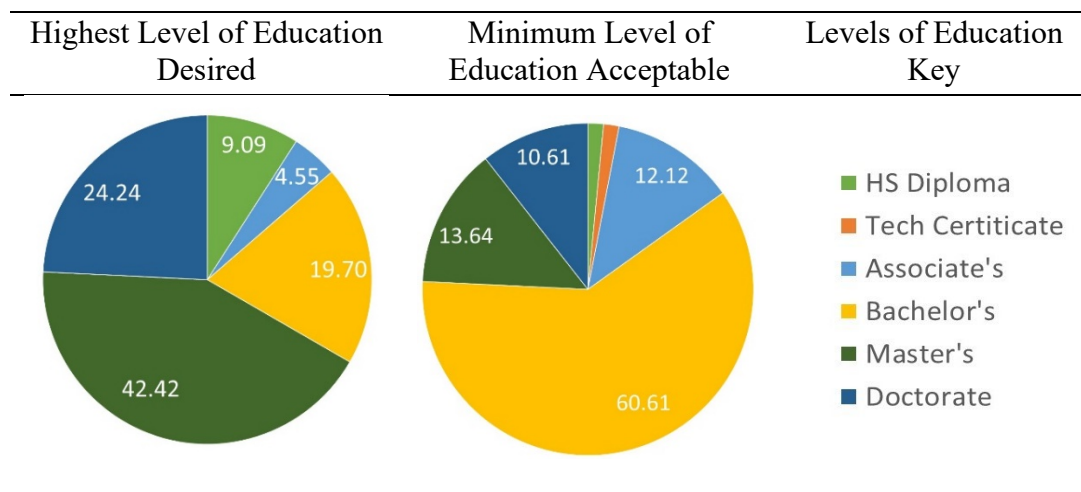
Postsecondary Plans	New Mexico	AVID National
Planned to attend any four-year college/university	52.9%	55.5%
Planned to attend any two-year college/university	33.7%	33.2%
Planned to enroll in any trade/technical school	1.1%	1.5%
Planned to enlist in any military branch	2.2%	2.2%

Note. Source used is *Year Secondary Detailed Data Report*, (AVID Center 2019f, 2019g).

Self-efficacy influences personal goal setting (Zimmerman et al., 1992). Referring to Bandura’s work in social cognitive theory, they state that “goals specify the requirements for personal success” (p. 664) which is reflected in the responses to the two survey questions “What is the highest level of education you want to achieve?” and “What is the minimum level of education with which you will feel satisfied?” These results, shown in Figure 9, indicate an expectation set by nearly 43% of the respondents that they will achieve master’s degrees, and that for almost 61% nothing less than a bachelor’s degree will feel satisfying.

Figure 9

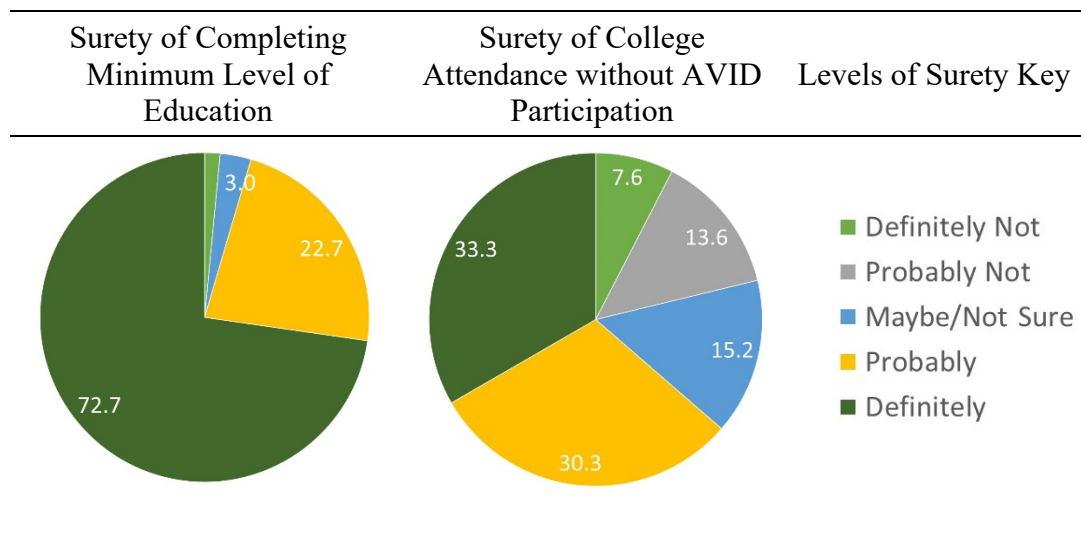
Graduates’ Questionnaire: Levels of Education



Additionally, Student Agency determines the amount of effort students put into their goals as well as their ability to overcome obstacles and persist. This is apparent in the self-reported response that 72.7% of respondents “definitely will” complete their minimum educational goal (see Figure 10).

Figure 10

Graduates’ Questionnaire: Surety of College Completion and Attendance



At first, the results of Figure 10, *Surety of College Attendance without AVID Participation* could make it appear that AVID graduates did not need to participate in AVID to reach college since almost 63.6% stated that they “probably” or “definitely” would be attending college without having been in AVID, and 44% of those students were in AVID for four or more years. The complexity of this response is born out in the development of their own Student Agency throughout their years in AVID. It is not possible to know how they would feel had they not actually been in AVID, though comparing the relative success of AVID students with other underrepresented students in terms of college persistence suggests that they may owe more of that success to AVID than they realized.

Additionally, since most AVID students have grown up in New Mexico, and all colleges in the state are Hispanic serving institutions, students' perceptions of their own agency may be heightened due to a more supportive scholastic environment involving a network of ethnically similar adults and peers. It would be beneficial to run a future study in another state with the same instrumentation to compare results.

Open Response Questionnaire Items. Two open response items on the survey provided graduates an opportunity to describe their AVID experience in their own words (Table 20) and to explain any connection they may have felt with their AVID teacher(s) (Table 21). In Tables 20 and 21, I present coded themes along with the frequency of their occurrence in the data set. I paired supporting quotations with each theme.

Table 20

Open Response Item: If you were to describe your experience with AVID to someone else, what would you say?

n=66

Theme	Frequency	Supporting Quotation
Skills	8	It was a great experience. I learned skills that helped me in college such as note-taking, leadership, time management and most importantly organization and so much more! AVID was a great class where I learned how to stay organized and take focused notes. AVID taught me strategies to succeed in an academic setting.
College Prep	12	It was a great way to get me prepared and know the process of college. The only thing that keeps a forward focus on education. Everything else while growing up told me to not go to college after graduation. My experience in AVID was unique in the way that I didn't know how much it would help me in college. My least favorite part about AVID, doing TRFs, became the most important thing in college. I do not believe I would be able to form the study groups I have now with my classmates and friends without the knowledge of how a study group actually works!
Prep Plus	9	It's an amazing experience that teaches so much more than just what to expect in college.

		<p>College preparation class that builds the bond of family, builds a safety net and support system, it's different than any other high school experience.</p> <p>In describing my AVID experience to someone else I would say that I was well prepared for the task that was in front of me. That task was a daunting one that no one in my family had done before. This task was preparing for college, something that was unknown to me. My experience in AVID opened my eyes to my potential and fostered skills within me that I continue to hold onto.</p>
Family or Community	12	<p>Supportive community aimed at supporting success in students. It was always engaging, I was included, had value to this supporting peers around me, we felt like a family all while learning and prepping for the bigger picture (college).</p> <p>One word that would describe AVID would be "Family". All my classmates and my AVID were my family and an integral part to my success in college right now. I have been motivated to do well and been supported by everyone in that classroom.</p> <p>It's an incredible support system for academics or personal struggles and anything else in between. AVID becomes your family and the people in it celebrate your successes and hold you up through your struggles.</p>
Helpful or Great	14	<p>Memorable and a great experience that I will never forget. It is really helpful and if you participate, you really change. Very helpful in every which way, so glad I was a part of this program: it taught me so much and I would not be where I am today without it.</p>
Opportunities	5	<p>AVID really opened my eyes to a lot of opportunities I didn't even know existed. It played a huge role on my path to college, from scholarships to preparing for new settings. I also met some of my closest friends there and I will always cherish that.</p> <p>AVID was a smooth road and every way I turned I was encouraged, shown new opportunities, and given tool to help me grow and succeed in life and school. AVID helped me to see the strong, independent, and bright person that I could be!</p> <p>I would say AVID was helpful in many ways. As a first generation American, AVID was a program that filled the knowledge and resource gaps about applying to college and applying for scholarships because my parents and family members were unaware of the process of attending a higher education institution.</p>
1-2 Words	8	<p>Awesome Resources Helpful, and collaborative</p>

Some graduates reported an academic association with AVID, focusing their comments on the skills they obtained and the college preparatory nature of the program. In the ‘Prep Plus’ theme comments of Table 20, graduates offered a more blended approach, showcasing the extra qualities the program offered beyond just the college focus. A dozen responses talked about the family orientation of the elective and feeling supported by their classmates and teachers. Still more explained how helpful or informative they found AVID to be. A handful focused on the Opportunity Knowledge that AVID proffered, and many summed up their feelings in a word or two. Whether strictly descriptive or more revealing, these comments echo that balance between social and academic support seen throughout the discussion of the College and Career Readiness Framework.

Table 21

Open Response Item: What connection, if any, do you have or did you have to your AVID teacher(s)?

n=66

Theme	Frequency	Supporting Quotation
In Touch	12	<p>We still have a group chat and occasionally we hear updates about each other's lives.</p> <p>I've kept in touch with my high school AVID teacher. We text sometimes, and she asks how my family and I are doing, and how school is going.</p>
Close	22	<p>I liked that she's always there for me and willing to help me with any issues I run into.</p> <p>I was extremely close to [teacher name] as a few of my close friends were. She was always willing to help us outside of school and at any academic or extra-curricular, event she'd be there to support us.</p> <p>I was and still am very close to my AVID teacher. She was there for me when I was having problems at home and I know that if I ever need anything I can always go to her.</p> <p>I was very close with my AVID teacher and I even decided to take 2 AP courses my senior year that I wouldn't have taken normally just because he taught them. I still keep in touch with him and we talk every now and then and catch up.</p>
Mentor	6	<p>Most amazing person I met in high school, my mentor and friend, always one of the most supportive people I've had to guide me.</p> <p>My AVID teacher was one of my biggest mentors in high school, she honestly helped me get through high school.</p>
Parent	5	<p>My AVID teacher was like another parent to me. We were able to joke around but he also helped me in so many ways. I'm very grateful for him.</p> <p>My AVID teacher was like my school mom that supported me and sometime showed me tough love to prepare me for the world that I was about to encounter.</p> <p>Personally, I considered my AVID teacher as my second mom since she took care of me in school and always wanted the best for me. She was really helpful during my high school since I transitioned to a U.S. high school from abroad. I hope to continue this connection for as long as I live.</p>
A Few Words	8	<p>Strong connection</p> <p>A family bond</p> <p>I love her</p>

When asked about their relationships with their AVID teachers, graduates presented a united viewpoint: they felt a connection. A dozen students stated they were still in touch with their AVID teachers, and sometimes classmates as well. Many others felt ‘close’ to them, citing specific examples of how teachers continue to ‘be there’ for their students. A handful described more intense relationships with their teachers, either as mentors or as ‘parents.’

Stories about AVID moms and dads are common fodder at AVID professional learning events. Hearing how these students saw their teachers as “another parent to me” or “my school mom,” even doling out bouts of “tough love” when needed, accentuates the AVID family as part of the phenomenon. This sort of bond goes beyond what Bourdieu (1986) would consider cultural capital, beyond the acquisition of a certificate of knowledge, and into a realm of social and academic belonging where the student remains embraced in perpetuity.

Quantitative Data Results: Description of Teacher Participants

Of the thirty-seven educators who responded to the Survey for New Mexico AVID Teachers, 73% were female and 27% were male. About 54% were middle school teachers, and the others taught high school. Some shared characteristics of AVID students in New Mexico with nearly 60% raised in the state, about a third having been low income students, and more than half having been the first generation in their families to attend college (see Table 22 for more characteristics of AVID teachers in New Mexico).

Table 22

Characteristics of AVID Teacher Survey Respondents
n=37

Characteristics of NM AVID Teacher Survey Respondents	Yes	No
Grew up in New Mexico	59.5%	40.5%
Low income student K-12	32.4%	59.5%
English Language Learning K-12	8.1%	91.9%
First generation to attend college	56.8%	43.2%
Low income college student, n=36	37.8%	59.5%
Went to college in New Mexico	62.2%	35.1%
Bilingual	29.7%	70.3%
Biliterate	24.3%	75.7%
Bilingual, Spanish or ‘Spanglish’	18.9%	81.1%

Note. ‘Spanglish’ is a self-reported language and is a combination of Spanish and English.

In addition to their characteristics featured in Table 22, there were a few other important data points to consider when viewing the teachers’ responses. Approximately 35% were in their first 3 years teaching AVID, and therefore considered ‘new’ to the elective. More than half were Humanities teachers (32.4% English, 21.6% Social Studies) which might have made them more comfortable teaching writing and reading strategies to students. None of the respondents were new teachers, carrying an average of nearly fourteen years of classroom experience in the group. They were well-educated, with more than sixty percent holding a master’s degree.

The teachers were also highly trained in terms of AVID professional learning strands (16-hour courses offered at summer institutes and more locally during the school year), with six teachers having been to seven or more strands. A full eighty-three percent had attended the two required courses for being an elective teacher (four teachers were still in their first year of teaching AVID and had not yet attended both courses). Sixty percent had additional AVID training within their own content areas, giving them strategies to teach Math or Social

Studies for example, similar to those used in AVID curricula.

More than forty percent of the teachers had engaged in AVID school leadership training. A study completed by Watt et al. (2010) suggests that AVID professional learning is a significant predictor of teacher leadership on a campus. According to this study — which confirmed the results of an early study (Huerta et al., 2008) — “even more experienced teachers continue to develop as leaders as they receive additional professional development” (p. 547). This sentiment was echoed by one participant who stated, “I have been a teacher for 18 years and teaching AVID has been the highlight of my career.”

Over forty percent of the teacher respondents had also engaged in an AVID strand around culturally relevant teaching. Professional learning in teaching students who may come from a different cultural background would be especially important in this group of largely Caucasian educators (over 56%) within a diverse student body (see Table 23).

Table 23

Ethnic Identities of AVID Teachers Survey Respondents in New Mexico
n=37

Ethnicity	Percent
African American	0.0%
Asian	2.7%
Caucasian/White/Anglo	56.8%
Filipino	0.0%
Hispanic/Latino	27.0%
Native American	0.0%
Pacific Islander	0.0%
Caucasian and Hispanic	5.4%
Hispanic/Latino and Native American	2.7%
Caucasian and Jewish	2.7%
African American, Asian, and Hispanic	2.7%

Note. All ethnicities are self-reported. AVID does not collect ethnic data about its teachers.

Teacher Questionnaire Response Results and Themes. Unlike in the student questionnaire, I did not query teachers about their use of the AVID Elective curriculum. Instead, their role in the study was to define the classroom culture they helped to develop and to explain why students report feeling so close to their AVID teachers. Their responses help to complete an understanding of the essence of the AVID experience, contributing to an understanding of Research Questions 1 and 2.

Open Response Teacher Questionnaire Items.

If the AVID classroom is the context in which the AVID students develop their bonds, then it follows that the teacher is a central part of creating that atmosphere. The New Mexico AVID Teacher Survey offered three open response items, the results of which help to explain the teachers' role in creating a different kind of classroom culture, as well as their role in influencing their students' lives and academic achievement — again balancing the Social and Academic Systems seesaw with the CCR Framework as its fulcrum.

Each open response question produced its own set of themes as revealed during the coding process. Paired with supporting quotations, I present the themes in Tables 24, 25, and 26. The first set of responses (Table 24) describe the teachers' motivation to take on the AVID Elective. Most volunteered for the position, while a few were assigned the role. Generally, teachers reported a positive motivation for wanting to work with AVID students. This was especially true for teachers who personally identified with their students, including a few former AVID students who became AVID teachers themselves.

Table 24

Open Response Item: What made you want to teach the AVID Elective?

Theme	Supporting Quotation
Philosophy and Mission	I am committed to closing the opportunity gap for all students. I have a passion for first generation college students and I know that AVID changes hearts, attitudes, and lives.
	I really admired the sense of community that the AVID teachers and Site Team had, and I really loved the connections made with their students. And of course, I loved AVID's mission.
Opportunity Knowledge	I have always believed that every student should have the opportunity and be excited about going to college and should be prepared for college.
	The ability to expose students to higher education and careers they are interested in. Also, to teach and guide students on how to develop their own learning style to succeed academically. To help them learn how to find tools that will help them achieve their goal/s in life.
Teaching Strategies	I saw another teacher teaching it and liked the way AVID students were organized and overall more aware of what they needed to do as students.
	Find tools to help reach more students and help me understand better what AVID is really about.
Assigned	I started out by just wanting to help fill the slot since no one else wanted to. I keep doing it because I love AVID and it's [sic] strategies.
	I was told I would be teaching it. Now I don't ever want to stop.
Students Are Like Me	Helping students like me.
	I was an AVID student when I was in school. Then when I went to college, I helped [a middle school] start their AVID program by being an AVID tutor. I know that AVID works, and I am extremely passionate about the program. I am so lucky to be able to teach it!

In Table 25, the teachers' assertions about the nature of the AVID experience begins to align with the students' assertions. Several powerful statements about the "life-changing" nature of the elective were followed by enthusiastic examples of AVID as a family with 'campus moms' and AVID kids who "now feel as close to as if they were my own children." They also concluded that AVID strategies made them better teachers by improving their instructional effectiveness. Though a few reported some difficulty with how overwhelming teaching AVID can be, AVID teachers' experiences were very positive overall.

Table 25

Open Response Item: If you were to describe your experience with AVID to someone else, what would you say

Theme	Supporting Quotation
Impact	<p>I was able to make a huge impact on a handful of students. I was able to help provide support for some students that might not have had it otherwise. AVID changes the trajectory for all students on the campus where they are learning. It increases rigor, making learning available for all students. Ability to actually effect [sic] lives, practical application.</p>
Better Teacher	<p>It has made me a more organized, more thorough, less controlling, and more effective teacher. It has changed how I teach in all my classes, not just AVID.</p> <p>AVID has helped be a better teacher and student.</p> <p>I would say that it has made me more aware of how I teach, how to be adaptable, and how to enjoy learning again and being more creative in my “why” with students.</p>
Life Changing	<p>Teaching this class is nothing less than life-changing. My identity as a teacher has changed since I started teaching AVID and every part of my professional life has changed, even who my teacher friends are on campus, as I learned to grow my teacher voice and advocate for students. It is one of the most positive experiences a secondary educator can have. I have been a teacher for 18 years and teaching AVID has been the highlight of my career.</p>
Family	<p>Teaching AVID was the best decision I ever made! I developed close relationships with so many kids who I now feel as close to as if they were my own children. Their accomplishments feel like mine! My first graduating class is graduating from college this year and I couldn’t be happier.</p> <p>It’s like being their mom on campus. I keep up on their grades, make sure they’re taking the right classes, help them stay organized, get after them when they slip up, encourage them to keep going, and just overall being their support system and coach.</p>
Skills	<p>Teaching AVID is highly motivating. It’s nice to teach a curriculum that shows students what they need to be successful.</p> <p>Giving students skills that they will not only use in high school but out in the real world. Students learn so much by giving them real world experiences.</p> <p>AVID is an amazing program that helps you get and stay organized, teaches you the importance of taking notes and using them, and also helps you become a teammate in many different group settings. AVID is more than just a way to help you get to college, it has helped me succeed through many different parts of my life. I am grateful to have been able to be a part of it.</p>

Mixed Views	<p>However, it is also incredibly overwhelming, and can overshadow other good programs unfairly.</p> <p>AVID is difficult, but fun and rewarding.</p> <p>I love the idea behind the AVID program. It has been a positive experience overall, but there is [sic] some things that do bug me.</p>
1-2 Words	<p>Awesome</p> <p>Very satisfying</p> <p>A blessing</p>

Table 26 is perhaps the most aligned to the graduates’ reporting of the essence of AVID. The connection to their students that the vast majority of AVID teachers expressed (only one answered ‘no’ to the question about feeling connected to students) mirrors the intensity of the relationships described by the six interviewees. Many teachers stated that they were still in contact with their graduates regardless of whether they had them in middle or high school. They continued to depict AVID as a family, ascribing the roots of that closeness to an intentional building of trust among students in a “safe place to work, learn, and play.” One teacher, a former AVID student, proclaimed, “my AVID teacher will always be a role model to me” echoing the poignant stories of other AVID graduates.

Table 26

Open Response Item: Do you feel connected to your AVID students/graduates? If so, describe how and why you feel connected to them.

Theme	Supporting Quotation
In Touch	<p>I still am in contact with many of them. They email or text me updates of their academic and life progress regularly.</p> <p>Yes. I love the connections/relationships built within the AVID classroom and community. I have kept close with many former AVID (and non-AVID) students through the years. This year, 3 former students are now tutors in my classroom.</p> <p>100%. I’m still in contact with my first AVID class who graduated in 2010, and this year is extremely difficult being online [due to Covid-19] and away from each other especially during their senior year. But I stay connected with them through our Google Meets, and I get texts from them almost every day asking some kind of college or school question. I know I’m their “go-to” person, and I feel honored that they see me as such.</p>

Family	<p>Yes, they are my AVID babies. I switch jobs and they still text me for every little thing, like I'm their mother.</p> <p>Yes. We form a family in the classroom and get to know each other with a deeper connection because of the trust the students have with each other and with me.</p> <p>YES! We are a family. I celebrate with them when their siblings are born, when they earn their driver's licenses, at their quinces, and most importantly, at their graduation and acceptance into college. We care deeply for one another and even in the most difficult times (like we are in now) we band together and take care of one another. I am also very vulnerable and transparent with them about how I'm feeling, what I've faced in live, and what difficulties I'm dealing with (in an appropriate way) and I can trust them with this information. And sharing this strengthens our relationship over the years. This is a special dynamic that I do not share with other classes.</p>
Trust	<p>My classroom is a safe place to work, learn, and play.</p> <p>Yes. It is all about relationships.</p> <p>I feel connected to them because of what and how we share things to grow in a positive learning environment. When an obstacle comes up that I don't have an immediate answer for my students enjoy finding the answer with me. They also like to mentor others in finding the path best suited to achieve success.</p> <p>Yes, a good percentage of them. Why, is mainly because they developed sense of trust and respect for me I think that allowed them to reach out to me while they were in college and otherwise. The relationship is as important as the curriculum! In regards to maintaining deep relationship, however, I feel that the high expectations we hold the students to can sometimes backfire. Those who feel they have not met my expectations have definitely disappeared from my life.</p>
Academic focus	<p>Yes, I feel responsible for them and more concerned with their grades than my other students.</p> <p>I feel the student that I'm here to help with their academic plan.</p> <p>Yes, I feel connected to all of my students. It is my responsibility as a teacher to do my best to help my students be successful.</p>
Students Are Like Me	<p>Yes. I can relate to them because I feel I had a similar life.</p> <p>Yes, I do feel connected, because I also wanted to achieve during school.</p> <p>YES! I may only teach middle school, and this is my first year, but I also know from my standpoint as a previous [AVID] student, my AVID teacher will always be a role model to me. I feel so connected already to all of my AVID students and excited to see them grow!</p>

Students also reported a bond with their AVID teachers in their survey results and cited specific examples of a family atmosphere in the interview responses. The field of study around teacher immediacy may account for some of this reporting. Teacher immediacy is defined as verbal and nonverbal teacher behaviors that generate “perceptions of psychological closeness with students” (LeFebvre & Allen, 2014, p. 29). These types of behaviors are associated with teacher effectiveness (Anderson, 1979; Anderson & Anderson, 1982) and teacher influence (Richmond & McCroskey, 1992), and represent what most would consider good teaching: gesturing while talking, looking at students, smiling at students, moving around the classroom while teaching. This type of teacher stance is normal in elementary classrooms, but often becomes scarce the higher students go in education, terminating in the typically remote, lecture-style of college courses.

A brief review of the literature on teacher effectiveness presents several approaches to define, measure, and evaluate teacher performance. Some define it as teacher quality, detailing their coursework, certification, and degrees as ways to measure teachers’ effectiveness (e.g., Rice, 2003). Others synthesize research on student achievement, providing tools to measure teacher effectiveness on a national scale (e.g., Goe et al., 2008). One foundational review of field research on teacher competence and effectiveness (Medley, 1977) contains tables of observable classroom behaviors such as “[teacher exerts] control without criticism” (p. 99) or “teacher encourages pupils to speak freely” (p. 107) along with other sound teaching practices. The table entitled “Positive Affect” (p. 109), however, lists indicators of a positive classroom culture such as “pupils happy, positive attitude and climate,” “pupil pride, cooperation vs. apathy, fear, etc.” and most interesting, “teacher

develops “we” feeling.” This elementary classroom from the 1970’s sounds like the secondary AVID classrooms of today.

Another report on teacher effectiveness (Mayes, 2001) suggests that a combination of teacher skills and professional characteristics, along with classroom climate is what allows for student progress. Classroom climate is defined as “a measure of the collective perceptions” of students that has a “direct impact on their capacity and motivation to learn” (p. 195). Duckworth et al. (2009) found three teacher traits to be positive predictors of teacher performance: grit, life satisfaction, and an optimistic explanatory style (positive self-talk). If AVID teachers are effective, perhaps they are modeling these types of positive traits, which are exactly what AVID students themselves need in order to persist, and using their professional skills to develop a culture of “we.”

Analysis of both teacher and student survey responses suggest that AVID teachers and students are transformed by their experiences in the AVID elective. Together, teachers and students are creating an environment in which they both thrive.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I analyzed both qualitative and quantitative results, attempting to answer the two research questions, address the issue of college persistence for AVID students, and discover the essence of the AVID experience from the graduates’ perspective. Analysis of all data sources, interviews, and surveys upheld the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID as a structure for successful college transition: balanced in Social and Academic Systems, and supported by Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency.

In answer to *Research Question 1: What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?* I used the results of the semi-structure interviews with six AVID graduates to exemplify each one of the aligned framework components:

Academic Transition
Rigorous Academic Preparedness
Opportunity Knowledge
Social Transition
Student Agency
Individual Determination

In addition to supporting each theme and subtheme with the story of one particular graduate, I inserted excerpts from other of the graduates' interviews to support themes, subthemes, and elements, presenting multiple examples of each. In this way, I demonstrated that the lived experience of the college transition can be described using the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID. It is therefore a useful tool for understanding how the CCR framework supports AVID graduates' transition into the Social and Academic Systems in college.

Academic Transition, supported by Tinto's Academic System (1975), was facilitated by Rigorous Academic Preparation, both inside and outside the AVID elective, and allowed for intellectual development. Structures such as tutorials, study groups, and office hours helped students form connections to peers and teachers, creating networks of support. Skills they began learning in high school were expanded upon in college, easing their way to academic success and supporting their academic self-esteem (Nora, 2004).

Note-taking, time management, and critical thinking skills were among the most discussed in the interviews, showcasing graduates' use of forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness — the three agentic properties of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001). Opportunity Knowledge, begun in high school, flourished in college as students leveraged

their social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) by joining professional organizations, seeking out work and volunteering hours, and taking advantage of campus offerings.

Social Transition, as supported by Student Agency, was exemplified by students finding peer support and leadership roles, especially in groups centered around their interests and/or identities. Through these actions they expanded their social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and used their individual and collective agency (Bandura, 1986). A few of the graduates even found their professional calling by getting involved on campus. By seeking out membership in campus clubs, students were able to expand their extra-familial capital (Nora, 2004) and build supportive networks through social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital (Yosso, 2005).

In addition to the CCR Framework subthemes, Support and Money were revealed as subthemes through the coding process. Support came from peers, adults, and especially AVID teachers. Many graduates expressed warm feelings of connection to their “AVID families,” a phenomenon supported in the literature (Mendiola et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2013; Watt et al., 2011). Money impacted all of the graduates, forcing some tough choices on them in terms of college fit, work study jobs, and degree attainment.

All graduates, at some point in their college transition, called on their resilience to help them persist in difficult times. For some, the challenges were academic, for others, social or emotional. Several graduates admitted they considered dropping out of college, but ultimately employed their skills, their networks, and their individual determination to pull them through.

The lived experience of these AVID graduates as they transitioned into college is supported by the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID. They navigated both the

Social and Academic Systems in college using their Rigorous Academic Preparedness, their Opportunity Knowledge and their Student Agency. They called on their peers and teachers — especially their AVID teachers — for support, advice, and friendship. They each encountered some hard life lessons, yet all of them used their individual determination to persist.

In answering Research Question 2: *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?* the graduate survey responses were used to analyze the three CCR Framework components in terms of their relative helpfulness. Opportunity Knowledge was found to be the most helpful, followed by Student Agency, and then Rigorous Academic Preparedness (see Table 13). Interpretation of this finding is that all courses focus on Rigorous Academic Preparedness, but only AVID intentionally teaches students about Opportunity Knowledge and Student Agency.

Rigorous Academic Preparedness included graduates' continued use of strategies learned in AVID. Most students continue to use a planner or agenda and other time management tools. Nearly two-thirds took some form of focused notes to keep up with lectures and course readings, and almost three-quarters continued to mark their texts as strategy for critical reading. Fewer than ten percent of graduates continued using the AVID binder, however, a majority did use a physical or electronic filing system which is a logical adaption for college.

Student Agency, including networks of supportive peers and adults, appears to influence students' decision to attend and persist in college. They cited their AVID teachers as being a major influence in their college decision. This result supports AVID national data

showing that an average of 93% of AVID students choose to attend college after being presented with other opportunities during middle and high school (AVID Center, 2019).

Opportunity Knowledge helped students to set aspirational educational goals for themselves. Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents said that a bachelor’s degree is the minimum level of education they expect to attain. About 42% plan to achieve a master’s level education and nearly 25% are aiming for a doctorate. For students in underrepresented groups, most of whom are first generation college students, these goals display a confidence in their own ability to navigate obstacles with almost two-thirds of graduates’ claiming they “definitely will” meet their minimum education goals.

Open response items on the student and teacher surveys help to reveal the essence of the AVID experience through the following themes displayed in Table 27.

Table 27

Themes from Open Response Questions on Graduate and Teacher Questionnaires

Themes	For Students	For Teachers
	College prep	Philosophy & Mission
	Prep Plus	Impact
	Skills	Skills & Teaching Strategies
	Opportunities	Life-Changing
	In Touch	In Touch
	Close	Trust
	Mentor	Better Teacher
	Parent	Students Are Like Me
	Family	Family

Graduates and teachers alike found AVID to be much more than an elective class. Graduates felt they were being prepared for college by acquiring skills and college knowledge. They also expressed deep connections to their classmates and teachers, explaining how they keep in touch, and often see their AVID teachers as mentors. Teachers explained how they became better practitioners through the use of AVID strategies and skills

garnered from AVID professional learning. Some saw themselves reflected in their students, having common characteristics such as ethnicity, first generation status, or growing up in New Mexico. They believe in AVID's mission to close opportunity and achievement gaps, and they enjoyed a bond with their students.

The AVID family represents the phenomenon of the AVID experience for both students and teachers. Not only do students stay in touch with their AVID teachers more than other teachers, but they also sometimes see their teachers as a parent that can help them in ways their own families cannot. AVID teachers act as a conduit to college, allowing students to use their proxy agency (Bandura, 1986) to gain insight and access to a new world. The close bond that is created through facilitating students' transition to higher education is sometimes no less than life-altering for teachers as well as their students.

Even as an exploratory study, the findings in *AVID Graduates' Transition to College* support the use of the CCR Framework as a curricular and instructional tool, enhance our understanding of how students navigate their transition into college and continue to persist, and reveal the essence of the AVID experience — connection through the AVID Family. These findings have implications for educators, and I pose recommendations for further discussion and study in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Through this study I sought to address the issue of college persistence for underrepresented students, specifically those in New Mexico who are majority Latino, low income, and first generation college students. New Mexico faces stark challenges to prosperity and educational attainment largely due to poverty. Yet despite the difficulty, participants in this study continued to pursue higher education through the state's Hispanic serving institutions, persisting after successfully transitioning into Social and Academic Systems on campus (Tinto, 1975). Part of their ability to transition into college was due to their participation in AVID — a college preparation program designed to provide Rigorous Academic Preparedness, offer Opportunity Knowledge, and activate Student Agency through individual determination.

Summary of the Study

The existing data suggest that AVID graduates persist in college at higher rates than other American college students, including their underrepresented peers (AVID Center, 2018a) — through this study I sought to understand why. I used two research questions to consider the overall experience of graduates of the school-based AVID programs in New Mexico and their perception of the framework that supports the curricula. Those questions were:

1. *What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?*
2. *What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency)?*

A ‘lived experience’ is a concept related to phenomenology, the theoretical framework of the study. As a group of people describe a shared experience — depicting common feelings, thoughts, or mindsets — an essence of that experience is revealed. I looked for a common understanding of what participation in the AVID program entails and how it supports transition into college.

To garner this understanding, and to address the research questions, I used three instruments in a mixed methods approach with quantitative data from graduate and teacher questionnaires, and qualitative data from semi-structured graduate interviews. I supported the use of mixed methods with its ‘partner’ pragmatism (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 129) — a philosophy that embraces flexibility in the application of whichever instruments best suit the practical application of the research (Creswell, 2013). However, the application of the research results is limited by the small sample size of 66 AVID graduates, and 37 AVID teachers, from a probable pool of 1,000 graduates and more than 100 teachers.

Despite the various and numerous attempts I made to electronically distribute both the teacher and graduate questionnaires, the complications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020-2021 school year made data collection more challenging. Gaining the attention of teachers, college students, and college administrators whose inboxes and minds were constantly focused on technological and psychological adaptations necessary during that unprecedented year was difficult at best. Therefore, this study is considered exploratory, and any findings ought to be considered through that lens.

The qualitative analysis of the semi-structured graduate interviews, as well as the open response items on the graduate and teacher surveys, involved three rounds of coding. I utilized a combination of Values coding (Saldaña, 2016) and In Vivo coding (Creswell,

2013), remaining as close as possible to the terms offered by those sharing the experience. For example, themes such as “family,” “skills,” and “money” were based in terms used by the study participants, whereas other themes, such as “academic transition” and “Opportunity Knowledge” were inherent to the aligned framework and used to structure the interview responses.

Quantitative analysis of the two questionnaires consisted of frequency calculations (e.g., demographic data, educational goals), crosstabs (e.g., AVID vs. non-AVID teacher contact) as well as estimates of Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient to determine the continuity of CCR framework component items (e.g., Student Agency), which were found to be highly reliable.

Findings

College Persistence

This study affirmed the existing data that AVID students successfully transition to, and persist in, college at greater rates than their peers (AVID Center, 2018a) despite belonging to one or more groups considered underrepresented on campuses nationwide. The years they spent in AVID acquiring skills, engaging in opportunities, and developing their own agency prepared them to prosper in an environment where students who share many of their same characteristics do not thrive. AVID students are underrepresented in all college categories save gender, yet their preparation and their determination guide them through the hurdles of the Academic and Social Systems (Tinto, 1975) they must navigate to attain the long-planned-for goal of a college degree.

By the time they finally arrive on campus, students of color — represented by 94% of study respondents — have already encountered more barriers to college entrance than other

students. They are less likely to complete college entrance requirements such as taking the correct courses (California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, 2015), completing the college application process (McCoy, 2014), surviving “subordination and racism” (Welton & Martinez, 2014, p. 218), and fighting through summer melt (Rall, 2016).

For Latino students, who made up 75.8% of the study participants, college transition can be complicated by cultural and language barriers. Finding campus connections to cultural identity (Clayton et al., 2019), along with support systems that recognized and validated their experiences (Gloria & Castellanos, 2012), or which fostered feelings of belonging (Gonzales, 2019) helped some Latino students to transition and persist. In their interviews, some of the AVID graduates discussed the importance of finding groups of students with whom they felt that sense of belonging, which is essential to transition, according to Tinto’s motivation and persistence model (2017).

English language learners face unique challenges to college entrance, especially in New Mexico where only 15% reach English proficiency (ED Data Express, 2017). They must often challenge lowered academic expectations (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016) endure “stigmatization and barriers to educational opportunity” (Umansky, 2016, p. 714), and fight off a “feeling of dissonance” (Darder, 2002, p. 129) that is created by having to build knowledge in another language while in a tense state of being, unable to relax and learn. Despite these challenges, which about one-third of these study participants may have faced, college students with limited English proficiency exhibit a strong motivation to persist which is apparent in their significantly higher than average retention rates (Fong et al., 2016).

For Hispanic students who mostly begin at a community college (Krogstad, 2016), making a second transition to a four-year university is statistically unlikely with only a 20%

transfer rate, followed by a 50% degree-completion rate. Only 15% of participants were attending a 2-year institution at the time they completed the survey, though a third of AVID students typically attend community college (AVID Center, 2019). Since community college is usually the most affordable option, particularly for undocumented students who are not eligible for federal financial aid (NASFAA, 2019), students must garner institutional, financial, and family support (Harris, 2017) to make it work for them.

Low income students account for one-third of all college students and are more likely to enroll in two-year institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). They tend to be academically unprepared for college due to opportunity gaps in their learning (Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2018). As is the case for most low income students, 77.3% of the study participants received Pell grants to help finance their college educations. Also in line with low income students, most AVID graduates were attending public, in-state universities (60.6%). A smaller group were attending private colleges with full-ride scholarships from a local organization.

Similar to low income students, first generation college students, who represent almost 70% of the study population, make up approximately one-third of college students nationally (Swecker et al., 2013). Similarly to all other underrepresented groups, first generation students face challenges that their continuous-generation peers do not face as often. Some are not academically prepared, requiring enrollment in noncredit foundational courses, especially in math and English (Stephens et al., 2014). This group must often navigate the transition from a two-year to a four-year college, where more first generation students begin (Miller, 2013), but fewer manage to persist (Huerta et al., 2013). First generation students' perceptions of their cultural capital appear to play a role as well since

they report having lower academic self-esteem (Nora, 2004, p. 187), which affects their sense of belonging. The final challenge for first generation college students is that they typically “embrace lower educational aspirations than their non-first generation peers” (Franklin & Slate, 2012, p. 178). This was not the case for the AVID graduates in this study, 60.6% of whom would settle for nothing less than a bachelor’s, and 42.4% who intended to obtain a graduate degree.

AVID was created more than forty years ago for students who fit any and all of the characteristics of underrepresented students. Beginning with the first AVID class of 1984, AVID graduates have shown time and again that with intentional preparation and support, they can qualify for, enroll in, and graduate from even the most prestigious institutions of higher learning in the country. This achievement of college transition and persistence is especially notable for students from a state that is ranked 50th for high school graduation and child prosperity (Center for American Progress, 2018). Their success on campuses across New Mexico is a testimony to the phenomenon of the AVID experience.

Aligned Framework

The major finding of the study is that the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID is a useful construct for explaining how AVID graduates transitioned into college. The Social and Academic Systems from Tinto’s well-established Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College (1975) serve as opposing sides of the seesaw balancing atop the triangular fulcrum of AVID’s Career and College Readiness Framework (CCR Framework). As AVID graduates navigate the two systems, they engage all components of the CCR Framework to support their college transition and persistence.

The evolution of Tinto’s framework with the incorporation of motivation and

persistence in 2017 aligns with CCR Framework components. Under Academic Systems, the framework components of family background, individual attributes, and pre-college schooling, align with Opportunity Knowledge, with goal commitment, and along with Rigorous Academic Preparedness. Under Social Systems, self-efficacy represents a component of Student Agency. Surrounding both systems is motivation, aligned to individual determination. Tinto's 2017 model considers the student's own agency, as well as their sense of belonging, as critical components to their persistence. Importantly, he emphasizes that students' perceptions of their experiences are critical factors in their motivation. It is not a far stretch to see how AVID students' perceptions of their experiences, and their sense of belonging to a social and academically supportive program, could transfer to their persistence and motivation at the college level.

The graduate interviews support all aspects of the aligned framework as well. Each graduate exemplified a different component — Tinto's integration into Social and Academic Systems, as well as students' use of AVID's Opportunity Knowledge, Rigorous Academic Preparedness, and Student Agency to make those transitions. Additionally, excerpts from their interviews overlapped with other themes and subthemes, supporting those results and demonstrating the complexity of the transition into college.

Helpful Framework Components

Of the CCR Framework components, AVID graduates in this study found Opportunity Knowledge and Student Agency to be the most helpful. When put into the larger context of college preparation at the secondary level, this finding highlights AVID's use of curricula designed to prepare the whole student for college transition, while other courses focus solely on Rigorous Academic Preparedness. Replies to open response items on the

graduate questionnaire support AVID's mission of expansive college preparation, citing experiences related to broader opportunities, memorable events, and a supportive community.

While AVID graduates found the curriculum addressing WICOR (writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading) to be 'really' or 'extremely helpful,' it was not the *most* helpful in terms of their college transition. The WICOR skill set is aligned to national college preparatory standards (Conley, 2005) and the college readiness standard for each individual skill is detailed in the literature review — e.g., W: (Burdick & Greer, 2017), I: (Costa & Kallick, 2004), C: (van Leeuwen & Janssen, 2019), O: (Breux et al., 2019), and R: (Thomas et al., 2018). Despite ample support for the importance of developing each of the five skills for college readiness, and a high reliability score for the WICOR survey items themselves (Cronbach's alpha = .980), the data suggest that graduates found both Student Agency and Opportunity Knowledge more helpful.

One possible explanation for this result is that most of the other secondary classes students take are also building WICOR skills, which makes them less salient within the AVID curriculum, even though it, too, is built around WICOR. Another supporting point of data is that among the WICOR skills, more students found the "O" skills, organization (O=78.8%) and the "C" skills, collaboration (C=74.2%), to be 'really' or 'extremely' helpful versus instruction in writing (W=65.2%) or reading (R=68.2%). This result implies that the skills students find most valuable in AVID are those not typically developed in other courses.

Connection

AVID is a phenomenon, and connection is the essence of the AVID experience. Both graduates and teachers related strong feelings of attachment to their AVID cohorts, offering

multiple instances of emotional and academic support. Many affirmed the essence of AVID as a family structure, complete with parents and siblings. They affectionately referenced AVID “moms” and “babies,” illustrating how the AVID family is a treasured structure for both students and teachers. These connections extended beyond graduation, with many students continuing to seek the advice of their AVID mentors years later.

Quantitative results depict a marked connection between AVID students and their teachers. Almost thirty-eight percent reported being in touch with their AVID teachers ‘a few times a year’ at nearly double the rate of their other teachers. Similarly, nearly 40% said they were ‘never’ in touch with their teachers, but less than 19% said that about their AVID teachers. Graduates also stated that their AVID teachers influenced their decision to attend college almost as much as their families or themselves. Even in the open response survey items, graduates expressed a range of connections to their AVID teachers from being ‘in touch’ (18%) to feeling close (33%) to proclaiming that their teacher acted as a mentor or a second parent (16%).

The qualitative section of the study, the interviews with AVID graduates, showed the same range of connection as expressed in the survey question, “What connection, if any, do you have or did you have to your AVID teacher(s)?” Five out of the six graduates interviewed stated they still had a relationship with their AVID teacher, even fifteen years after graduation for one interviewee. Two of the graduates felt supported by their AVID teachers in terms of their academic goals. They intimated that a rapport had developed between them, and they seemed to feel they could rely on their teachers. One had a strong, though brief, connection to two different teachers in just two years in AVID. She trusted their advice and enjoyed learning from them. The remaining three graduates exuded feelings of an

intense bond with their teachers, calling them in turn a “mentor,” a “second mom,” and the “reason why I went into the education field.”

AVID teachers also reported a strong connection or bond with their AVID students. Some recognized aspects of themselves in their students; others were motivated by AVID’s mission to make a difference in the lives of young people. Several theories of teacher effectiveness could account for their collective ability to create a positive and motivating classroom climate. For example, it could be their level of training (Watt et al., 2010), their years of experience (Rice, 2003), or their consistent use of strategies (Mayes, 2001). One likely explanation is that they make their students feel seen, heard, and cared for, much as their elementary teachers likely had. They create a feeling of “we” (Medley, 1977, p. 109) in their classrooms.

Limitations

The intent was for any findings of this research to be applicable to any AVID program. However, due to the smaller than expected sample size, it is considered an exploratory study and any results would need to be confirmed by a larger, future study. Additionally, the stated challenges that face New Mexico, and the unique composition of the student population, limit the study to local application.

Another limitation concerned the allowable recruitment methods for participants, which impeded data collection. Permission to contact graduates via AVID Center’s senior data pool was denied due to FERPA regulations. Attempting to reach current college students via departmental email or campus social media accounts was not very successful, resulting in less than a dozen responses. Reaching AVID graduates through their former AVID teachers was the most successful method, but relied on them having current contact information for

the students and on the students receiving a link to the study through the teachers. The COVID-19 pandemic was a barrier to data collection due to campus restrictions on the student body. For example, physical flyers for the study were not posted because most students were enrolled in online courses. Lastly, trying to get teachers or students engaged in any extra-curricular activities, especially through electronic contact (email or text) was difficult given the underlying stress of the pandemic.

Finally, for AVID graduates to participate in this study on college transition, they needed to be enrolled in or have attended college. That limits participants to those who successfully navigated their way into, and persisted in, an institution of higher education. It does not include students who took a different path after high school. Nor was it likely to include those who did not find AVID helpful as they would probably choose not to participate in the survey. As a result, there is no understanding of how those students perceived the AVID College and Career Readiness Framework.

Recommendations for Further Research

The AVID College and Career Readiness Framework is a relatively new construct from AVID Center, having been formally introduced in 2019. In this exploratory study, I have aligned it to Tinto's Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College (1975) to form the Aligned Framework Model: Tinto and AVID (presented in Appendix F) through which to view AVID graduates' transition into college. It has served as a useful tool for this project; however, I have used only the top portion of the full CCR Framework, the triangular section with the three components of Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency. This is considered the "What Students Need" segment of the framework (AVID Center, 2019e).

As shown in Appendix A, there is another section to the CCR Framework underneath the “College and Career Readiness” title listing four actions: Insist on Rigor, Break Down Barriers, Align the Work, and Advocate for Students. This is the “What Educators Do” segment of the framework. These actions are in support of the work that students are doing and are not addressed directly in the teacher survey instrument or the themes of this project. Further study of how AVID teachers, AVID site coordinators, other teachers, and campus leaders collectively use these actions to support all students on a campus is needed to understand the potential impact of the full CCR Framework.

Additionally, due to the small sample size of this exploratory study, as well as the unique characteristics of New Mexico, research about the CCR Framework needs to be conducted in larger student populations across different areas of the country. For example, a more diverse student population that is similar to the national composition of AVID students, might offer new insights into how the framework works for different ethnic groups. Studies in states with better educational outcomes, or with less pervasive poverty, might lead to additional actions educators could take to support AVID students. The conceptual components of the CCR Framework open many possibilities for research.

Another potential area of research is the “AVID family” bond that teachers and students develop over time. First, comparing cohorts that loop (stay together) with the same teacher to cohorts that move through grade-static teachers could reveal the benefits of both, allowing schools to weigh those benefits before determining their AVID elective structure. Next, studying the characteristics and classroom culture of AVID teachers who foster a family bond could help schools in their recruiting efforts as they consider which teachers to place with AVID students. Lastly, the challenges of the pandemic forced all educators to put

relationships before rigor. With an increasing focus on social and emotional learning due to COVID-19 (Hadar et al., 2020), such studies could add to the literature on student-teacher bonds and a caring classroom culture within, and perhaps also outside, the AVID elective.

Implications for Professionals

AVID teachers, by and large, enjoy teaching the AVID elective and often get as much from it as their students do. As supported by their statements, they gained new teaching techniques, became better content teachers, and found value and purpose in AVID's mission to close opportunity gaps for all students. In addition to acquiring new classroom skills, some teachers personally identified with their AVID students, having similar experiences or characteristics — a few were AVID students themselves. In their AVID role, they became coaches, advocates, and “campus mom[s]” to their students. Beyond that, many also felt the same closeness that the students expressed. Some felt transformed by the experience of teaching AVID, calling it “life-changing,” a career “highlight,” and “one of the most positive experiences a secondary educator can have.”

Even before COVID-19, teachers were leaving the profession due to myriad issues including feeling disrespected by students, parents, and the community. AVID teachers, on the other hand, feel connected to students, their parents, and the community. The connection is so strong that a small group of AVID students became teachers specifically so that they could recreate that bond in their own AVID classrooms. The phenomenon of this experience, for both teachers and students, could bring meaningful change to schools, to teacher training, and to educators' stance in the classroom right when it is needed most. The pandemic shone a light into some dark corners around equity and opportunity gaps, student learning, and the relevance of content in the absence of connection. If AVID teachers can keep holding that

light for themselves, their students, and their colleagues, more teachers and students might experience the essence of what is currently unique to the AVID elective.

Lessons Learned

In my sixteen years as an educator, all but three have been with AVID in some capacity. In all of my roles with AVID including teacher, administrator, and now curriculum developer, I have had the privilege of working with some of the best educators in the country. Their intellect, experience, and most importantly, their passion for the work has continually inspired and motivated me. These colleagues would agree that we do all that we do for the benefit of AVID students. Their success is our success, as students, graduates, and adults living their own lives. The collective pride we feel cannot be understated. It drives us to make AVID even better for those students yet to come, until there is a time when AVID is no longer needed. To that end, I will use what I have learned, even from this small exploratory study, to improve AVID implementation.

Financial Literacy

From Antonio, I learned that financial literacy is critical to postsecondary success. Because so many AVID students are both first generation college students and from low income families, understanding the FAFSA, scholarships, and college financial aid is the first step. However, the financial unit for seniors currently in place may not be explicit enough when it comes to predatory lending. We will need to look more broadly to encompass the needs of students at two-year institutions who may be living on their own, working part-time, and balancing adult responsibilities while attending college. This is part of developing their agency.

Two-Year Institutions

The research cited in the literature review on Latino, low income, and first generation college students converges on an important point about college attendance: many AVID students will enroll in two-year institutions. Those data suggest that starting at a four-year college or university is statistically better for all students, and particularly underrepresented students. However, this is just not the reality for a third of our graduates, and they will need support to matriculate and complete their bachelor's degrees.

Designing differentiated lessons for students going to two-year or four-year institutions could provide students with both the knowledge and the agency to implement next-step readiness plans. Partnering with AVID teachers, who are often still in contact with their graduates, AVID Center could send communications reminding students of their next steps at strategic intervals. This form of 'nudging' from institutions has shown positive outcomes for students attending those institutions (Castleman, 2018). AVID could apply those same actions to their graduates and study the results.

Career Opportunity Knowledge

The graduate survey data suggest that students' perceptions of how helpful AVID was in providing opportunities to learn about career was lower than opportunities to learn about college. Twice as many graduates found the career standards to be 'not helpful/somewhat helpful' than the college standards — meaning that only 66.7% found the career standards to be 'helpful/extremely helpful' versus 85.3% for the college standards. The CCR Framework is designed to support both college and career readiness. Teachers might need more support in connecting students to dual credit, career technical pathways, and career-related internships. This could be accomplished through various forms of professional learning.

Additionally, more lesson plans or units of study could be written using the Opportunity Knowledge standards and topics.

Another way to address these results is to balance out the attention paid to career in the curricula. What I learned from Stephanie is that not only was college financially out of the question for her family without her full-ride scholarship, but that due to her Rigorous Academic Preparedness, she had a variety of career opportunities in the armed forces. Connecting the dots between STEM skills and careers, especially for girls of color, could widen their view so that they are able to choose between multiple options. Bringing the STEM work that AVID is doing with summer programs more solidly into the school year units of study would strengthen Opportunity Knowledge for all students, and especially for the majority of girls in AVID.

Intersectionality

AVID students have many identities. They are a blend of races, ethnicities, genders, and backgrounds. They come from poor families and middle-class families, families with a college-educated parent and families building a college-going tradition. They are from two-parent, two-language, two-story households. They live in the mountains, on the plains, by the water, and in the desert. They live on city blocks and acres of farmland. They are students with potential and individual determination. And AVID makes a place for them all.

Within each AVID student, there are many identities. They may be first generation college students and bi-lingual. They may be bi-lingual and low income. They may be low income and trans-gendered. They may be trans-gendered and African American. They may be African American and Hispanic. They may be Hispanic and gifted. Membership in

multiple groups brings greater social capital. It also brings a complexity to how they see, and are seen in, the world.

Developing or adopting curriculum that helps students to explore all facets of their identities, while affirming their identities as college-bound students, would align with Student Agency. Professional learning for AVID teachers in creating “identity-safe” classrooms where diversity is “cultivated” as a resource (Cohn-Vargas & Steele, 2015) would be an extension of AVID’s culturally relevant teaching curriculum.

The goal of focusing on identity would be to help AVID teachers support their students in understanding who they are, and perhaps the students might extend that support to others. With fewer boys and young men in AVID, and in college, AVID teachers could form mentoring networks of middle and high school students to affirm their intersectional identities as students of color, and as scholars. In New Mexico, those networks could encompass urban and rural AVID students, as there are more boys in the rural AVID programs, and they are at increased risk for tobacco, alcohol and illegal drug use (Atav & Spencer, 2002). Inversely, the young women in the urban AVID classes could network with their peers in rural areas, who are at greater risk for teen pregnancy (New Mexico Community Data Collaborative, 2018). This type of network could be implemented in different AVID communities to strengthen different intersectional identities.

Implementing such curricula would not be the first time that AVID has focused on students’ identities in order to support their scholarship and college-going readiness. In the past, AVID has sponsored national conferences centered around two particular groups of students. In 2007, AVID sponsored a conference entitled “Up Where We Belong: Accelerating African-American Male Student Achievement” to support educators who

worked with those young men. Similarly, in 2009, AVID sponsored “Juntos” a conference for educators supporting Latinx students across the United States. Bringing AVID’s focus to the intersectionality of its student population could address the needs of nearly half a million students as they develop their multiple identities.

Resilient to Resistant

Among the qualitative results, I presented examples of how AVID graduates used their individual determination to navigate obstacles. Antonio, suddenly and unexpectedly out on his own, altered his educational plans to make ends meet. He found scholastic grants and work study at his local community college, but a “bad roommate” falling behind on rent led to payday loans, collections, and repossessions. Stephanie, feeling that she was missing opportunities in her smaller charter school, transferred to a larger comprehensive high school where she could access AP courses, AVID, ROTC, and a school library. Had she stayed at her old school, she would not have been eligible for a full-ride scholarship without which she would not be in college studying engineering among “others who look like me and who come from the same background as me.” Marta, inspired by a service learning project in AVID, pursued volunteer opportunities on her college campus. Despite facing discouraging times when she wanted to drop out, especially since “no one [in my family] would bat an eye if I decided to leave,” she resolved to become a social worker after discovering an appalling lack of services in mental health, substance abuse, and child welfare. In fact, 2018, her first year as a college student, was the same year when New Mexico sank to 50th in child prosperity, employment, food security, and high school graduation (Center for American Progress, 2018). She aims to make a difference in those statistics.

Each student in turn used their Rigorous Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and Student Agency to navigate difficult circumstances and persist in their education. But what if, instead of navigating difficult circumstances, AVID students were taught how to dismantle the systems that enabled those circumstances — predatory lending, unequal schooling, and a severe lack of social services — to exist in the first place? Over the past decades, researchers and authors have moved from navigating systems of oppression to calling for their dismantling. From the Me Too movement (e.g., Nicholls, 2021) to white privilege (e.g., Rodriguez & Villaverde, 2000) to racism (e.g., Chaudry, 2020) to deficit thinking in education (e.g., Valencia, 2010), the pattern is clear. For AVID to address these issues of social justice and how they impact students — particularly in terms of exercising both individual and collective student and teacher agency — it would only be a matter of developing curriculum and professional learning. AVID is about half-way there already.

In their text, *Transformative Ethnic Studies in Schools: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research*, Sleeter and Zavala (2020) list the seven hallmarks of ethnic studies. AVID curricula is currently aligned to three of them: *community engagement, pedagogy that is culturally responsive and mediated, and students as intellectuals*. The remaining four — *curriculum as counter-narrative, intersectionality and multiplicity, criticality, and reclaiming cultural identities* — could be added to the curricula using curated writing teams who would undertake the necessary research to properly design units of study for implementation by AVID teachers many of whom, like 80% of American teachers, are white (NCES, 2019).

The research that supports implementing ethnic studies in public schools is in alignment with AVID’s goals and philosophies. Focusing on these hallmarks can help “students grapple with and think their way through diverse and conflicting perspectives, then

consider what to do with their new knowledge” (Sleeter & Zavala, 2020, p. 48). One study cited describes the impact of implementing the hallmark of *curriculum as counter-narrative* stating it “improved the achievement of mainly Mexican American students significantly more than the traditional curriculum, and the more courses students took, the stronger the impact on their achievement” (p. 50). In another study, students reading scores were “significantly and positively” related to their teachers’ ability to use *culturally responsive teaching* (p. 57).

Beyond the academic outcomes, implementing curriculum that supports ethnic study hallmarks would support the agency of both teachers and students. AVID teachers, who are already poised as campus leaders, could impact their campus culture by using asset-based pedagogies in alignment with the cultural identities of their students. AVID students, who are largely students of color, could analyze how their own intersectionality is impacted by the intersecting systems of race, gender, and class in America. Then, they could use their agency to recognize, challenge, and change those systems, in effect moving away from necessary resilience toward an empowering resistance. Given where we stand as a country in this current moment in history, there may never be a better time to begin.

Concluding Remarks

In its first forty years, AVID has grown from one teacher in one classroom with one class of students to over 5,000 AVID schools, tens of thousands of AVID teachers, and hundreds of thousands of AVID graduates. Its mission to close gaps for underrepresented students is supported by educational leaders in organizations around the globe.

The creation of the AVID College and Career Readiness Framework provides a structure through which to discuss the curriculum teachers use and the skills students acquire throughout their years in the AVID elective class. It also describes the outcomes for students — both what they need and what they gain through their own actions. Though students perceive each component of the CCR Framework as helpful, they find most beneficial those aspects not covered in other classrooms: Student Agency and Opportunity Knowledge.

All phenomena have an essence that represents the experience for those involved, and for AVID that essence is connection. The AVID family is a network that supports students and teachers alike — academically, socially, and emotionally — beyond the bounds of a typical middle or high school course. The bond that AVID students and teachers feel is unique in secondary education, and as educators seek to better understand the needs of students in a post-COVID classroom, they would do well to take some time to observe an AVID class. What they find there might lead them to change their practice and enhance the classroom experience for their students just as AVID has done for its own students since 1980. It may be time for more than content to shape our connections to students, for the benefit of all.

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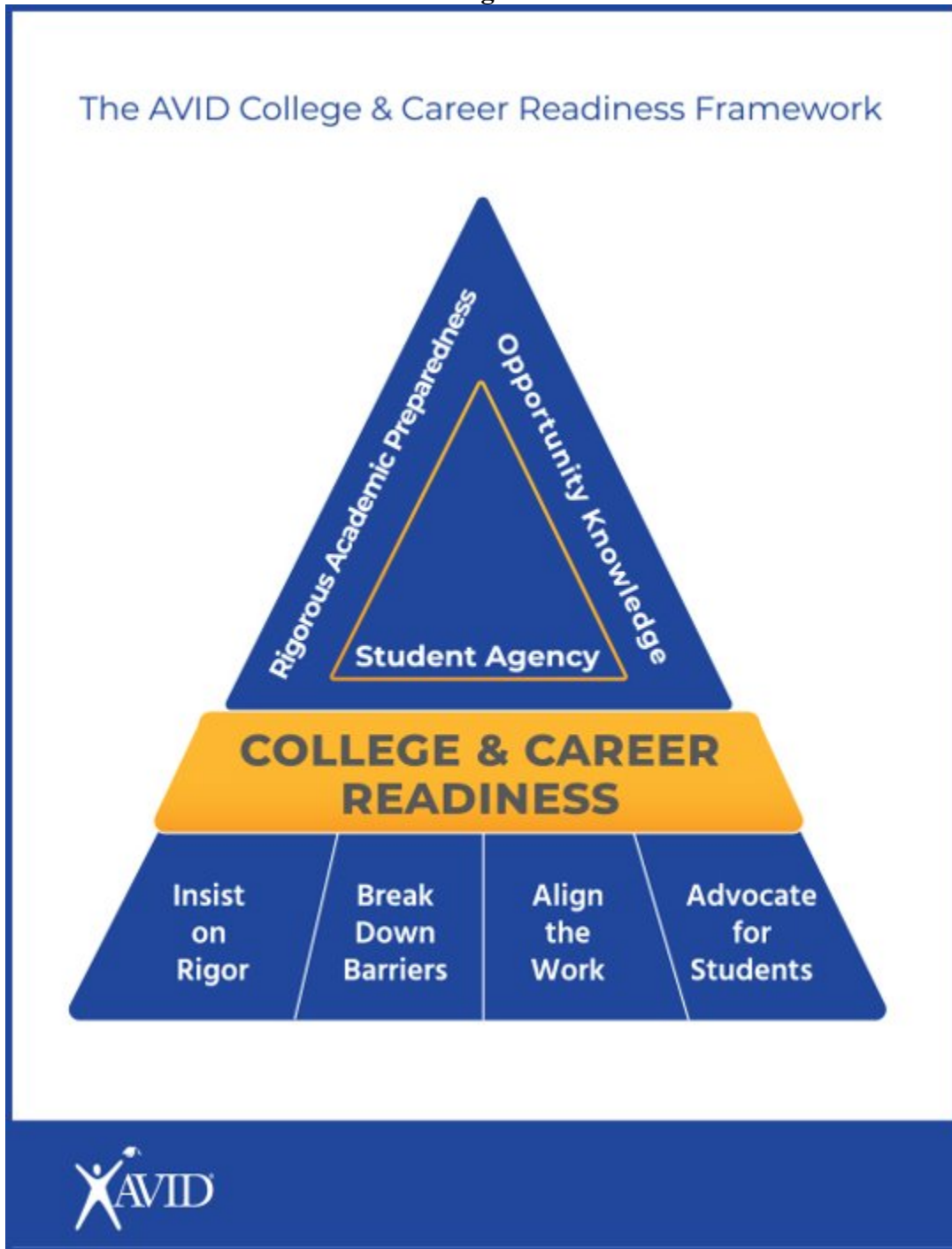
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Appendix A

AVID's Career and College Readiness Framework



Appendix B

AVID Anchor Standards

STUDENT OUTCOMES	Subsets	Codes	Anchor Standards
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.1	Act as a globally and digitally aware, responsible, and contributing citizen
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.2	Evaluate the impact of decisions on others and the world
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.3	Attend to personal health, safety and balance (including digital security)
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.4	Make appropriate personal financial choices
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.5	Generate and maintain a network of support for current and future success
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.6	Develop, demonstrate, and maintain motivation
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.7	Self-monitor and seek help when necessary
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.8	Demonstrate persistence, flexibility, and adaptability
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.9	Demonstrate self-awareness strategies and skills
STUDENT AGENCY	Student Empowerment	SA.SE.10	Apply learning to demonstrate knowledge and achieve success
STUDENT AGENCY	Leadership of Others	SA.LO.1	Demonstrate integrity and ethical leadership, including online
STUDENT AGENCY	Leadership of Others	SA.LO.2	Pursue leadership opportunities and hold leadership positions
STUDENT AGENCY	Leadership of Others	SA.LO.3	Manage and resolve conflict with others
STUDENT OUTCOMES	Subsets	Codes	Anchor Standards
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.1	Compose a variety of text types
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.2	Analyze a writing task
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.3	Revise writing to improve clarity and accomplish the writing purpose
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.4	Polish writing through editing and proof-reading
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.5	Publish writing by distributing to varied audiences
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.6	Take notes to meet the note-taking objective
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Writing	AP.W.7	Summarize and Reflect to synthesize learning and identify next steps

STUDENT OUTCOMES	Subsets	Codes	Anchor Standards
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.1	Use questioning techniques to engage in discussions and think critically about content and concepts
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.2	Identify specific questions based on a misunderstood concept or problem
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.3	Upon arriving at a solution, identify generalized steps/processes that could be used to solve similar problems
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.4	Make connections between new learning and previous learning, their experiences, themselves, and/or their world
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.5	Continuously reflect, and refine strategies to promote learning and academic success
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.6	Reflect and modify actions related to successful utilization of a process
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.7	Identify topics/questions to be investigated, with source material on opposing sides of the topic
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.8	Evaluate the validity and reliability of both digital and print sources
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.9	Synthesize and organize information effectively, including usage of digital tools
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.10	Cite evidence and support claims
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Inquiry	AP.I.11	Present research findings, customizing presentation for the intended audience
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.1	Share responsibility among group members
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.2	Work productively and effectively in diverse teams with diverse perspectives
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.3	Establish and maintain relational capacity with others
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.4	Respect individual contributions
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.5	Support group members in clarifying confusion and checking for understanding
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.6	Utilize technology as a tool for collaboration both synchronously and asynchronously
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.7	Clearly communicate verbally and non-verbally, including appropriate usage of technology
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.8	Listen effectively to decipher meaning
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.9	Demonstrate command of language and grammar usage when communicating
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Collaboration	AP.C.10	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks

STUDENT OUTCOMES	Subsets	Codes	Anchor Standards
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Organization	AP.O.1	Routinely utilize organizational systems to access and archive materials efficiently
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Organization	AP.O.2	Organize and allocate time based on priorities and task completion
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Organization	AP.O.3	Identify and plan for the steps necessary to accomplish various types of goals
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Organization	AP.O.4	Monitor progress towards goals and revise appropriately, leveraging technology
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Organization	AP.O.5	Organize information, indicating relationships between ideas
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Reading	AP.R1	Select a text according to the reading purpose
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Reading	AP.R2	Preview text to connect with or build background knowledge
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Reading	AP.R3	Examine key academic and content-related vocabulary to deepen comprehension of texts
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Reading	AP.R4	Interact with the text to process information as it is read
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS	Reading	AP.R5	Extend beyond the text by using academic thinking skills (applying, analyzing, evaluating, and/or synthesizing key learning)
STUDENT OUTCOMES	Subsets	Codes	Anchor Standards
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Advancing College Preparedness	OK.ACP.1	Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills and interests related to college selection
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Advancing College Preparedness	OK.ACP.2	Apply understanding of key college selection criteria to academic performance to determine best-fit colleges
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Advancing College Preparedness	OK.ACP.3	Understand scholarships and the role they play in college financing
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Advancing College Preparedness	OK.ACP.4	Plan education and college path aligned to personal goals
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Advancing College Preparedness	OK.ACP.5	Complete college admission requirements, including testing and application
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Building Career Knowledge	OK.BCK.1	Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills and interests related to career readiness and career selection
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Building Career Knowledge	OK.BCK.2	Apply understanding of potential careers in areas of personal interest to career goals
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Building Career Knowledge	OK.BCK.3	Develop skills and attitudes related to career readiness
OPPORTUNITY KNOWLEDGE	Building Career Knowledge	OK.BCK.4	Plan education and career path aligned to personal goals

Appendix C

Tinto's Conceptual Schema for Dropout from College (1975)

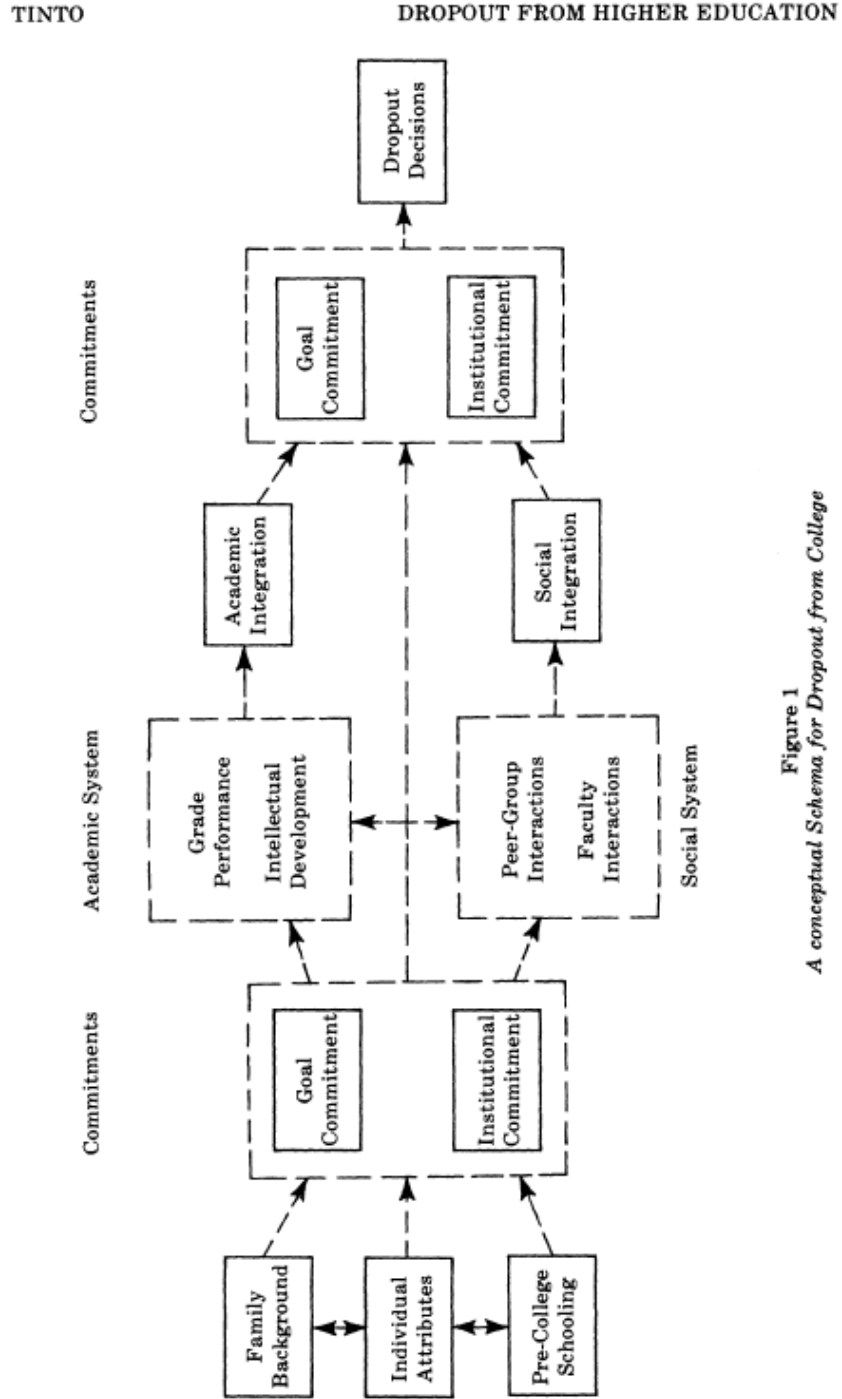


Figure 1
A conceptual Schema for Dropout from College

Appendix D

Tinto's Model for Student Motivation and Persistence (2017)

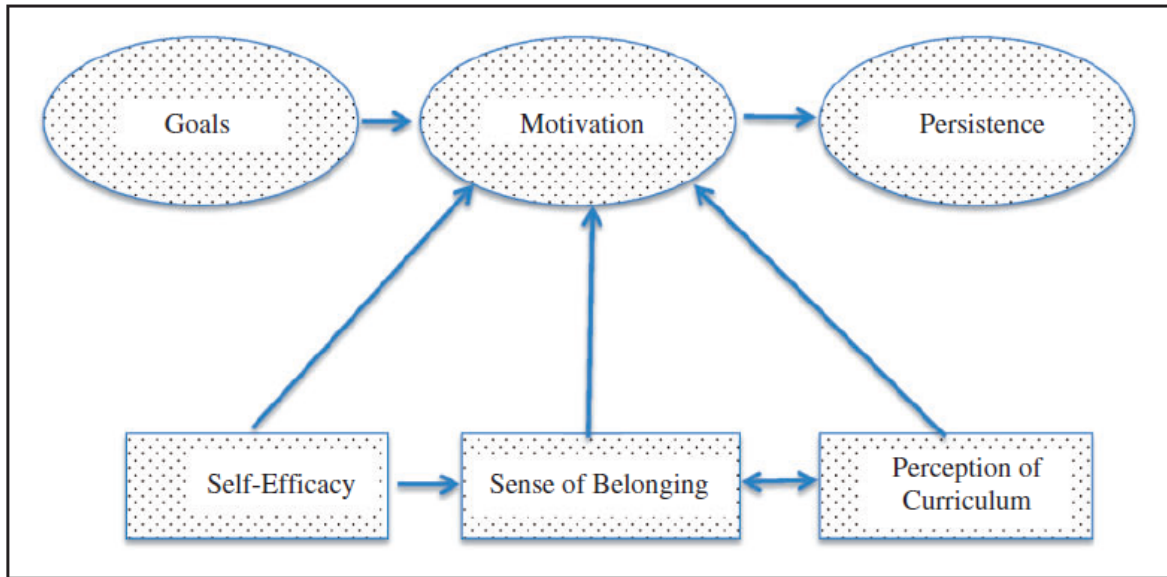


Figure 1. A model of student motivation and persistence.

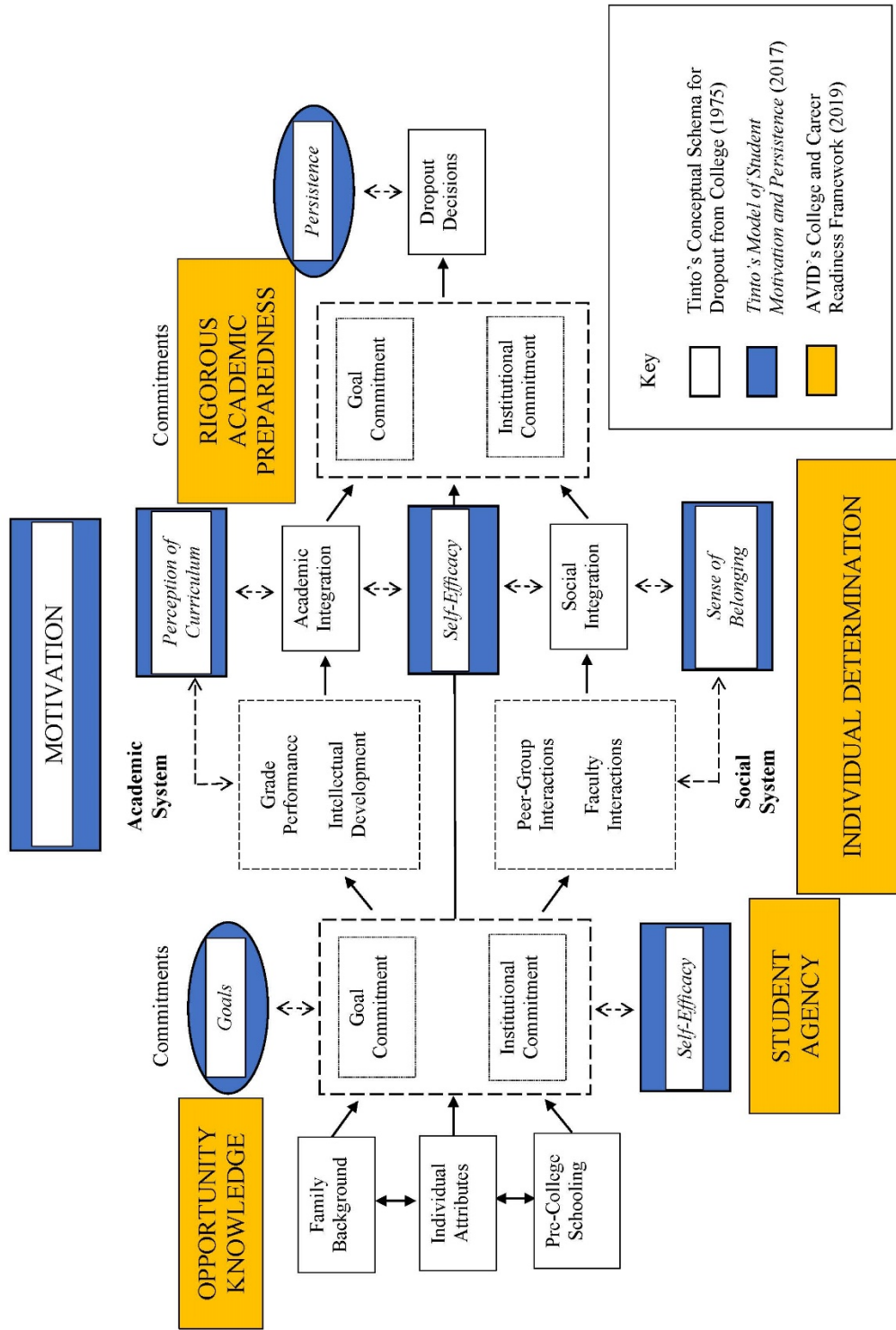
Appendix E

Costa's Levels of Thinking and Questioning

Costa's Level	Cognitive Functions	Sample Questions
Level 3: Applying Information Demonstrates mastering of knowledge learned (OUTPUT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply • Create • Evaluate • Generate • Hypothesize • Imagine • Judge • Modify • Predict • Speculate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would happen to ____ if _____? • What would it be like to live ...? • Pretend you are a character in the story and... • What do you think will happen to _____? Why? • Could this story have really happened? Why or why not? • How would you solve this problem in your life? • How does the author's claim hold up under these circumstances: _____? • What if the situation changed to ____; how would that impact the outcome?
Level 2: Processing Information Practice knowledge learned (PROCESS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze • Categorize • Compare • Contrast • Demonstrate • Develop • Group • Infer • Organize • Relate • Sequence • Synthesize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you have done the same thing as...? • How are ____ and ____ alike and different? • What was important about...? • What other ways could ____ be interpreted? • What is the main idea of the story (event)? • What information supports your explanation? • What does ____ mean? • What does _____ suggest about _____'s character? • What lines of the poem express the poet's feelings about _____? • What is the author trying to prove?
Level 1: Gathering Information Introduction of knowledge (INPUT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define • Describe • Find • Identify • List • Locate • Name • Observe • Recite • Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information is given? • Where does ____ happen? • When did the event take place? • What are...? • Where did...? • What is...? • Who was/were...? • What part of the story shows...? • What is the origin of the word _____? • What events led to _____?

Appendix F

An Aligned Framework: Tinto and AVID



Appendix G

AVID Graduates' College Transition Questionnaire



AVID Graduates' College Transition Survey

This survey asks questions regarding your experience in the AVID Elective Class in middle and/or high school. It seeks to understand how AVID graduates perceive their transition from high school to college, and what students may have experienced in the AVID Elective class that helped them make that transition and persist in college. Participation in this survey is strictly voluntary.

* Required

"AVID Graduates' Transition to College" Informed Consent for Survey

Cybele Leverett, a doctoral student at the University of New Mexico College of Education is conducting a research project. The purpose of the research is to identify the specific skills, knowledge, and agency obtained by AVID graduates in New Mexico and how those shared acquisitions affected their ability to transition from high school into college. You are being asked to participate because you were in the AVID Elective class in high school.

Your participation will involve the completion of a survey. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions such as which skills and strategies you may have learned in AVID help you in college. At the end of the survey is an option to continue your participation in the study by agreeing to an interview. The interview would take about 30 minutes to complete and asks questions about your transition into college. The interview would be done at your convenience via an online teleconferencing service; both audio and video will be recorded for ease of transcription. Your involvement in the research is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate. You can refuse to answer any of the questions at any time. Your responses will be kept confidential. There are no known risks in this research, but some individuals may experience discomfort or loss of privacy when answering questions. Data will be stored on the researcher's laptop, in her home, physically secured by lock, and electronically secured by password. Your email address will be replaced by a unique number identifier on a data collection form. All identifiable information will be removed from the information collected in this project. Your information collected for this project will NOT be used or shared for future research, even if we remove the identifiable information like your name, email address, and phone number.

For completion of the survey, I will offer a raffle drawing of a \$50 gift card for the first 150 respondents, and an additional \$50 gift card for the second 150 respondents (study is capped at 300 maximum survey). Drawing for the first \$50 gift card will take place as soon as there are 150 completed surveys. The second drawing would take place as soon as there are 300 completed surveys. There will be no second chance drawing. Odds of winning will be based on number of completed surveys, but no higher than 1/150. Winners will be notified via email and/or text, depending on which method of contact was provided on the survey.

For completion of the interview, I will offer a separate raffle drawing of a \$100 gift card for the first 15 respondents and an additional \$100 gift card for the second 15 respondents (total number of interviewees not to exceed 30). Drawing for the first \$100 gift card will take place as soon as there are 15 completed interviews. The second drawing would take place as soon as there are 30 completed interviews. There will be no second chance drawing. Odds of winning will be based on number of completed interviews, but no higher than 1/15. Winners will be notified via email and/or text, depending on which method of contact was provided on the survey.

The findings from this project will provide information on which skills learned in AVID helped students transition into college. If published, results will be presented in summary form only.

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, please feel free to call Dr. Allison Borden at (505) 277-1285. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or about what you should do in case of any harm to you, or if you want to obtain information or offer input, please contact the UNM Office of the IRB (OIRB) at (505) 277-2644 or irb.unm.edu. The IRB ID for this study is: 1596366

By clicking "yes" and submitting this survey online, you will be agreeing to participate in the above described research. You also confirm that you are 18 or over. *

Yes

No

General Information

All of these questions are confidential. You may choose not to answer any of these questions.

High School You Attended When You Were Enrolled in the AVID Elective Class

Your answer _____

Year You Graduated High School

Choose

Grades You Were Enrolled in the AVID Elective class in middle or high school
(check all that apply)

- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

Gender

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary/gender non-conforming

Are You the First Generation in Your Family to Attend College? (you are considered 1st Gen if none of the parents or adults who raised you had bachelor's degrees when you were in high school.)

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Did You Receive Free or Reduced Lunch While in High School and/or Are You Receiving a Pell Grant in College?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

What Is Your Cultural/Ethnic Identity (check all that apply)?

- African-American/Black
- Asian
- Caucasian/White/Anglo
- Filipino
- Hispanic/Latino/Spanish
- Native American (please check this box and "other" to indicate tribal or pueblo affiliation in fill-in response below)
- Pacific Islander
- Other: _____

If You Answered "Hispanic/Latino/Spanish," how do you most often identify yourself? (check all that apply, or fill in your response)

- American
- Chicano, Chicana, Chicax
- Cuban
- Hispanic
- Hispano
- Mexican, Mexican American
- Mexicano, Mexicana, Mexicanx
- Latino, Latina, Latinx
- Nuyorican, Neorican, Newyorican
- Puerto Rican
- Raza
- Spanish, Spanish American
- Other:

If You Are Bi-Lingual, List the Second Language You Speak Other Than English

Your answer _____

If You Are Bi-Literate, List the Second Language in which You Read and Write Other Than English

Your answer _____

Were You Considered an English Language Learner at Any Time in Grades K-12?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

How Many Semesters of College Have You Completed So Far? Please include any semesters that you completed in online courses due to Covid-19.

 ▼

Are You a Part-Time or Full-Time College Student?

- Part-Time
- Full-Time

Select the College You Are Attending. (If you are taking time away from college, select "not currently enrolled." If your college is not listed, select "other" and type in the name of your college or university.)

- University of New Mexico (UNM)
- Central New Mexico College (CNM)
- Northern New Mexico College (Northern)
- Santa Fe Community College (SFCC)
- New Mexico State University (NMSU)
- New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU)
- Not currently enrolled
- Already graduated
- Other: _____

Academic Preparedness for College

This section addresses the academic skills gained during middle and high school. AVID calls these WICOR skills: Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading. Please answer each section according to the scale.

WRITING: how helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Compose a variety of texts (essays, papers, blogs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Analyze a writing task (prompt or assignment)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take notes and use them as a study tool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Summarize and Reflect to solidify your learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

INQUIRY: how helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Use questioning techniques to engage in discussions and think critically about content and concepts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify specific questions based on a point of confusion (POC)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upon arriving at a solution, identify steps that could be used to solve similar problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Continuously reflect, and refine strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cite evidence and support claims	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Synthesize and organize information effectively, including usage of digital tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

COLLABORATION: how helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Share responsibility among group members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work productively in diverse teams with different points of view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish and maintain working relationships with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respect individual contributions to the group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support group members in clarifying their points of confusion and checking their understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clearly communicate verbally and non-verbally, including positive body language (SLANT)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listen effectively to understand new information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrate command of language and grammar when communicating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speak comfortably in an academic setting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ORGANIZATION: how helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Routinely use organizational systems to access and store materials, including electronically (binders, file folders)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prioritize time to complete tasks efficiently (use a planner)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identify and plan for the steps necessary to accomplish various types of goals (backwards mapping)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Monitor progress towards goals and revise appropriately (set goals)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organize information, indicating relationships between ideas (use graphic organizers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

READING: how helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Use critical reading strategies such as marking the text (underlining claims, circling key terms, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preview text to connect with or build background knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Examine key academic and content-related vocabulary to deepen comprehension of texts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interact with the text to process information as it is read (ex: taking reading notes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which of the Following AVID Strategies Do You Use in College? Check All That Apply

- Agenda/Planner, including electronic apps
- AVID Binder
- Backwards Mapping (starting with end date, breaking down assignment)
- Cornell Notes or Focused Note Taking
- Costa's Levels 1-3 of Thinking/Inquiry (Costa's house)
- College Study Groups (like tutorials without the tutor, no TRF required)
- Graphic Organizers (ex: Venn diagram, T chart, KWL, mind web)
- Marking the Text/Critical Reading Strategies (circle key words, underline claims, write in margins)
- Time Management (estimating time for a task, balancing studying and social life)
- Physical or Digital Organization Filing System (folders, crates, jump drives, online storage)
- Interactive Notebooks (notes on the right, how you understand/process them on the left)
- Other: _____

Use your best approximation to answer the following questions.

Never Once a Semester Once a Month Once a Week

How Often Do you Meet in Collaborative Study Groups?

How Often Do You Use Campus Tutoring Services (such as a writing lab or office hours)?

Student Agency

This section asks how AVID helped to develop skills like self-advocacy (standing up for yourself), leadership, decision making, and self-awareness

How helpful was AVID in developing or enhancing your abilities regarding the following personal qualities?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Act as a globally aware, responsible person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluate the impact of decisions on others and the world	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend to personal health, safety and balance (including safety online)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make appropriate personal financial choices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generate and maintain a network of support for current and future success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrate and maintain motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Self-monitor and seek help when necessary (academic or emotional)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrate persistence, flexibility, and adaptability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrate self-awareness strategies and skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Apply your learning to demonstrate your knowledge and achieve success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrate integrity and ethical leadership, including online	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pursue leadership opportunities and hold leadership positions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manage and resolve conflict with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Use your best approximation to answer the following questions.

	Never	Once every few years	Once a year	A few times a year
How Often Do You Stay in Touch with Your AVID Classmates?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How Often Do You Stay in Touch with Your Classmates Who Were Not in AVID?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How Often Do You Stay in Touch with Your AVID Teacher?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How Often Do You Stay in Touch with Your Other Teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you were to describe your experience in AVID to someone else, what would you say?

Your answer

What connection, if any, do you have or did you have to your AVID teacher(s)?

Your answer

My Decision to Attend College was Influenced By:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Does not apply to me
My Own Determination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My AVID Teacher(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Counselor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My AVID Classmates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Family and Relatives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Coach(es)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Mentor(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Participation in AVID	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Academic Support Program (Breakthrough, Gear Up, Simon Scholars, Upward Bound, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Opportunity Knowledge for College and Career

This section asks how AVID helped to develop skills around knowing what college and career options were best for you.

COLLEGE: How Helpful was AVID in Providing Opportunities for You to Learn about College and to...?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills and interests you already had to choose a college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Determining which colleges best matched your academic profile, including GPA/ACT scores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understand scholarships and the role they play in paying for college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plan education and college path aligned to personal education goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Complete college admission requirements, including ACT/SAT, FAFSA, and applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

CAREER: How helpful was AVID in providing opportunities for you to learn about career and to...?

	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Really Helpful	Extremely Helpful
Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills and interests you already had related to career selection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop new skills and attitudes related to career readiness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plan education and career path aligned to personal career goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which Types of College Visits Did You Experience with Your AVID Class or School? (Check All that Apply, Include Middle School Trips)

- We visited one or more 2-year community colleges
- We visited one or more 4-year colleges or universities in New Mexico
- We visited one or more 4-year colleges or universities outside New Mexico
- We attended one or more college and career fairs (on or off high school campus)
- We learned about colleges and/or scholarships from representatives coming to our AVID class or school campus
- We did not make any college visits
- I was unable to attend any college visits
- I made my own college visits without my AVID class or school

Educational Goals

This last section asks about your educational goals and if you would like to be entered into a raffle.

What Is the Highest Level of Education You Want to Achieve?

- High School Diploma
- Technical School Certificate (ex: auto mechanics license)
- Associate's Degree (graduation from 2 Year College, ex: A.A.)
- Bachelor's Degree (graduation from 4 Year College, ex: B.A.)
- Master's Degree (1-3 Years Graduate Degree, ex: M.B.A)
- Doctorate (3-6 Years Post Graduate Degree, ex: M.D. for medical doctors, J.D. for lawyers)

What Is the Minimum Level of Education with Which You Will Feel Satisfied?

- High School Diploma
- Technical School Certificate (ex: auto mechanics license)
- Associate's Degree (graduation from 2 Year College, ex: A.A.)
- Bachelor's Degree (graduation from 4 Year College, ex: B.A.)
- Master's Degree (1-3 Years Graduate Degree, ex: M.B.A)
- Doctorate (3-6 Years Post Graduate Degree, ex: M.D. for medical doctors, J.D. for lawyers)

How Sure Do You Feel that You Will Complete that Minimum Level of Education?

- Definitely Will Not
- Probably Will Not
- Maybe/Not Sure
- Probably Will
- Definitely Will

Do You Feel That You Would Be Attending College if You Had Not Been In AVID?

- Definitely Not
- Probably Not
- Maybe/Not Sure
- Probably
- Definitely

Would you like to be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card? If yes, please provide email or phone number to receive a text message below.

Your answer

Would you like to participate in a follow up interview? It would take about 30 minutes, and fit your schedule. The interview qualifies you to enter a separate drawing for a \$100 gift card. If yes, please provide email or phone number to receive a text message below.

Your answer

Thank you for your participation! You will be notified via email or text if you win a gift card! If you provided information for the follow up interview, you will be contacted via email and/or text shortly.

Appendix H

Questionnaire: AVID Graduates' College Transition Questionnaire Codebook

Dataset	AVID Graduates from New Mexico Public Schools with AVID programs
Overview	Student perceptions of AVID program effectiveness
Source	AVID Graduates' Transition to College student survey
Sample Size	n=66
Updated	March 1, 2021

Structure of the Dataset			
General Information			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
1	ID	Identification number of participant	1-66
2	HIGHSCHOOL	High school student graduated from	1= Albuquerque High School 2= Atrisco Heritage Academy 3= Capital High School 4= Del Norte High 5= Los Lunas High School 6= Manzano High School 7= McCurdy Charter School 8= Santa Fe High School 9= Rio Rancho High School 10= Outside New Mexico 11=Pojoaque Valley High School
3	YRGRAD	Year student graduated	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020
4	GRDSINAVID	Grades student in AVID	0= any other combination of grades 1= grades 11-12 2= grades 10-12 3= grades 9-12 4= grades 8-12 5= grades 7-12
5	GENDER	Gender of student	0= non-binary 1= male 2= female
6	FIRSTGEN	First generation to attend college	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
7	LOWINCOME	Low income student: receive free lunch or Pell grant	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
8	ETHNICITY	Ethnicity of student	1=African American/Black 2=Asian 3=Caucasian/White/Anglo 4=Filipino 5=Hispanic/Latino/Spanish

			6=Native American 7=Pacific Islander 8=Other 9=Caucasian and Hispanic (3,5) 10=Hispanic and Native (5,6) 11=Asian and Caucasian (2,3) 12=Caucasian and Other (3,8)
9	ETHSELFID	Hispanic/Latino/Spanish Identity	0= no, no response 1= American 2= Chicano, Chicana, Chicax 3= Cuban 4= Hispanic 5= Hispano 6= Mexican, Mexican American 7= Mexicano, Mexicana, Mexicanx 8= Latino, Latina, Latinx 9= Nuyorican, Neorican, Newyorican 10= Puerto Rican 11= Raza 12= Spanish, Spanish American 13= Other 14= American plus Multiple Identities (1 + 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and/or 12) 15= 2-3 Identities 16= 4-5 Identities
10	BILINGUAL	If bilingual list language	0=no, no response 1=Bengali 2=Chinese 3=French 4=Korean 5=Spanish 6=Vietnamese 7=French and Spanish (3,5)
11	BILITERATE	If biliterate list language	0=no, no response 1=Bengali 2=Chinese 3=French 4=Korean 5=Spanish 6=Vietnamese
12	ELL	English Language Learner in K-12	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
13	NUMSEM	College semesters completed	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
14	TIME	Part- or full-time student	0=part-time 1=full-time
15	COLLEGE	College that student attends	0=Eastern 1=UNM 2=CNM

			3=Northern 4=SFCC 5=NMSU 6=NMHU 7=out of state 8=not currently enrolled 9=already graduated 10=training school/institute
16	CLLPUB	Public college	0=not currently enrolled, already grad 1=no 2=yes
17	CLLG24	2- or 4-Year college	0=not currently enrolled, already grad 2=2 year 4=4 year
Academic Preparation for College			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
	W=writing I=inquiry C=collaboration O=organization R=reading	How helpful was AVID in your acquisition of, or improvement on, this skill?	0=Not helpful 1=Somewhat helpful 2=Helpful 3=Really helpful 4=Extremely helpful
18	WCOMPOSE	Compose variety of text	
19	WANALYZE	Analyze a writing task	
20	WTAKENOTE	Take notes as a study tool	
21	WSUMREF	Summarize and reflect	
22	IQSTNING	Use questioning techniques	
23	IIDSPQ	Identify specific questions	
24	IIDSTEPS	Identify steps to solution	
25	IREFREF	Reflect and refine strategies	
26	ICITE	Cite evidence, support claims	
27	ISYNORG	Synthesize and organize information	
28	CSHARE	Share responsibility in group	
29	CWORK	Work in diverse teams	
30	CRELATE	Establish relationships	
31	CRESPECT	Respect individual contributions	
32	CCLARIFY	Clarifying points of confusion	
33	CCOMMUNICATE	Communicate verbally, nonverbally	
34	CLISTEN	Listen effectively	
35	CLANGUAGE	Command of language	
36	CSPEAK	Speak in academic setting	
37	OSYSTEMS	Use organizational systems	
38	OTIME	Prioritize time for tasks	
39	OPLAN	Identify and plan steps	
40	OMONITOR	Monitor progress towards goals	
41	OINFO	Organize information	
42	RCRITREAD	Use critical reading strategies	
43	RPREVIEW	Preview text	

44	RVOCAB	Key academic vocabulary	
45	RTEXT	Interact with text	
		Which of the following AVID strategies do you use in college?	
46	AGENDA	Use of an agenda or planner	0=No 1=Yes
47	BINDER	Use of a binder for college courses	0=No 1=Yes
48	MAPPING	Backwards mapping technique to plan out projects	0=No 1=Yes
49	CORNELL	Cornell notes structure	0=No 1=Yes
50	COSTAS	Costa's levels of thinking/Inquiry	0=No 1=Yes
51	CSG	Collaborative study groups	0=No 1=Yes
52	GRAPHIC	Use of graphic organizers	0=No 1=Yes
53	MARKTEXT	Marking the text/critical reading strategies	0=No 1=Yes
54	TIMEMNGMT	Time management	0=No 1=Yes
55	FILING	Physical/digital organization filing system	0=No 1=Yes
56	INB	Interactive notebook	0=No 1=Yes
57	CSGS	How often meet in collaborative study groups	0=Never 1=Once a semester 2=Once a month 3=Once a week
58	TUTORING	How often use campus tutoring	0=Never 1=Once a semester 2=Once a month 3=Once a week
Student Agency			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
		How helpful was AVID in developing or enhancing your abilities regarding the following personal qualities?	0=Not helpful 1=Somewhat helpful 2=Helpful 3=Really helpful 4=Extremely helpful
59	ACT	Act as a globally aware person	
60	IMPACT	Impact of decisions on others	
61	HEALTH	Attend to health, safety	
62	FINANCE	Appropriate financial choices	
63	NETWORK	Maintain network of support	
64	MOTIVATION	Maintain motivation	
65	SELFMONITOR	Self-monitor, seek help	
66	PERSISTENCE	Persistence, flexibility	
67	SELF-AWARE	Self-awareness strategies	

68	APPLY	Apply learning	
69	INTEGRITY	Integrity and ethical leadership	
70	LEADER	Pursue leadership opportunities	
71	CONFLICT	Manage and resolve conflict	
72	STAYAVIDMATES	How often stay in touch with AVID classmates	0=Never 1=Once every few years 2=Once a year 3=A few times a year
73	STAYREGMATES	How often stay in touch with Non-AVID classmates	0=Never 1=Once every few years 2=Once a year 3=A few times a year
74	STAYAVIDTCHR	How often stay in touch with AVID teacher	0=Never 1=Once every few years 2=Once a year 3=A few times a year
75	STAYREGTCHR	How often stay in touch with regular teachers	0=Never 1=Once every few years 2=Once a year 3=A few times a year
76	DDETERMINE	Decision to attend college influenced by my own determination	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
77	DTEACHER	Decision to attend college influenced by teacher(s)	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
78	DAVIDTCHR	Decision to attend college encouraged by AVID teacher(s)	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
79	DCOUNSELOR	Decision to attend college encouraged by counselor	4=Strongly agree 3=Agree 2=Disagree 1=Strongly disagree 0=Does not apply to me
80	DAVIDMATES	Decision to attend college encouraged by AVID classmates	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
81	DFRIENDS	Decision to attend college encouraged by friends	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
82	DRELATIVES	Decision to attend college encouraged by family and relatives	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree

			2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
83	DCOACH	Decision to attend college encouraged by coach(es)	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
84	DMENTOR	Decision to attend college encouraged by mentor(s)	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
85	DAVIDPART	Decision to attend college encouraged by participation in AVID	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
86	DACADEMIC	Decision to attend college encouraged by academic support program	0=Does not apply to me 1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly agree
Opportunity Knowledge for College and Career			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
		How helpful was AVID in providing opportunities for you to learn about college and to...?	0=Not helpful 1=Somewhat helpful 2=Helpful 3=Really helpful 4=Extremely helpful
87	CLLGABIL	Awareness of personal abilities, interests to pick a college	
88	MATCH	Determine best college match	
89	SCHOLARSHIP	Understand role of scholarships	
90	EDPATH	Plan educational path	
91	ADMINREQ	Complete college requirements	
92	CRRABIL	Awareness of personal abilities, interests to pick a career	
93	CRRSKILLS	Develop career skills and attitude	
94	CRRPATH	Plan career path	
	CV=college visits	Which types of college visits did you experience with your AVID class or school?	0=No 1=Yes
95	CV2	2-year college	
96	CV4NM	4-year college in New Mexico	
97	CVOUTNM	4-year college outside New Mexico	
98	CCR	College and career fair	
99	CCREP	College and career reps	
100	CVNO	No college visits	
101	CVNOGO	Not attend college visits	
102	CVMY	My own college visits	

Educational Goals			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
103	HIGHEST	Highest level of education you want to achieve	0=HS diploma 1=Tech cert 2=Associates 3=Bachelors 4=Masters 5=Doctorate
104	MINIMUM	Minimum level of education with which you will feel satisfied	0=HS diploma 1=Tech cert 2=Associates 3=Bachelors 4=Masters 5=Doctorate
105	FEELSURE	How sure that you will complete that minimum level	0=Definitely will not 1=Probably will not 2=Maybe/not sure 3=Probably will 4=Definitely will
106	NOAVID	Do you feel that you would be attending college if you had not been in AVID?	0=Definitely not 1=Probably not 2=Maybe/not sure 3=Probably 4=Definitely
Computed Variables			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
107	ACADPREPscore	Academic Prep Score	
108	ACADPREPSCOREcoded	Academic prep score coded	0=acad prep score =< 73 1=acad prep score =>74
109	STDTAGNYscore	Student Agency Score	
110	STDTAGNYSCOREcoded	Student Agency Score Coded	0=Student Agency Score =<38 1=Student Agency Score =>39
111	OPPKNOWscore	Opportunity Knowledge Score	
112	OPPKNOWSCOREcoded	Opportunity Knowledge Score Coded	0=Opportunity Knowledge Score =<23 1=Opportunity Knowledge Score =>24
113	WICORWscore	WICOR Writing Score	
114	WICORIscore	WICOR Inquiry Score	
115	WICORCscore	WICOR Collaboration Score	
116	WICOROscore	WICOR Organization Score	
117	WICORRscore	WICOR Reading Score	
118	WICORWSCOREcoded	WICOR Writing Score Coded	0=Writing Score =<8 1=Writing Score=>9
119	WICORISCOREcoded	WICOR Inquiry Score Coded	0=Inquiry Score =<12 1=Inquiry Score =>13
120	WICORCSCOREcoded	WICOR Collaboration Score Coded	0=Collaboration Score =<18 1=Collaboration Score =>19
121	WICOROSCOREcoded	WICOR Organization Score Coded	0=Organization Score =<10 1=Organization Score =>11

122	WICORSCOREcoded	WICOR Reading Score Coded	0=Reading Score =<8 1=Reading Score =>9
144	CAREERScore	Career Score	
145	CAREERSCOREcoded	Career Score Coded	0=Career Score =<6 1=Career Score =>7
146	COLLEGEScore	College Score	
147	COLLEGESCOREcoded	College Score Coded	0=College Score =<10 1=College Score =>11

Appendix I

New Mexico AVID Teacher Questionnaire



Survey for New Mexico AVID Teachers

Thank you for taking the time to complete this brief survey! It should only take 10 minutes to complete and will help to round out the 'essence' of the AVID experience for all those who participate in the AVID elective.

* Required

"AVID Graduates' Transition to College" Informed Consent for Survey

Cybele Leverett, a doctoral student at the University of New Mexico College of Education is conducting a research project. The purpose of the research is to identify the specific skills, knowledge, and agency obtained by AVID graduates in New Mexico and how those shared acquisitions affected their ability to transition from high school into college.

You are being asked to participate because you taught the AVID elective during one of the last three years (2019, 2018, 2017).

Your participation will involve the completion of a survey. The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions such as your demographic information, why you wanted to be an AVID teacher, and which AVID trainings you have attended. Your involvement in the research is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate. You can refuse to answer any of the questions at any time. Your responses will be kept confidential. There are no known risks in this research, but some individuals may experience discomfort or loss of privacy when answering questions. Data will be stored on the researcher's laptop, in her home, physically secured by lock, and electronically secured by password. Your email address will be replaced by a unique number identifier on a data collection form. All identifiable information will be removed from the information collected in this project. Your information collected for this project will NOT be used or shared for future research, even if we remove the identifiable information like your name, email address, or phone number.

For completion of the survey, I will offer a raffle drawing of a \$50 gift card for the first 30 respondents, and an additional \$50 gift card for the second 30 respondents (study is capped at 60 maximum survey). Drawing for the first \$50 gift card will take place as soon as there are 30 completed surveys. The second drawing would take place as soon as there are 60 completed surveys. There will be no second chance drawing. Odds of winning will be based on number of completed surveys, but no higher than 1/30. Winners will be notified via email and/or text, depending on which method of contact was provided on the survey.

The findings from this project will provide information on which skills learned in AVID helped students transition into college. If published, results will be presented in summary form only.

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, please feel free to call Dr. Allison Borden at (505) 277-1285. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or about what you should do in case of any harm to you, or if you want to obtain information or offer input, please contact the UNM Office of the IRB (OIRB) at (505) 277-2644 or irb.unm.edu. The IRB ID for this study is: 1596366

By clicking "yes" and submitting this survey online, you will be agreeing to participate in the above described research. You also confirm that you are 18 or over. *

1. Yes

2. No

Demographic Data

Responses to these questions are optional. Data is being collected to look for patterns of who becomes an AVID teacher.

What Is Your Gender?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary/gender non-conforming

Were You the First Generation in Your Family to Attend College? (you are considered 1st Gen if none of the parents or adults who raised you had bachelor's degrees when you were in high school.)

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Did You Receive Free or Reduced Lunch While in High School?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Did You Receive a Pell Grant while in College?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

What Is Your Cultural/Ethnic Identity? (check all that apply)

- African-American/Black
- Asian
- Caucasian/White/Anglo
- Filipino
- Hispanic/Latino/Spanish
- Native American (please check this box AND "other" to indicate tribal or pueblo affiliation in fill-in response below)
- Pacific Islander
- Other: _____

If You Answered "Hispanic/Latino/Spanish," How Do You Most Often Identify Yourself? (check all that apply, or fill in your response)

- American
- Chicano, Chicana, Chicanx
- Cuban
- Hispanic
- Hispano
- Mexican, Mexican American
- Mexicano, Mexicana, Mexicanx
- Latino, Latina, Latinx
- Nuyorican, Neorican, Newyorican
- Puerto Rican
- Raza
- Spanish, Spanish American
- Other: _____

If You Are Bi-Lingual, List the Second Language You Speak Other Than English

Your answer _____

If You Are Bi-Literate, List the Second Language in which You Read and Write Other Than English

Your answer _____

Were You Considered an English Language Learner at Any Time in Grades K-12?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Did You Grow Up in New Mexico?

- Yes
- No

How Many Years Have You Lived In New Mexico?

Your answer _____

Educational and Professional Information

This section gathers information about your undergraduate education and your years in teaching.

Select the College You Attended for Your Undergraduate Degree (select all that apply if you transferred). If your college is not listed, select "other" and type in the name of your college or university.

- University of New Mexico (UNM)
- Central New Mexico College (CNM)
- Northern New Mexico College (Northern)
- Santa Fe Community College (SFCC)
- New Mexico State University (NMSU)
- New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU)
- Other: _____

How Many Years Have You Been Teaching?

Your answer _____

How Many Years Have You Been Teaching the AVID Elective?

Your answer _____

What Other Content Areas Do You Teach, if Any? Check All that Apply.

- Math
- English
- Science
- History/Social Sciences/Related Electives (e.g. Psychology, Sociology)
- Art/Music/Drama
- AP/IB Courses
- P.E./Health/Dance/Coach a Sport
- CTE Electives (e.g. Culinary Arts, Engineering, Auto Mechanics, BioMedical pathways)
- Other: _____

What Is the Highest Level of Education You Have Achieved?

- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate

What Is the Highest Level of Education You Want to Achieve?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate

AVID Elective and Professional Learning

This section asks about your personal involvement with AVID and the trainings you have attended.

What made you want to teach the AVID Elective?

Your answer

If you were to describe your experience with AVID to someone else, what would you say?

Your answer

Do you feel connected to your AVID students/graduates? If so, describe how and why you feel connected to them.

Your answer

Which AVID trainings have you attended? Check all that apply.

- Implementation
- Tutorology
- Advancing the AVID Elective
- Content training related to the content you teach (i.e.. Math, Science, History, ELA)
- Leadership training related to being an AVID Site Coordinator (e.g. Leadership for Schoolwide)
- Culturally Relevant Teaching (either educator or student focus)

- Reading (i.e. Critical Reading, Disciplinary Literacy)
- Writing (i.e. Content-Area Writing, Learning Through Writing)
- Academic Language and Literacy
- Student Success
- Preparing for College
- Career and Technical Education
- Digital Teaching and Learning (e.g. Foundations, Google, Microsoft, or Leadership)
- STEM Middle School
- Other:

Do You Currently Teach the Middle School or High School AVID Elective?

- Middle School
- High School

Thank you!

Thank you for completing this survey. Your valuable time is appreciated!

Would you like to be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card? If yes, please provide email or phone number to receive a text message below.

Your answer _____

Appendix J

Questionnaire: AVID Teacher Survey Codebook

Dataset	AVID Teachers from New Mexico Public Schools with AVID programs
Overview	Teacher Characteristics and Experiences with AVID and AVID students
Source	AVID Teacher Survey
Sample Size	37
Updated	February 13, 2021

Structure of the Dataset			
General Information			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
1	ID	Assigned ID number	1-37
2	GENDER	Gender of teacher	0=female, 1=male, 2=non-binary
3	FIRSTGEN	First generation to attend college	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
4	LOWINCOME	Was a low income student in K-12 schooling: receive free lunch	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
5	LOWINCCLLG	Was a low- income college student: Pell grant	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
6	ETHNICITY	Ethnicity of teacher	1=African American/Black 2=Asian 3=Caucasian (not Hispanic) 4=Filipino 5=Hispanic/Latino/Spanish 6=Native American 7=Pacific Islander 8=Other 9=Caucasian and Hispanic (3,5) 10=Hispanic and Native (5,6) 11=Asian and Caucasian (2,3) 12=Caucasian and Other (3,8) 13=Black, Asian, Hispanic (1,2,5)
7	ETHSELFID	Hispanic/Latino/Spanish Identity	0= no, no response 1= American 2= Chicano, Chicana, Chicanx 3= Cuban 4= Hispanic 5= Hispano 6= Mexican, Mexican American 7= Mexicano, Mexicana, Mexicanx 8= Latino, Latina, Latinx 9= Nuyorican, Neorican, Newyorican 10= Puerto Rican 11= Raza 12= Spanish, Spanish American

			13= Other 14=American and Hispanic (1,4) 15=Hispanic, Latino, Raza (4,6,9)
8	BILINGUAL	If bilingual list language	0=no, no response 1=Dutch 2=Filipino 3=French 4=Japanese 5=Serbian 6=Spanish 7=Visayan 8= Serbian and Spanish (5,6) 9= French and Japanese (3,4) 10=Filipino and Visayan (2,7) 11=Spanglish
9	BILITERATE	If biliterate list language	0=no, no response 1=Filipino 2=French 3=German 4=Spanish 5=Spanglish
10	ELL	English Language Learner in K-12	0=No 1=Yes 2=I'm not sure
11	GROWUPNM	Grow up in New Mexico	0=No 1=Yes
12	YEARSINNM	Number of years in New Mexico	Continuous
Educational and Professional Information			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
13	COLLEGE	College attended	0=New Mexico college 1=out of state
14	CLLGPUB	Public college	0=No 1=Yes
15	CLLGMIX	Mix of public and private colleges	0=No 1=Yes
16	YEARSTEACH	Number of years teaching	Continuous
17	YEARSVID	Number of years teaching AVID	Continuous
18	MATH	Mathematics	0=No 1=Yes
19	ELA	English	0=No 1=Yes
20	SCI	Science	0=No 1=Yes
21	HSS	History/Social Sciences/Related Electives (e.g., Psychology, Sociology)	0=No 1=Yes
22	ARTS	Art/Music/Drama	0=No 1=Yes
23	APIB	AP/IB Courses	0=No 1=Yes
24	PEHEALTH	P.E./Health/Dance/Coach a Sport	0=No 1=Yes

25	CTE	CTE Electives (e.g., Culinary Arts, Engineering, Auto Mechanics, Bio Medical pathways)	0=No 1=Yes
26	OTHER	Other content areas taught	0=No 1=Yes
27	HIGHEST	Highest level of education you have achieved	1=Associates 2=Bachelors 3=Masters 4=Doctorate
28	WANT	Highest level of education you want to achieve	1=Bachelors 2=Masters 3=Doctorate
AVID Elective and Professional Learning			
Var #	Variable Name	Variable Description	Variable Metric/Labels
	TRAINING	Which AVID training attended	VARIES
29	IMP	Implementation	0=No 1=Yes
30	TUT	Tutorology	0=No 1=Yes
31	AAE	Advancing the AVID Elective	0=No 1=Yes
32	CONTENT	Content training related to the content you teach (i.e., Math, Science, History, ELA)	0=No 1=Yes
33	LEAD	Leadership training related to being an AVID Site Coordinator (e.g., Leadership for Schoolwide)	0=No 1=Yes
34	CRT	Culturally Relevant Teaching (either educator or student focus)	0=No 1=Yes
35	READ	Reading (i.e., Critical Reading, Disciplinary Literacy)	0=No 1=Yes
36	WRITE	Writing (i.e., Content-Area Writing, Learning Through Writing)	0=No 1=Yes
37	ACADLL	Academic Language and Literacy	0=No 1=Yes
38	SS	Student Success	0=No 1=Yes
39	PREPCLLG	Preparing for College	0=No 1=Yes
40	CTE	Career and Technical Education	0=No 1=Yes
41	DIG	Digital Teaching and Learning (e.g., Foundations, Google, Microsoft, or Leadership)	0=No 1=Yes
42	STEM	Middle School summer course	0=No 1=Yes
43	TRAINOTHER	Other	0=No 1=Yes
44	LEVELAVID	What secondary AVID taught (added to survey 12/1/2020)	0=MS 1=HS

Appendix K

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Objective: to answer the research questions:

1. What is the lived experience of AVID graduates as they transition to college?
2. What are the graduates' perceptions of the AVID College & Career Readiness Framework (Academic Preparedness, Opportunity Knowledge, and student agency)?

Operationalization of "lived experience" topics:

1. The degree to which students transitioned into a social system on campus to find peer-group interactions, faculty interactions, sense of belonging.
2. The degree to which students persisted (i.e. made an institutional commitment) because of transitioning in a social system on campus.
3. The degree to which experiences in AVID may have supported this social transition due to development of student agency.
4. The degree to which students transitioned into an academic system on campus to find grade performance, intellectual development, perception of curriculum.
5. The degree to which students persisted (i.e. made a goal commitment) because of transitioning in an academic system on campus.
6. The degree to which experiences in AVID may have supported this social transition due to rigorous Academic Preparedness.

Interview Questions

1. Thinking about your first semesters in college, please describe how you made the transition to college in terms of your social life?
Possible follow up questions: Did you find friends and/or classmates to socialize with? What, if any, support did you seek on campus? For example, did you join any clubs organizations?
2. Please describe how your social life has influenced your decision to remain in college here. Possible follow up questions: How is it the same now? Or is it different?
3. Tell me about the connections you see between what you did in AVID and your social transition to college.
4. Thinking about your first semesters in college, please describe how you made the academic transition to college.
Possible follow up questions: Did you find that you were academically prepared for your college coursework? What, if any, support did you seek on campus? For example, did you go to a writing center, tutoring services, study groups, or professors' office hours?
5. Please describe how your academic life has influenced your decision to remain in college here. Possible follow up questions: How is it the same now? Or is it different?
6. Tell me about the connections you see between what you did in AVID and your academic transition to college.
7. If you were to describe your AVID experience in 5 or 6 words, what would those words be?

Appendix L

Sample Coded Interview

Pseudonym: Valentina

KCL: Hello, Valentina.

Valentina: Hello. How are you?

KCL: I'm good. How are you? My name is Cybele Leverett. Thank you for joining me today to work on the AVID Graduates' Transition to College study. So, I'm going to put just a message in the chat just make sure you can see it. Okay are you able to see that message?

Valentina: Yes.

KCL: Okay, so I am going to record the meeting so I don't have to type the whole time you're talking so I can pay attention to what you're saying. And I'm going to ask you eight interview questions that I've asked all the other participants. And I if we had been face-to-face, I would have given them to you on a piece of paper, so I will drop them in the chat as we go just so that you have that verbal or that visual confirmation of the questions. And then at the end of those eight questions, there may be some things that I that I come back or ask you some follow-up questions about.

Valentina: Okay.

KCL: Okay? Okay. So, let's start. Oh, one other thing. I'm going to be asking you two sets of questions: one is going to be about your social life and your social transition to college, and then I'll ask you a set about your academic transition to college - just to make that more clear. Okay. So, here's our first question. Again, I'm going to put this in the chat. So, thinking about your first semesters in college, please describe how you made the transition to college in terms of your social life.

Valentina: That was so long ago. I would say I kind of... So, I went to school with my cousins. And so I really stuck with them, with her. And then I still have some other lot of friends that I went to school with from high school, so I stayed in contact with them. I tried to join Greek life my freshman year - didn't work out, but I admitted I eventually joined later on. So, I really try to stay busy as well. I kind of stopped - I like message my friends more so than going to see them. I was trying to work more and really just tried my best to like hang out with my family and my friends when I had time.

KCL: Nice. Okay to follow up on that and did you join any other kinds of social clubs or organizations aside from the Greek life?

Valentina: No just did a sorority.

KCL: Okay, and you had a job too, so you were busy.

Valentina: Yes.

KCL: Okay. So, here's question two: please describe how your social life has influenced your decision to remain in college.

Valentina: I think with a lot of my friends all of us went very different career paths. And so having people that are really wanting to see you succeed. And not only that but like I said, I was still with my family so a lot of us all wanted

SUPPORT: PEERS HS posse/friends

<p>to graduate together and go to school together. [It] has been really nice to have like their support to just keep pushing through. Or even just being in a sorority has really helped or really helping me as well, because we have to do like study hours and they had Study Buddies and things that were able to help us succeed in school... and we had to actually have a decent GPA to be in school and it was something that I really enjoyed doing. So, having that aspect of it really forced me, well not forced me, but made me want to stay in college so I can continue doing what I was enjoying.</p>	<p>SUPPORT: PEERS C posse/friends study buddy organization</p>
<p>KCL: How many cousins were you with?</p>	<p>STUDENT AGENCY seeking help</p>
<p>Valentina: Well now there's like three of us are going to school. I was with two other ones at the time and then like as years went on, two more were added. So, there's about there's like five of us I went to school together at once.</p>	<p>SUPPORT: PEERS C posse/friends</p>
<p>KCL: Nice. And were you an AVID together as well?</p>	
<p>Valentina: Only with one, and yeah him and I were in AVID together all through high school.</p>	<p>SUPPORT: PEERS HS posse/friends</p>
<p>KCL: Okay, here's question 3: tell me about the connections you see between what you did in AVID and your social transition to college.</p>	
<p>Valentina: Hmmmm</p>	
<p>KCL: So, thinking about maybe some team building activities or that sort of family concept. Well, literally family for you with your cousin there, but any of those sort of like um, maybe what we would call sort of non-academic activities.</p>	<p>STUDENT AGENCY relational capacity</p>
<p>Valentina: Um, well obviously the family aspect like we were saying just because even the people that like are - my AVID class was very close where I went to school at, and So like being able to see those people on campuses or like the friendships that I made in their being able to still like build on those relationships even years later. So being able to still see them and talk to them and just catch up or even just like our relationship that we had with our teacher at the time. So being able to have him checking in on us and just telling - like helping us get through our transition. And then also I would say kind of, which is like a very weird one, but time management because we had to find ways to make time for ourselves to do school and find ways to take care of ourselves and still be able to see our friends and family. So, give us our own time to do things. So, kind of making like an agenda for yourself and finding the extra time to hang out with other people.</p>	<p>SUPPORT: PEERS HS AVID classmates</p>
<p>KCL: How did your AVID teacher help you make that transition?</p>	<p>SUPPORT: ADULT HS AVID teacher</p>
<p>Valentina: Well, I was actually an AVID tutor right after I graduated in high school. So, I went straight into tutoring right after I graduated because my AVID teacher took over that job there. So, we were able to - like he was still checking in on me like how school was doing and then like constant emailing and he was always there for us. Even if it was just like a stupid question or a lot of recommendations or if we were struggling, we could just email him be like "hey, like we're really struggling" and he's like, "Okay. Well, you handled this in high school. You can handle it now; it's just on a bigger platform." So, he was really always supportive of us and just making sure we were okay, and our well-being was okay rather than just like our academic side.</p>	<p>SKILLS time mgmnt</p>
	<p>STUDENT AGENCY leadership role</p>
	<p>STUDENT AGENCY seeking help</p>
	<p>SUPPORT: ADULT C AVID teacher</p>

KCL: Okay. Nice. Okay, so now we're going to switch over to some academic questions. So, thinking about your first semesters in college, please describe how you made the academic transition to college.

Valentina: I would say school was pretty easy in my first couple of years just because I took a lot of like prereqs. So, I was able to use like notes. I had very good note-taking skills that I obviously got from AVID, and then just being able to focus and like find ways to study. And so, I had really good time management to set aside time to do my homework and get my notes done, pay attention in class, ask questions when I needed to, or even do like study groups so that way we could all work on things together because I always found like that was our best way to learn sometimes is learning from each other. So, doing group work. So, I really thought going into school or going into college is really easy. It wasn't too much of a... It wasn't hard. It was I was like, I felt prepared to go to college.

RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREP grade performance
SKILLS time mgmnt
STRUCTUR ES study groups
SUPPORT: PEERS C study buddy
RIGOROUS ACADEMIC PREP skill development
SUPPORT: ADULT C professor

KCL: That's terrific news. Did you take advantage of any services like going to The Writing Center tutoring center, office hours, any of that?

Valentina: I went to office hours. One of my professors actually had us go to office hours for it was like a requirement for a grade, but even just doing that it was better for me. I just feel like my professor - I actually ended up having that professor three more times after that just because of how much I enjoyed working with her - and so office hours have always helped I think because it just helps you build that relationship with your professor and getting to know them so they get to know you as well because we only get to see them for so long. So I think going to like office hours and like I said that professor from my - she's actually my freshman year English teacher from college - and I had her for two semesters after that, so whole year and a half, so I really got to know her and she got to know me.

KCL: Thanks. So, you mentioned that you are an AVID tutor. Did you become a college tutor or receive college tutoring at all?

Valentina: Uh-uh. So as AVID tutors through [the public schools] we, I don't even know, it was - they usually got like senior like they get seniors to do it in high school. And because it's just like a minimum wage job [the school system] puts on for AVID classes when they do their tutorials and the tutor will come in to help them. And so, since my teacher was the boss up there, I was like, "I could do it. Like I have free time." I wasn't working at that time. So, I was like I'll be able to do it and so then I got into it because of him. And then I got placed at the high school I went to, so I was able to still be there and be involved. And then I only did it for a year though because then things - I started coaching, I'm a [sport] coach, I started coaching and So it would be hard for me to do that on top of school and coaching all at the same time.

OPPORTUN ITY KNOW jobs
STUDENT AGENCY leadership role

KCL: Ok, we're going to come back to that at the end and I definitely have some questions for you about being an AVID tutor. Okay, so here's questions 5. Please describe how your academic life has influenced your decision to remain in college.

Valentina: Um, like I said, I've always really liked school. I had a there's like one time where I had a really hard time in school where I was ready to drop out

and just I didn't really want to do it anymore. And I actually the guy I emailed, my AVID teacher, was like, "I'm really stressed out" and him and I talked. He's like, "You can do it!" I talked to my mom and she was like, "you're so close to being done that at this point don't give up." And then it was like around the time where I like had just changed my major as well, because I was originally a criminology major and I switched to education, and so I wasn't enjoying criminology, but then I found courses that I actually like I enjoyed taking. And that semester that I contemplated dropping out I actually got a 4.0. So, I was very just I was impressed with myself too because there is like at the beginning of the semester you were so ready to be done like you didn't want to do anything and then that semester really just kind of helped push me to keep going forward because I knew that if I don't give up, I'm capable of doing like really well things in my academics.

PERSIST

SUPPORT:
ADULT C
parent
AVID
teacher

PERSIST
changing
major

KCL: That's quite a transformation from almost dropping out to getting a 4.0! Okay question 6: tell me about the connections. You see between what you did in AVID and your academic transition to college.

Valentina: So, note-taking has always been my favorite thing in AVID just because it helps you look at it in so many different types like your notes in a lot of different ways - direct questionings and like when you highlight - it gives you so much like tips on how to take notes [for] your hour-long lectures, you're not just put writing every little thing that they're saying. You can write like just what's most important and you can go back to it and reread your notes and you're like, "oh, yeah. I remember what's going on." And then also just like the finding people in your class that you can like have groups with. Like I have a lot of people's numbers in school that were just like random people, but they're like [course number] or whatever course we have together so that way now we all like if we ever needed anything that you just text each other, email each other like what we're doing. And so that really helped me with like my grades and also just being able to, like I said, talking to the professor and trying to figure out like if I was really lost I could just talk to my professor. And I feel like AVID has really helped give me like confidence in like public speaking and talking to my professor. So, I was able to actually put myself forward and out there to not be afraid to go and ask them for help if I needed it.

SKILLS
note-taking
questioning

SUPPORT:
PEERS C
classmates

KCL: Okay, question 7: if you were to describe your AVID experience in five or six words, what would those words be? They don't have to make a sentence - they just could be random words.

Valentina: Let's see. Great, kind of life-changing, family, and educational
KCL: okay, great. And question 8: Is there anything else about these topics that we've talked about already that you'd like to share with me?

Valentina: I just I don't know. I think AVID is such a good thing. I enjoyed it. I always talk about it even when I was a tutor. I always told the kids like how much to - how much they should enjoy what they're getting out of it because I believe you always learn so much more in that class and how to succeed in your other classes. As much as it's like for academics, I also feel like it's very much like social, like your life skills as well. And I had a great experience with that but my high school teacher, even my middle school teacher of AVID, he like

SKILLS

STRUCTUR
ES office
hours

STUDENT
AGENCY
building
community

those experiences that I had was all of them. I created a very good bond with the kids I was in school with and it was able to just help me succeed. And I know that I feel like if I didn't have those, I would probably have had a different high school experience because I really do believe that AVID has made like helped me and - like professor, not professor - my teacher helped me become like the individual that I am today.

SUPPORT:
PEERS HS
AVID
classmates

KCL: Nice, are you still in touch with that teacher?

SUPPORT:
ADULT HS
AVID
teacher

Valentina: Yeah, every now and then. sometimes it's hard. He's changed jobs a lot. So, we don't know like where he is sometimes, but like occasionally I'll send him like an update on how life is going and he'll email us back or email me back. I like to keep them updated on me and my cousin who were in school together and like he's like one of the first people I emailed and I told him I was changing my major because he's also like a really good reason why I went into the education field.

SUPPORT:
ADULT C
AVID
teacher

KCL: Yes. So, let's talk about that! What kind of degree are you thinking about? Elementary education or secondary?

Valentina: I'm doing secondary education. I'm currently in my fifth year, so I'll be graduating in May. I'm student teaching right now. So yeah, but yeah, I was originally a criminology major, didn't like it, wasn't a big fan. And so I said, I guess I'll go look into teaching because it something else that I could be passionate about and So I'm going for secondary education with a concentration in language arts.

OPPORTUN
ITY KNOW
majors

KCL: Amazing. So, would you - since you've been an AVID tutor - would you want to be an AVID teacher?

Valentina: Yes, that's always been something that I've always thought about too. I did a research project - not a research project - I did a project on AVID actually for one my education courses because I just wanted to like learn more about it. Even though I feel like I have knowledge on it. I know knowledge of it for like a student version not a teacher version of it. And so, I got to look into like the depths of that. My auntie's a teacher and so she also has gone to a lot of like AVID training, and she speaks highly of it. And then who I'm placed with for student teaching she's like, "I don't know much about AVID" and things that I have to basically teach myself about a lot of things. Even being an [AVID] tutor what you see like - I don't know, it was just my opinion - but I feel like I had a really great AVID experience. So, seeing how some of these other kids, how much they aren't getting that same education-wise of what AVID is, it's really disheartening because it's such a good course that, if it's done correctly, people can get like the best education out of it, and the best advice out of it.

OPPORTUN
ITY KNOW
real-world
application

KCL: Can you see any way to infuse in your student teaching - because I'm assuming you're teaching English language arts?

Valentina: Yes

KCL: Any of the techniques that you're AVID teacher may have used with you - if you thought about any of those pedagogical tricks?

Valentina: Like one thing that always sticks out to me with him is that he always asks us how we are doing rather than - he actually wanted to know. He was never really like, "okay, you're doing fine. We'll just move on." It's always like

STUDENT
AGENCY
identity
development

SUPPORT:
ADULT HS
AVID
teacher

“okay, how are you doing?” Like he got to know us on a very - we also had him for four years, but like even just the first year he was very just welcoming and opening and always wanted to see us succeed. He gave us like every opportunity and always told us that he believed in us. So, I think kind of like using those like in my every day of teaching, and kind of helping my kids just succeed. And letting them know that like I'm advocating for them and I'm in their corner rather than like telling them “it is what it is.” I want to see them succeed and I want to be there for them to help them succeed.

STUDENT
AGENCY
relational
capacity
exercises

KCL: Nice. Nice. I'm so happy that you're going into secondary education there's such a need especially - are you going to stay in the state do you think?

Valentina: Yeah, so I'm like I'm staying here. I live here. I coach here. So, I really enjoy like everything here. My sister, my whole family went to [the same school system]. We all went to like the same high school. So, like it's just I'm okay with it. I like being here and the [the school system] needs teachers. So yeah.

OPPORTUN
ITY KNOW
identity
development
jobs

KCL: Yes. Well, that's why I'm thinking is that if you're staying in New Mexico to teach, even if you know, you're not here exact same high school or district, there's such a need here, and the fact that you if you become an AVID teacher and you were an AVID tutor at an AVID student, you're just going to have just that connection that other people won't necessarily have because they haven't done that same path.

Valentina: Yeah.

KCL: Yeah, that's terrific. Yeah. I know another teacher who did the same thing where she was an AVID student and then and I'm a tutor and then to now she's an AVID teacher, and actually now she's vice principal of her school.

Valentina: Nice.

KCL: Yeah, so it's not unheard of, but it's not very typical. So, it's great. I'm very pleased to hear that you're doing that. So, let's talk little bit about your AVID tutor position. One of the things that we say in AVID is that tutors can be mentors for the classes that their tutoring. How did you see your role as a tutor in the class?

Valentina: It was kind of hard for me with like the classes that I was with. I was a freshman for - I had freshman and juniors for the three classes that I got the tutor for. And like I said, maybe it just my experience. Their AVID classes were run very differently than what I was used to. So, I obviously have to like sit back and follow the teachers roles and what she wants with you, but it was like very hard to see or just even hear how the kids were talking like some negative about what they were learning and so like things like that. Whereas it was like very hard to take. You always have to be like positive with them and then at the same time, I was also coaching, so some of the kids were my athletes. So, they saw me around more than just tutoring. So, the kids always they always knew who I was and I was like always around on campus. So, they could they talked to me like I was very much more So their friend because they knew that I wasn't going to sit there. And like I kind of told them how it was, though. It's like, “You have to do your work. You can't do the same things over and over again. You're not going to get anything out of this class if you're going to sit here with

STUDENT
AGENCY
building
community

a bad attitude the whole time.” Or walk over their teachers – they were freshmen and they all thought they knew what they were doing. And it was very like hard when we had like a substitute come in. And so, I was I kind of took - not took charge - but I did take charge with a lot of what the other people if we had a substitute in one class to tell them like we're doing we're doing this we're doing this because that is what we are supposed to do here. That's what were paid to do. That's what our normal teacher would tell us that they so we need to just stick to our plan and not let go off script and all of these kids hurt us. Because we would go from like we had like for tutors at the beginning of the year, we had two by the end. Because they just couldn't handle what the kids were doing. It was just hard and I also feel like I was so close in age with them, that it was easier for me to connect with them and kind of tell them like, “You need to get it together. We got to get through this as soon as you're done. You can go back to doing what you were doing.”

STUDENT
AGENCY
leadership
roles

STUDENT
AGENCY
building
relationships

KCL: How do you think that that experience might inform your role as an AVID teacher?

Valentina: I think doing it more so - I feel like I always leave very influenced by my AVID teacher and I really liked how what he did with us helped us and not just in like the curriculum side. So, we did like a lot of team building exercises in our class and we were all like I said, we were all very, very close. We have like 40 kids that we had like 40 kids in our AVID class. So, it was very... all of us were like we didn't know each other, but from the same AVID classes we were able to just like see each other in the classroom or in the hallways and talk. So, you really think being able to know what I do as a good AVID class versus what I seen, I can find ways to find things that I know can make it run efficiently and also take the things that didn't work, and like if they were good ideas, find ways to make them work in a classroom.

STUDENT
AGENCY
relational
capacity
exercises

STUDENT
AGENCY
identity
development

KCL: Do you see a role in AVID’s professional learning that could help the teachers you were seeing be less successful, that could help them get to the point of your AVID teacher? What do you think was missing in their training or was it a teacher specific thing?

Valentina: I mean, it was just a teacher specific thing. I think they like one of the teachers really loved AVID, like she was a very big advocate of AVID, but a lot of the kids just didn't like her because like she was strict on them, very hard on them. And I do understand like AVID has like these like we had like certain requirements we had to meet like 50 Cornell notes and things like that. And a lot of the kids didn't see like the point why or even like even when I was in school, we didn't see the point of why either, but then you look back. I look back on it now and I'm like, it's 50 Cornell notes you guys. If you guys take two pages of notes a day, you'll be fine - like just stay up on to date with it. And I just think that having that connection with your students is a little bit more - like I feel like that's also very important as a teacher - and I saw a lot of them lack that. And then the other teacher - she didn't know anything about AVID. She was kind of thrown into the position. So, I think if she had more knowledge about AVID and was able to actually find the reasons why she wanted to be an AVID teacher... because she like she even told the kids that she didn't want to

STUDENT
AGENCY
real-world
application
building
relationships

teach it before, so the kids like had the kids having her say that they're like, "What are we really doing this stuff for?" And the other, actually four classes, but the other two they were like older teachers and so they'd been doing it for a long time. And they had Juniors and juniors are like, I feel like Juniors and seniors are kind of like the age where they're used to doing the same thing for over and over again. So, like me going to tutor with them -it was very - they knew what to do. I was just there to grade, but they also didn't see the point in AVID still. So, kind of making them see like the, not the point, but was trying to find like the importance of why they're doing these things. And trying to tell them like in the future it's going to be beneficial. They're going to look back on it and they're not going to be like, "Oh my God, I wasted so much time doing this," but in reality it's beneficial for them.

STUDENT
AGENCY
real-world
application
building
relationships

KCL: Right, so it sounds like there's a may be a gap about the why from the tutor to the student, and from the student to buy in to the why.

Valentina: Yeah.

KCL: Okay that's important for me to know. Thank you. So, I'm just imagining you in your first summer Institute as an AVID teacher going to Implementation - that's the very first class you take when you're an AVID teacher. And I'm imagining you sitting there feeling comfortable with Focused note-taking, feeling comfortable with tutorial, and everyone around you is like, "oh my gosh, there's so much to learn, I'm so overwhelmed!" and you'll be like, "it's all going to be fine, it's all going to be good." Because I remember that first class. I was an AVID teacher for ten years and that first summer Institute, you just feel exhilarated and overwhelmed at the same time. So, I'm just going to imagine you feeling cool as a cucumber because you're feeling like "I got this. I know this. I feel it." And for you the challenge is going to be just figuring out who you are as an educator and you know, looking back at your experience as a student and a tutor. I'm excited for you. I'm excited for the profession and I'm excited for you personally because I think you know just having that ability and that identity having walked that path and then to turn around and give that back to younger students will just be an amazing experience for you and for them.

Valentina: Thank you.

KCL: Make sure that you invite your AVID teacher to your college graduation!

Valentina: I know. I'm actually going to email him I usually do like we usually do, You know, email him around this time. Like here's my life update and I just have to find his email. I think he's like at another school now, but even when he was our AVID teacher he got offered [another] job. So, he took it while he was teaching us, but he would only come back just for his AVID classes. So, it's just little stuff like that where it's like I told the dedication from him and just like how much he cared for all of us. It just has inspired me to want to be a teacher and kind of take that into consideration when I become one.

SUPPORT:
ADULT C
AVID
teacher

KCL: That's terrific. What a great story. Yeah. I hope he's able to celebrate your success in going into education. That's just amazing. Okay, so a couple of just reminders So because you've finished the survey, your entered into a raffle for fifty dollars and because you finished the interview, you're entered into a separate raffle for a hundred dollars. So, if you win either of those, I will contact

you via email the way we did before again. I apologize about my app not telling me you had made an appointment. So glad that you emailed back because. Okay. So, the way the dissertation process works is that the dissertation will be published, but just at UNM. So it will be in UNM dissertation. It's kind of like a section of the library, but it's all digital now, so it'll be in their dissertation data bank so to speak, but your name and all names of anyone who participated will have a pseudonym. So, I will assign you a number and that number will then become the record. It will be attached to your data and your interview and then I will actually give you a different name when I talk about your responses to these questions and use quotes from your interview, but you'll have a different name.

Valentina: Okay.

KCL: So that way your privacy is protected. But again, I just really appreciate your time today, and I just loved hearing about your story, and I wish you so much success in the classroom. No matter English, AVID, whatever you end up teaching. It's just going to be great because you'll bring all those skills with you, and it sounds like you have the most important part, which is caring about the kids.

Valentina: Hmhm.

KCL: If you care about the kids, then all things are possible.

Valentina: I agree.

KCL: Good luck to you and your cousin. I hope your cousin's doing well too and that you guys finish up together. Thank you so much for your time, Valentina.

Valentina: Have a good day.

KCL: You, too.

Appendix M

ACADPREPscore Variable Frequencies

		Academic Prep Score			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	0	1	1.5	1.6	1.6
	31	1	1.5	1.6	3.3
	37	1	1.5	1.6	4.9
	39	1	1.5	1.6	6.6
	41	1	1.5	1.6	8.2
	44	1	1.5	1.6	9.8
	48	1	1.5	1.6	11.5
	49	1	1.5	1.6	13.1
	51	1	1.5	1.6	14.8
	53	2	3.0	3.3	18.0
	55	1	1.5	1.6	19.7
	57	1	1.5	1.6	21.3
	58	1	1.5	1.6	23.0
	59	2	3.0	3.3	26.2
	60	1	1.5	1.6	27.9
	61	1	1.5	1.6	29.5
	64	1	1.5	1.6	31.1
	68	1	1.5	1.6	32.8
	69	1	1.5	1.6	34.4
	71	2	3.0	3.3	37.7
	72	2	3.0	3.3	41.0
	73	1	1.5	1.6	42.6
	75	2	3.0	3.3	45.9
	76	1	1.5	1.6	47.5
	78	2	3.0	3.3	50.8
	80	1	1.5	1.6	52.5
	84	4	6.1	6.6	59.0
	85	1	1.5	1.6	60.7
	86	2	3.0	3.3	63.9
	87	1	1.5	1.6	65.6
88	2	3.0	3.3	68.9	

	89	2	3.0	3.3	72.1
	90	1	1.5	1.6	73.8
	92	1	1.5	1.6	75.4
	93	2	3.0	3.3	78.7
	101	2	3.0	3.3	82.0
	102	2	3.0	3.3	85.2
	103	1	1.5	1.6	86.9
	104	1	1.5	1.6	88.5
	107	1	1.5	1.6	90.2
	109	1	1.5	1.6	91.8
	112	5	7.6	8.2	100.0
	Total	61	92.4	100.0	
Missing	System	5	7.6		
Total		66	100.0		

Appendix N

Characteristics of Successful AVID Teachers

Characteristics of Successful AVID Teachers

- Are fair, firm, and consistent
- Believe and exemplify the philosophy that all students can learn
- Understand “academic press”—the requisite levels of college preparatory courses
- Are organized and good with follow-through
- Are willing to advocate for underachieving, underserved students
- Have the ability to motivate, coach, and counsel students
- Have the ability to promote academic success for underachieving students
- Understand how the “system” works in order to get what is needed for the program and the students
- Have the ability to gain the respect of, and collaborate on a regular basis with, school faculty and parents/guardians
- Have the ability to train and work well with tutors, especially as part of Socratic tutorial groups
- Are willing to devote time outside of the school day to help students achieve

The Roles of the AVID Teacher:

- Academician
- Counselor/College Advisor
- Negotiator
- Exam Coach
- Organizer
- Collaborator
- Instructional Leader
- Advocate
- Communicator
- Promoter
- Change Agent

Assists and Supports Students With:

- Studying for all types of tests
- Learning a note-taking system
- Scheduling into rigorous courses
- Rigorous course support
- Developing problem-solving skills
- Working in collaborative groups
- Choosing a college focus
- Preparing for entrance exams (e.g., SAT®, ACT®)
- Preparing for placement exams
- Taking Advanced Placement® exams
- Spending time studying at home
- Keeping an organized notebook
- Developing organizational and study skills
- Doing research
- Completing the requirements for the next level

The 3 Rs: Relationships, Rigor, and Relevance