

BACKGROUND OF PROGRAMMING IN BHM SCHOOLS

AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. The AVID Elective course began in the 2012-2013 school year, with 1 teacher serving 39 students in 10th grade. It now serves over 200 students ranging from 7th-12th grade, with 6 teachers and 8 tutors supporting students with their success.

The AVID Elective class focuses on the development and refinement of writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading (WICOR) skills. It provides the structure for students to be successful with rigorous coursework, and highlights the importance of using academic tools for post-secondary success. Students are selected through an application and interview process. Selected students should demonstrate that they possess the individual determination to develop skills needed to be successful in post-secondary education and the work ethic that are needed to reach their goals.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM & STANDARDS

The BHM Schools AVID Elective curriculum is guided by the AVID Elective Standards, as there are no state academic standards for the AVID Elective courses. The AVID Elective Standards have been developed to align with the following national standards:

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)	Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	The Common Career Technical Core (CCTC)
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)	English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21)	Marzano's Strategies for English Reflective Practice
Conley's Four Keys to College and Career Readiness	Danielson's Framework for Teaching	

The AVID Elective Standards were developed by considering what skills a college and career ready student needs. Those skills are captured as the 12th grade standards. To meet this level of college and career readiness, the AVID Elective Standards are a vertically aligned progression of skill development for students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

The standards are naturally scaffolded as students apply the skills and knowledge at the high school level to more rigorous content. As students enter high school, they take a second loop through those same skills in 9th, 10th, and 11th grades to deepen their proficiency in those skills, knowledge, and behaviors. This looping of the standards also helps to address the challenges of students who do not enter the AVID Elective until high school. There are multiple standards in each of the following areas: Rigorous Academic Preparation, Student Agency and Opportunity Knowledge.

Below is an example of how the standards progress as well as loop to support students' development of inquiry skills.

Inquiry - Use questioning to demonstrate critical thinking and clarify learning.	
7.RAP.I.1	Develop inquiry skills through focused observations and analyses
8.RAP.I.1	Use questioning techniques to think critically about content and concepts
9.RAP.I.1	Create questions based on Costa's Levels of Thinking
10.RAP.I.1	Develop inquiry skills through focused observations and analyses
11.RAP.I.1	Use questioning techniques to think critically about content and concepts
12.RAP.I.1	Use questioning techniques to engage in discussions and think critically about content and concepts

There are a few consistent, foundational components to the AVID Elective curriculum that span 7th-12th grade. Tutorials, a form of study group, occur twice a week. Weekly to bi-weekly binder, planner and focused note checks are also assessed either weekly or biweekly. Each year in AVID, all students have the opportunity to attend at least two college visits and hear from guest speakers.

Through the support of the comprehensive, rigorous curriculum provided by AVID, students deepen the skills outlined in the standards during the three non-tutorial days each week. Lessons centered on the formal writing process, goal setting, interest inventories, structured reading discussions, college/career research, ACT preparation, scholarship and college application completion and leadership opportunities are representative of some of the curriculum topics that the students experience.

PROGRAM VISION STATEMENT

The AVID Elective Educators believe that to build a community of competent and caring citizens, we must provide equitable opportunities for growth to foster resilience and ensure our students are academically prepared to succeed at a college or university. AVID Elective students at Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools use their individual determination to:

1. Engage in experiences to enhance awareness of post-secondary opportunities
2. Expand leadership skills
3. Increase academic skills in the areas of writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading

4. Utilize critical thinking and questioning to gain a deeper understanding of classroom content
5. Develop self-advocacy skills
6. Positively impact their community

SUMMARY OF PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF PROGRAMMING

The AVID Elective formally joined the district's Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) in the 2024-2025 school year, beginning in the Research Phase. Although the AVID Elective team had been meeting regularly in previous years, it was decided that it would be beneficial to add this course to the CIP process, modifying and adjusting tasks and outcomes as needed in order to make the process applicable and meaningful.

The CIP requires a comprehensive review of needs, educational research, and potential program enhancements prior to writing the Curriculum Adoption Proposal. During the CIP phases of RESEARCH and PILOT over the past two years, the AVID team engaged in the following activities:

In the fall of 2024, the AVID team created a draft version of an AVID Vision Statement and identified some top priorities based on that draft. Some minor revisions were made to that draft and, in February 2025, the AVID team committed to the current version of the AVID Vision Statement, as well as identified priorities and areas of focus based on that vision.

In the fall of 2025, the AVID Elective teachers reviewed their priorities and conducted a gap analysis to narrow their focus. After identifying and agreeing on three key priorities, they developed implementation plans and outlined the corresponding data they intended to collect. During the months of November, December and January, the AVID Elective teachers piloted the new ideas created in their classrooms and gathered data. At the end of January, the full team reconvened to review, revise and agree on commitments for full implementation of the plan, including corresponding measurements and data.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The 7th–12th grade AVID Elective has made commitments in three key areas: curriculum, systems, and vision. In the area of curriculum, all grade levels will use the same Focused Note Taking rubric to ensure consistency and alignment of desired skill development across the program.

To establish a system that promotes meaningful and consistent peer mentorship within the program, the AVID Elective team developed a grade-level pairing model and committed to facilitating at least two interactions per year. Grade 7 will partner with Grade 10, Grade 8 with Grade 11, and Grade 9 with Grade 12, creating opportunities for students to build lasting connections throughout their AVID experience.

To support the program's vision, AVID teachers in grades 7–12 commit to assigning at least one learning log per month (when class is in session) to help students reflect on and deepen their learning. Students will use the same rubric to guide their learning log responses, creating alignment and continuity of metacognitive skills across all grade levels.

Some of the potential benefits of implementing a common Focused Note Taking rubric, mentorship pairings, and monthly Learning Logs across AVID 7–12 are as follows. It will create a cohesive and supportive learning system that can ease the student transition from one grade

level to the next. Establishing a consistent approach to Focused Notes gives students a clear structure for organizing and reflecting on their thinking, while a common rubric allows teachers to gather meaningful data to guide targeted interventions. Pairing grade levels strengthens the AVID community by providing leadership opportunities for mentors and meaningful guidance for mentees; mentors build leadership skills and contribute positively to the school culture, while mentees increase their awareness of BHS and post-secondary opportunities and develop stronger self-advocacy skills. Finally, routine use of learning logs encourages students to reflect not just on what they learn, but on how they learn, strengthening metacognitive skills that are closely linked to academic success and independent learning. It will also support deeper thought development by students in performance based classes.

The AVID Elective Team has also identified some potential challenges that may arise in the implementation of their plan. Focused Note Taking expectations may feel repetitive over time, raising the question of what refinements might take place as the students progress. There may also be challenges related to students' perception of the value of note-taking in their current classes. The more the AVID Elective teachers can capture and share student narratives around the benefits of the Focused Note Taking process, the greater the genuine commitment to the process. With the student mentorship opportunities, logistical concerns such as bussing, coordinating schedules between the high school and middle school, differences in academic calendars (yearlong courses versus trimesters and quarters), and students missing classes may present obstacles. As noted with the Focused Note Taking, Learning Logs may also feel repetitive over time. Continued awareness of the AVID Elective team on promoting the value of the Learning Logs instead of students just seeing it as a compliance piece will be beneficial.

EVALUATION

The desired outcome of the Focused Note Taking initiative is for students to develop a deeper understanding of the academic content presented in their classes and to effectively apply that learning on corresponding assessments. AVID Elective teachers will evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation plan by collecting and analyzing student reflections through midterm and end-of-term surveys. Based on survey results and ongoing observations, teachers and tutors will provide targeted interventions and support as needed to ensure student success.

AVID Elective teachers envision that, through the implementation of a thoughtfully designed student mentorship program, students will strengthen cross-grade relationships, mentors will develop and refine their leadership skills, and mentees will gain increased familiarity with high school expectations and systems. These intended outcomes will be measured through exit tickets aligned to clearly defined objectives for each event. Teachers will analyze the results to inform data-driven decisions and identify areas for improvement to enhance the overall mentorship experience.

The intended outcome of implementing Learning Logs is to support students in developing, practicing, and applying metacognitive skills, while also recognizing the Learning Log's value in the learning process. Students will gain insight into how structured reflection can enhance their overall learning experience, including in performance-based courses.

Data gathered through the common rubric will enable teachers to assess student growth in metacognitive skill development and identify specific components of deeper reflection that may require additional instruction and support.