



AVID/TOPS 2017-2018

# DISTRICT FINDINGS: ANNUAL REPORT

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## Executive Summary

The Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) and the Boys & Girls Club of Dane County (BGCDC) have partnered with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative to conduct an assessment of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program and Teens of Promise (TOPS) program in high school and postsecondary education. AVID/TOPS is a collaborative partnership between MMSD and the BGCDC designed to increase academic achievement, college preparation, postsecondary educational access, and degree attainment for students in the middle academically (i.e. grade point averages between 2.0 and 3.5) who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. The program operates in all four MMSD high schools. This 2017-2018 AVID/TOPS report presents results from analyses of measurable student outcomes that reflect the program's stated goals. These analyses focus on AVID/TOPS program impacts in three areas—2017-2018 academic and engagement outcomes, longitudinal end-of-high school outcomes, and longitudinal postsecondary outcomes. Research questions guiding these analyses are as follows:

1. How does the academic achievement of students who participated in the AVID/TOPS program in high school compare to that of academically and demographically similar peers during the 2017-18 academic year?
2. How does the end-of-high school academic achievement of students who participated in the AVID/TOPS program in high school compare to academically and demographically similar non-AVID/TOPS peers? How do impacts vary by the number of years students participated in AVID?
3. How do college enrollment, persistence, and graduation outcomes of AVID/TOPS high school participants compare to the outcomes of academically and demographically similar peers?
4. Are students, MMSD AVID staff, and BGCDC TOPS staff satisfied with the program?

## Methodology

Estimates of program effects were computed using propensity score matching. This statistical method matches AVID/TOPS and non-AVID/TOPS students based on their individual probabilities of high school AVID/TOPS participation. Groups of students were matched within cohort and high school, and balanced within eighth grade, pre-participation academic, racial, and socioeconomic categories. Rather than comparing selected AVID/TOPS students to all of their grade-level peers, this propensity score matching methodology compared AVID/TOPS students to other students who had similar academic and demographic profiles but chose not to participate. This matching process occurred on four separate samples—a cross-section of high school students in 2017-18, a main cross-cohort sample of students who either graduated or dropped out of one of four MMSD high schools, a cross-cohort sample of students who ever attended college, and a cross-cohort sample of students who attended 2-year colleges. Students in the cross-sectional sample were drawn from ninth through twelfth grade students in the 2017-18 school year.



Students in the cross-cohort samples were drawn from ninth grade cohorts from 2009-10 through 2014-15 and were used to analyze end-of-high school and postsecondary outcomes. This study also included a satisfaction survey of AVID/TOPS students and AVID/TOPS staff designed to gauge staff and student satisfaction with the program overall as well as with various components of the AVID/TOPS program.

## Findings

The impacts estimated in this study of the AVID/TOPS program are broadly similar to those from a similar examination of high school and postsecondary outcomes in 2014-2015; however, this 2017-2018 report also added several new outcome measures including an analysis of postsecondary persistence and graduation from two-year postsecondary institutions. Highlights of impact analyses include:

- The AVID/TOPS program had a large impact on initial postsecondary enrollment, especially for low-income students, students of color, and students with full exposure to the program throughout high school.
  - District-wide, AVID/TOPS students initially enrolled in postsecondary education at a rate 14.7 percentage points higher than students in the non-AVID/TOPS comparison group. The impact was larger for low-income students (19.2 percentage points) and students of color (16.7 percentage points).
  - Full exposure to the program throughout high school had an even larger difference on initial postsec-
- ondary enrollment rates, with AVID/TOPS students enrolling at a rate 21.5 percentage points higher than their matched peers.
- Participation in AVID/TOPS during high school has helped students, particularly low-income students and low-income students of color, graduate high school and prepare for college. District-wide, 95% of AVID/TOPS students graduated from high school in four years, compared to 92% of the matched comparison group.
- Low-income students who participated in AVID/TOPS during high school graduated within four years at a higher rate than their matched peers by approximately 4.8 percentage points. The impact was similar for low-income AVID/TOPS students of color with a difference of 4.5 percentage points.
- By the end of high school, AVID/TOPS students had, on average, earned 0.5 credits more Advanced Placement and Honors course credits than their matched peers.
- Full exposure to AVID/TOPS over four years is associated with improved outcomes relative to students who participate for less than 4 years.
- During the 2017-18 school year, the AVID/TOPS program had modest average impacts on high school academic achievement, particularly for low-income students and students of color.
  - District-wide, AVID/TOPS students earned cumulative GPAs approxi-

mately 0.11 grade points higher than their non-AVID/TOPS peers. The impact was slightly larger for low-income students and students of color (0.17 and 0.15 grade points higher, respectively), consistent with AVID/TOPS's focus on reducing achievement gaps.

- Male AVID/TOPS students of color took more Advanced Placement and Honors course credits than similar non-program peers by approximately 0.27 credits.
- Survey results indicated high levels of student and staff satisfaction with the AVID/TOPS program overall and many of its components.

## Introduction

The Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) is a large and increasingly diverse urban school district, serving 27,000 students in 49 schools. Nearly half of the students in the district come from low-income families, and over half identify as students of color. Equity is a serious concern in MMSD as the district has grappled for many years with persistent socioeconomic gaps in academic achievement and high school graduation rates. In 2007, as part of an effort to close these achievement gaps, MMSD began to implement the national AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) system at East High School. In 2008, the district joined forces with the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County (BGCDC) to pair AVID with BG CDC's Teens of Promise (TOPS) program, and the following year the combined AVID/TOPS program was offered in all four of the district's comprehensive high schools. Starting in 2012, the AVID program was expanded to 11 district middle schools, and BG CDC also began implementing the College Club program at selected middle schools that same year.

Since 2014, the Madison Metropolitan School District has partnered with the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to conduct an annual

assessment of the district's AVID/TOPS program. The 2017-2018 assessment focuses on estimating AVID/TOPS high school and postsecondary program impacts in three areas—high school academic and engagement outcomes for students attending MMSD during the 2017-18 school year, end-of-high school academic impacts across six cohorts, and postsecondary academic impacts across five cohorts. In addition, the report includes descriptive analyses of satisfaction surveys from both AVID/TOPS students and MMSD and BG CDC AVID/TOPS staff. Research questions guiding these analyses are as follows:

1. How does the academic achievement of students who participated in the AVID/TOPS program in high school compare to academically and demographically similar peers during the 2017-18 academic year?
2. How does the end-of-high school academic achievement of students who participated in the AVID/TOPS program in high school compare to academically and demographically similar non-AVID/TOPS peers? How do impacts vary by the number of years students participated in AVID/TOPS?

3. How do college enrollment, persistence, and graduation outcomes of AVID/TOPS high school participants compare to the outcomes of academically and demographically similar peers?
4. Are students, MMSD AVID staff, and BG CDC TOPS staff satisfied with the program?

## Overview of AVID

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a national comprehensive college readiness system, whose mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. At its heart AVID is a shared philosophy between students, educators, families, and community: hold students accountable to the highest standards, provide academic and social support, and they will rise to the challenge. AVID brings research-based strategies and curriculum to an educational institution.

AVID College Readiness System is comprised of three mutually reinforcing key elements. The AVID Elective Class, the first element, is a stand-alone elective course that targets students in the academic middle. AVID targets students in the academic middle with a 2.00 – 3.5 GPA, who have an interest in post-secondary education. Students targeted for AVID are typically students who are capable of completing rigorous curriculum but may need additional support, mentoring, and/or information to meet the requirements for enrollment in post-secondary education. Typically, AVID students are the first in their families to attend college, and many are from low-income or minority families. AVID pulls these students out of their unchallenging courses and puts them on the college track: acceleration instead of remediation. AVID Schoolwide, the second element of AVID, transforms the

instruction, systems, leadership, and culture of a school, ensuring college readiness for all AVID Elective students and improved academic outcomes for all students. AVID Professional Development, the third element, provides educators in all content areas with training and methodologies to create a strong college and career readiness system. Educators leverage these high quality professional learning opportunities both in their respective roles and in support of the school improvement process and professional development in their schools. MMSD's contract with AVID provides the district with access to AVID Center resources and curriculum to successfully implement the AVID elective course and AVID strategies school-wide.

AVID is schoolwide when a strong AVID system transforms the Instruction, Systems, Leadership, and Culture of a school, ensuring college readiness for all students enrolled in the AVID Elective class and improved academic performance for all students, based on increased opportunities.

1. AVID Schoolwide **instruction** occurs when the entire instructional staff utilizes AVID strategies, other best instructional practices, and 21st century tools to ensure college readiness for AVID Elective students and increased academic performance for all students.

2. AVID is Schoolwide when **systems** are in place that support governance, curriculum and instruction, data collection and analysis, professional learning, and student and parent outreach to ensure college readiness for AVID Elective students and improved academic performance for all students.
3. AVID Schoolwide **leadership** sets the vision and tone that promote college readiness and high expectations for all students in the school.
4. AVID Schoolwide **culture** is evident when the AVID philosophy progressively shifts beliefs and behaviors resulting in an increase of students meeting college readiness requirements.

### History of AVID and the Partnership with the Madison Metropolitan School District and Boys and Girls Club of Dane County

MMSD piloted the AVID program at East High School in 2007. In 2008, MMSD and BG CDC collaborated to create the AVID/Teens of Promise (TOPS) partnership to extend and deepen the supports and opportunities for students in AVID. The program was designed so that all high school AVID students receive TOPS support through their AVID affiliation.

In 2009, MMSD expanded the AVID/TOPS system to include the AVID elective class and schoolwide strategies at the district's four comprehensive high schools. The first district-wide freshman cohort graduated 84 students in 2013. In 2012, MMSD implemented AVID for seventh- and eighth-graders in 11 MMSD middle

schools. Additionally, MMSD and BG CDC established AVID/College Club to expand their partnership to Cherokee and Wright middle schools. Like the high school TOPS program, College Club middle schoolers receive additional support with tutoring, guest speakers, college field trips, and experiential learning opportunities. In addition, these schools receive BG CDC financial and personnel support.

School-based AVID teams, including a designated administrator, AVID coordinators, and AVID elective teachers, maintain the school-level AVID/TOPS program and work with students directly and behind the scenes to foster student growth.

### AVID National Certification

The national AVID Center monitors the implementation of AVID Schoolwide through an extensive certification process, encompassing the four AVID Schoolwide Domains. Schools must show evidence of their implementation. AVID Center introduced a new evaluation tool, the AVID Coaching & Certification Instrument (CCI).

The CCI is organized into four sections that correspond to the four AVID Schoolwide Domains: Instruction, Systems, Leadership, and Culture. Use of the CCI helps schools ensure fidelity to the AVID system and plan for sustainable growth. To support the continuous improvement of the school's AVID system, the AVID Site Team is responsible for completing the



CCI early in the school year, collecting authentic evidence to document progress, revisiting the CCI regularly to sustain growth, and submitting data to AVID Center in the spring to determine the overall AVID certification rating based on the level of implementation of each Domain. The Domains are further defined through Subdomains that monitor the level of AVID implementation using multiple indicators.

The overall AVID Certification for a school is determined based on the individual levels of implementation of each Domain and Subdomain and the submission of AVID Data Collection forms. The following are AVID Certification ratings:

1. AVID Non-Certified Site: At least one of the Domains is rated "Does Not Meet AVID Implementation Expectations."
2. AVID Certified Site: All Domains are rated "Meets AVID Implementation Expectations" or higher.
3. AVID Emerging Schoolwide Site: Three out of four Domains are rated "Emerging AVID Schoolwide" or higher. If one Domain is rated less than "Emerging AVID Schoolwide," the rating must be "Meets AVID Implementation Expectations."
4. AVID Schoolwide Site of Distinction: All Domains are rated "Emerging AVID Schoolwide" or higher.

**FIGURE 1: AVERAGE MMSD HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATION, 2017-18**

School	Overall Rating	Instruction	Systems	Leadership	Culture
Memorial	<b>AVID Certified Site</b>	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations
East	<b>Emerging Schoolwide</b>	Emerging Schoolwide	Emerging Schoolwide	Sustaining Schoolwide	Sustaining Schoolwide
West	<b>AVID Certified Site</b>	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations	Meets Expectations
La Follette	<b>Emerging Schoolwide</b>	Emerging Schoolwide	Meets Expectations	Emerging Schoolwide	Emerging Schoolwide

### AVID Implementation

During the 2017-18 school year MMSD offered 28 sections of AVID in grades seven and eight and 40 sections in grades nine through twelve, serving 1,515 students (Table 1). Generally, one class per grade was offered in middle and high school.

In 2017-18, AVID served approximately 17% of MMSD's seventh and eighth grade student population and 12% of high school students. Seventy-two percent of AVID middle and high school students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch (Table 2). While the district is 18%

African American and 21% Hispanic, these groups represent 20% and 40% of the AVID

population, respectively. Following the national trend, boys (46%) are under-enrolled in AVID.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF AVID COURSE SECTIONS OFFERED AND TOTAL AVID ENROLLMENT BY GRADE, 2017-18**

Grade Level	Enrollment	Sections Per Grade
7	306	14
8	316	14
9	256	10
10	210	10
11	224	10
12	203	10
Total	1515	68

**TABLE 2: 2017-18 HIGH SCHOOL AVID ENROLLMENT BY STUDENT BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS**

	Total	Low-Income	Female	Black	Hispanic	Asian	White	ELL	SPED
7 <sup>th</sup>	306	77%	56%	25%	35%	11%	19%	50%	7%
8 <sup>th</sup>	316	69%	53%	19%	39%	10%	18%	50%	6%
9 <sup>th</sup>	256	79%	54%	26%	45%	8%	12%	49%	5%
10 <sup>th</sup>	213	74%	56%	24%	42%	12%	13%	55%	8%
11 <sup>th</sup>	224	72%	59%	26%	44%	11%	11%	55%	4%
12 <sup>th</sup>	203	76%	65%	25%	45%	13%	13%	59%	5%
Total	580	72%	54%	20%	40%	9%	20%	47%	7%

## Program Retention

AVID/TOPS seeks to retain all students who enroll in the AVID elective class through their senior year. Students who are struggling academically are identified and closely monitored by a school-based AVID/TOPS site team. Student attrition from AVID typically occurs through three avenues: (1) they leave the district or transfer to a district school that does not offer AVID programming, such as Shabazz High School; (2) they voluntarily drop the AVID elective course, or; (3) they are asked to exit from the program because their cumulative

grade point average drops below 2.0 for more than one semester.

Among AVID ninth graders in 2016-17, 89% enrolled in the program again as tenth graders for the 2017-18 academic year. Retention from tenth to eleventh grade (90%) was substantially higher (Table 3). On average, year-to-year retention was between 80% and 90% for most subgroups, with the exception of white students, whose retention was 77% (Table 4).

**TABLE 3: 2017-18 YEAR-TO-YEAR AVID RETENTION BY GRADE**

Grades	Retained
Eighth to ninth	66%
Ninth to tenth	89%
Tenth to eleventh	90%

**TABLE 4: 2017-18 YEAR-TO-YEAR AVID RETENTION BY SUBGROUP**

Grades	Retained
Female	87%
Male	81%
Asian	86%
Black or African American	85%
Hispanic/Latino	84%
Multiracial	90%
White	77%

## BGCDC TOPS Implementation

BGCDC operates TOPS in and out of school by enhancing the AVID program for high school students enrolled in the AVID elective class. BGCDC provides each high school with two full-time TOPS coordinators and one part-time administrative assistant who work closely with students enrolled in AVID and their AVID elective teachers. TOPS coordinators support the AVID-required, in-class tutors and tutorials. In 2017- 2018, they also coordinated and chaperoned field trips that allowed 100% of students in grades 9-12 to attend at least three colleges and universities, scheduled and hosted community speakers to speak in over 300 class periods, matched and managed nearly 50 mentor and mentee relationships with community members, and operated career development programs, including paid summer internships, for over 200 students. The presence of the coordinators in each school allows for a natural division of labor between the elective teachers and the coordinators who can each work deeply on a narrowed range of tasks. This arrangement ensures that students have the best possible chance of maintaining and improving their grades, developing the necessary skills to foster critical thinking, engaging in more rigorous coursework, and learning how to succeed within the school system. In addition to staffing support by the TOPS coordinators, BGCDC provides funding for the AVID tutors and extends Boys and Girls Club membership to AVID/TOPS students for free. Students can access the programs offered there, as well, including competing for the annual Youth of the Year scholarship among other experiential learning activities.

The TOPS College Success Program (TCSP)

provides additional support for graduating seniors by following them from high school through college completion. The program funds six full-time staff, including dedicated staff to support college applications and enrollment, and College Success Coaches who case manage ~125 students annually towards persistence. The College Enrollment Coach works with high school seniors on the college selection, application and enrollment process, including helping them locate and apply for financial aid. The College Success Coaches provide support to students during college to access campus resources, acclimate to college life, and stay on track for graduation. The TOPS staff co-organizes the College Signing Day program for graduated seniors with the MMSD AVID coordinators. They hold a summer transition conference for all graduated seniors to address summer melt (the loss of college plans during the summer following high school graduation) and provide assistance for the final steps of college matriculation and navigating the campus experience. Over two hundred students received support through their senior year in 2017-2018. Of those, 183 enrolled in college the fall semester immediately following high school graduation, representing 91% of AVID/TOPS students. Five TOPS College Success staff continue to guide over 500 students enrolled in college by tracking their course-taking each semester, providing one-on-one coaching at their college campuses, and organizing scholar activities. TCSP also has a formal partnership with Madison College to support student success and is developing additional partnerships for its top feeder institutions.



## Study Methodology

We estimated the effects of high school AVID/TOPS participation using propensity score matching. This statistical method allowed AVID/TOPS students to be compared with other students who had similar academic and demographic profiles but who did not participate in the program – a more “apples to apples” comparison. Our approach matched students based on the individual probability of high school AVID/TOPS participation computed for each student within each MMSD high school. Because we used multiple cohorts in our analyses, we performed this matching process separately for each cohort to ensure that AVID/TOPS students and their matched non-AVID/TOPS counterparts were exposed to the same school environments (e.g. school policies, leadership & peers) which might otherwise bias our estimates.

To maximize the overall quality of the matching process, we allowed AVID/TOPS students to be matched with more than one similar non-AVID/TOPS comparison student. All final estimates were weighted to adjust for the number of matched partners. Matching was based on the probability of AVID/TOPS program participation as calculated from the student's eighth grade pre-program characteristics.<sup>1</sup> These baseline characteristics were derived from district administrative records and

included student demographics (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, low-income status, parent education<sup>2</sup>, English language learner (ELL) status, special education status); academic and behavioral records; attendance; and WKCE, Badger, and Forward Exam Reading and Math scores.<sup>3</sup> In cases where particular baseline information for a given student was missing, we substituted predicted (imputed) values based on other observed characteristics.<sup>4</sup> This allowed us to keep these students in our analyses rather than drop them and risk biasing our results.

We conducted this matching process on four separate samples:

- Cross-sectional – ninth through twelfth grade students enrolled in MMSD in 2017-18. Students in this sample were matched separately based on high school and grade.
- Cohort, non-transfers – students who first enrolled in ninth grade in 2009-10 through 2014-15 and did not transfer out of the district. Students in this sample were matched separately based on high school and cohort year.
- Cohort, persistence – students who first enrolled in ninth grade in 2009-10 through 2012-13 and enrolled in any college immediately after high school

<sup>1</sup> In order to maintain apples to apples comparisons between students within high schools, we limit the sample to students whose most recent high school is the same that their 8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school feeds into. This results in the loss of approximately 7% of the treatment sample.

<sup>2</sup> In 2015-16, we began including parent education in our matching process. Although the relationship between parent education and school outcomes is well established in the research literature, missing data previously prevented the use of parent education for matching. However, recent published guidance on dealing with missing values in propensity score matching allowed us to account for the influence of parent

education in all of our impact estimates while also accounting for missing values. For more information see: [http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-41259-7\\_5](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-41259-7_5).

<sup>3</sup> We use eighth grade WKCE, Badger, and Forward Exam scores instead of MAP scores due to their availability for all cohorts used in our analyses.

<sup>4</sup> Approximately 4% of the students in our samples had missing values for parent education. We used the technique of multiple imputation to handle these missing values in both the matching and analysis.

graduation.

- Cohort, 2-year attendees – students who first enrolled in ninth grade in 2009-10 through 2011-12 and attended a 2-year institution. Students in this sample were matched separately based on high school and cohort year.

We used the cross-sectional sample to estimate the impacts of AVID/TOPS participation on 2017-18 cumulative and core<sup>5</sup> GPA, attendance, out-of-school suspensions, Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors credits, and AP and Honors GPA. With the cohort, non-transfer sample we examined how participation in AVID/TOPS impacted end-of-high school

outcomes including twelfth grade cumulative GPA, AP and Honors credits, graduating high school within four years, initial postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary enrollment within 3 years. The cohort, persistence sample was used to examine the impacts of AVID/TOPS participation on postsecondary education persistence.<sup>6</sup> The cohort, 2-year attendees sample was used to estimate impacts of graduation from a two-year postsecondary institution within 150% of the normal time. Table 5 shows a list of all of the samples, cohorts, and outcomes examined in this analysis. Throughout the report we note significant program impacts using a 95% confidence level ( $\alpha=.05$ ) unless specifically stated otherwise.

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<sup>5</sup> Core classes include math, science, language arts, and social studies.

<sup>6</sup> Persistence is defined as three semesters of continuous enrollment not including summer terms.

**TABLE 5: AVID/TOPS ANALYSIS SAMPLES, COHORTS, AND OUTCOMES**

Sample	Outcomes	Cohort (Ninth Grade Year)	Outcomes Year
Cross-sectional	Core & cumulative GPA, AP/Honors credits, AP/Honors GPA <sup>7</sup> , attendance, suspensions	2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18	2017-18
Combined cohort, main sample	12th grade cumulative GPA, 12th grade AP/Honors credits, high school graduation within 4 years	2009-10	2012-13
		2010-11	2013-14
		2011-12	2014-15
		2012-13	2015-16
		2013-14	2016-17
		2014-15	2017-18
	Initial postsecondary enrollment	2009-10	2013-14
		2010-11	2014-15
		2011-12	2015-16
		2012-13	2016-17
		2013-14	2017-18
	Postsecondary enrollment within semesters	2009-10	2015-16
		2010-11	2016-17
		2011-12	2017-18
Cohort, persistence	Persistence	2009-10	2014-15
		2010-11	2015-16
		2011-12	2016-17
		2012-13	2017-18
Cohort, 2-year attendees	Graduation from a 2-year institution within 150% of normal time	2009-10	2015-16
		2010-11	2016-17
		2011-12	2017-18

<sup>7</sup> Note that the AP/Honors GPA analysis included only students who took AP/Honors courses.

In addition to estimating program impact overall, we examined impacts for several demographic subgroups (low-income, students of color, white students, low-income students of color, male students of color, and ELL students) and in the cohort sample analyzed impacts by varying levels of AVID/TOPS participation (full high school participation, partial high school participation, and any high school participation).

Like all non-experimental studies relying on observational data, the present study is subject to certain limitations. Most notably, AVID/TOPS and non-AVID/TOPS students could only be matched on the eighth grade, pre-program characteristics present in district administrative records. While these records allowed us to

“control” for a comprehensive array of academic and demographic pre-program information that would otherwise bias estimates of program impact, remaining bias from other preexisting, but unobserved, factors is still possible. The analysis therefore bears this risk in absence of better strategies for estimating program effects.

Finally, we present results of a satisfaction survey that MMSD administered in December 2018 to AVID/TOPS students and staff to gauge satisfaction with the program overall as well as with various components of the program. The surveys also asked students and staff their perceptions of student preparedness for postsecondary education in a variety of areas.

### Cross-Sectional Impacts of 2017-18 AVID/TOPS

The statistical matching process for the cross-sectional sample resulted in a matched comparison group of non-AVID/TOPS students whose eighth grade demographic and academic characteristics closely resembled those of their AVID/TOPS counterparts. Figure 2 presents the demographic makeup of the two groups, as well as the demographic profile of the full district. Among both AVID/TOPS students and their matched comparison group peers, students of color made up approximately 85%

of the sample. Low-income students represented about three-quarters of the matched sample. Slightly less than half of AVID/TOPS and comparison group students were male, while about 20% were English language learners. Students in the matched sample most commonly had parents who had attended college. However, just over a quarter had parents who had earned a four-year college degree or higher.



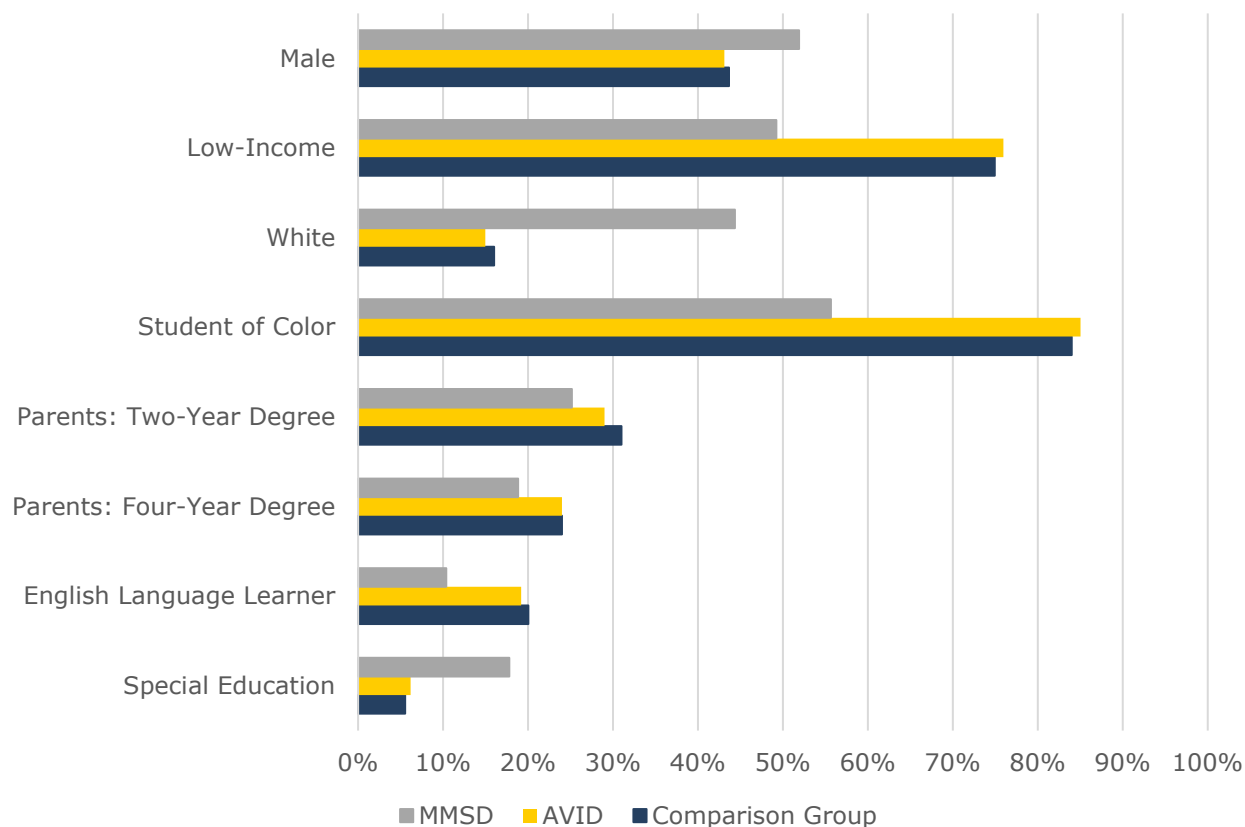
**FIGURE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CROSS-SECTIONAL SAMPLE**

Table 6 shows that AVID/TOPS students and their comparison group counterparts had nearly identical academic histories at the end of middle school. This was true in terms of their eighth grade GPA, as well as their eighth grade WKCE, Badger, and Forward Exam Reading and Math scores. Reflecting how AVID/TOPS selects its participants, students in the matched cross-sectional sample came from the academic middle, with an average

GPA of around 3.0 as eighth graders. All baseline measures presented in Figure 6 and Table 6 were statistically equivalent between AVID/TOPS students and their comparison group peers.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, in all of our impact estimates we made statistical adjustments for any residual imbalance between the two groups.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Throughout the report, statements of statistical significance are based on a 95% confidence level, with  $\alpha=.05$ .

<sup>9</sup> Impact estimates are derived from regression models, which control for any residual imbalance in baseline characteristics between AVID and comparison group students.

TABLE 6: ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CROSS-SECTIONAL SAMPLE

	MMSD	AVID	Comparison Group
Eighth Grade Cumulative GPA	2.96	3.05	3.03
Eighth Grade Core GPA	2.80	2.96	2.94
Eighth Grade Attendance Rate	93%	95%	95%
Eighth Grade Behavior Events	2.80	1.04	1.00
Eighth Grade WKCE Math Score	545.1	536.2	536.1
Eighth Grade WKCE Reading Score	525.7	511.9	512.1
Eighth Grade Badger Math Score <sup>10</sup>	2549.1	2542.4	2543.7
Eighth Grade Badger Reading Score	2545.5	2531.7	2534.7
Eighth Grade Forward Math Score	629.9	609.2	608.6
Eighth Grade Forward Reading Score	618.6	624.9	624.5

These matching results are similar to previous analyses of AVID/TOPS high school impacts.<sup>10</sup> Both analyses achieved statistical equivalence between AVID/TOPS students and their comparison group, but there were some slight differences in the student demographics of the samples. In this sample, relative to the comparison group AVID/TOPS students had a slightly higher proportion of low-income students and a slightly lower proportion of ELL students.

#### High School Impacts: Cross-Sectional (2017-18)

Impact estimates in this section are based on a cross-sectional analysis of students in ninth through twelfth grades in 2017-18. They thus represent the average impacts of AVID/TOPS participation over those grades. **Our evaluation of the high school AVID/TOPS program indicates that in 2017-18 it had significant positive average effects on academic achievement, specifically cumulative GPA. We also found positive, albeit not statistically significant, average effects on AP and Honors course credits, GPA, attendance, and out-of-school suspensions. In all cases, however, effects were generally modest.** We detail each of these findings below.

<sup>10</sup> Due to changes to Wisconsin's state exams, eighth grade exams differ by cohort. The cohort that entered 9th grade in 2014-15 was given the WKCE, the 2015-16

2017-18 cohorts were given the Forward Exam.

<sup>11</sup> See AVID/TOPS 2014-2015 District Findings: Final Report for more information.

## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

## Impact: High School GPA

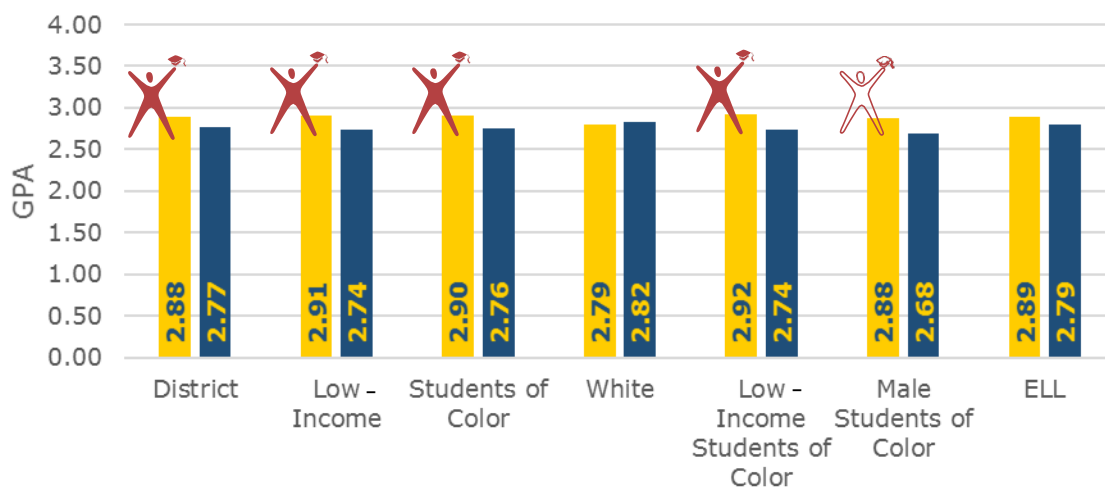
**There is evidence of positive, though modest, average program impacts on high school academic performance.**

AVID/TOPS students earned higher cumulative and core GPAs than their non-AVID/TOPS peers. This was true both at the district level and across focal subgroups (Figures 3 & 4). Differences in cumulative GPA were generally statistically significant, with the exception of the white, male student of color, and ELL student sub-

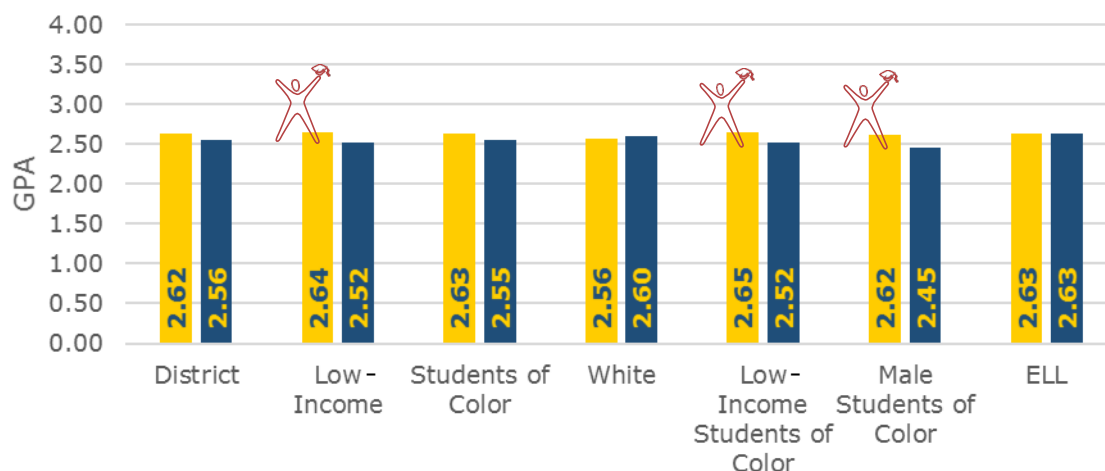
groups. Differences in core GPA were not statistically significant, but AVID/TOPS students over-all and in all sub-groups but ELL had higher core GPAs than their peers in the non-AVID/TOPS comparison group.

**Key Finding:**  
AVID students  
earned higher  
cumulative and  
core high school  
GPAs than their  
peers.

**FIGURE 3: CUMULATIVE GPA BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



**FIGURE 4: CORE GPA BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

## Impact: High School AP and Honors Courses

**We found evidence of average AVID/TOPS effects on AP and Honors course enrollment.** At the district level and across most subgroups, AVID/TOPS students took more credits in AP and Honors courses in relation to their comparison group peers (Figure 5). Several of these results are significant at the 90% level, although not at the 95% level. Male students of color who were AVID/TOPS participants took about 0.28 more AP and Honors course credits than their matched peers – a significant differ-

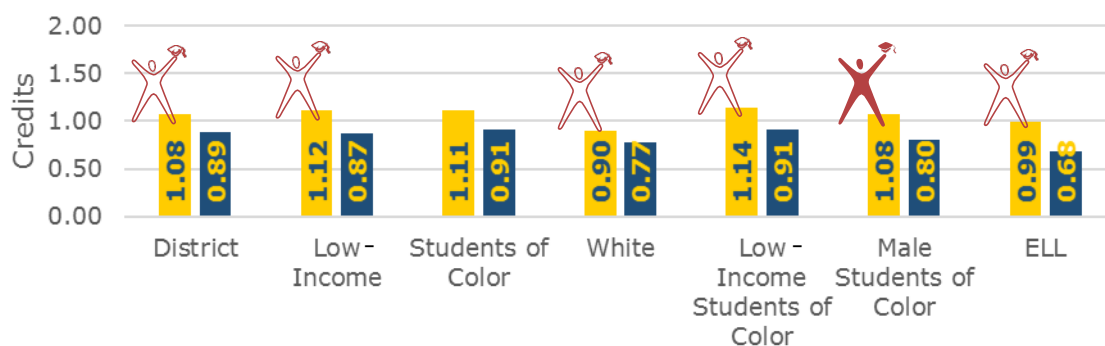
ence between the two groups.

Overall and across all subgroups, while AVID/TOPS students had higher AP and Honors course GPA's than their matched peers, the difference was not statistically significant (Figure 6).

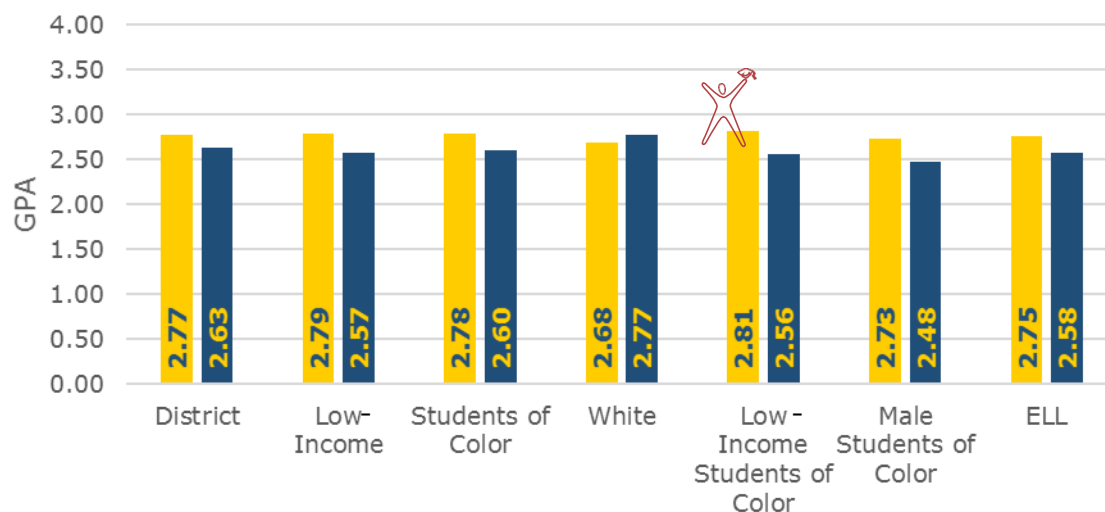
### Key Finding:

Male AVID students of color enrolled in significantly more AP and Honors course credits than their peers.

**FIGURE 5: AP & HONORS COURSE CREDITS BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



**FIGURE 6: AP & HONORS COURSE GPA BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**





## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

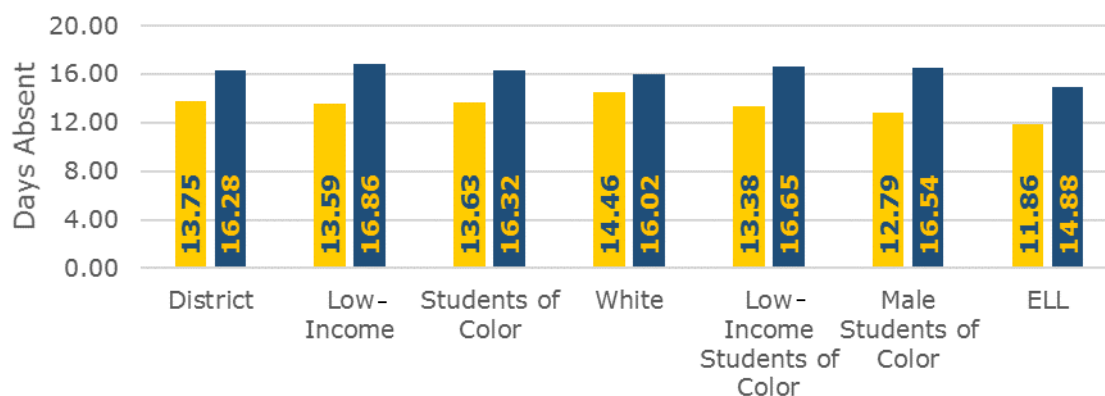
## Impact: High School Attendance

There is possible evidence that AVID/TOPS participation reduced the number of absence days and unexcused absent days in high school. At the district level and across all subgroups, absence days and unexcused absence days for AVID/TOPS students were lower on average than

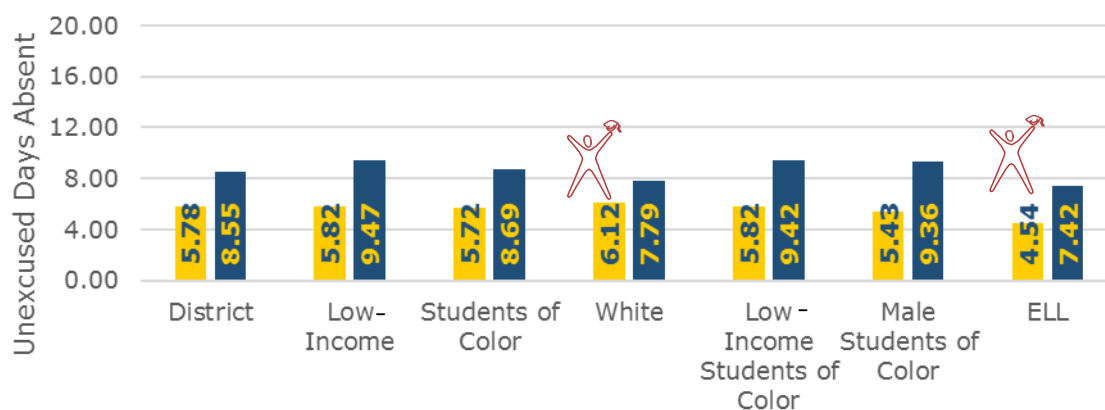
their comparison group counterparts. These differences, however, were not statistically significant (Figures 7 & 8).

**Key Finding:**  
AVID students  
had fewer  
absences and  
unexcused  
absences in high  
school than their  
peers.

**FIGURE 7: DAYS ABSENT BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



**FIGURE 8: UNEXCUSED DAYS ABSENT BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



## Legend



AVID



DIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVEL



DIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

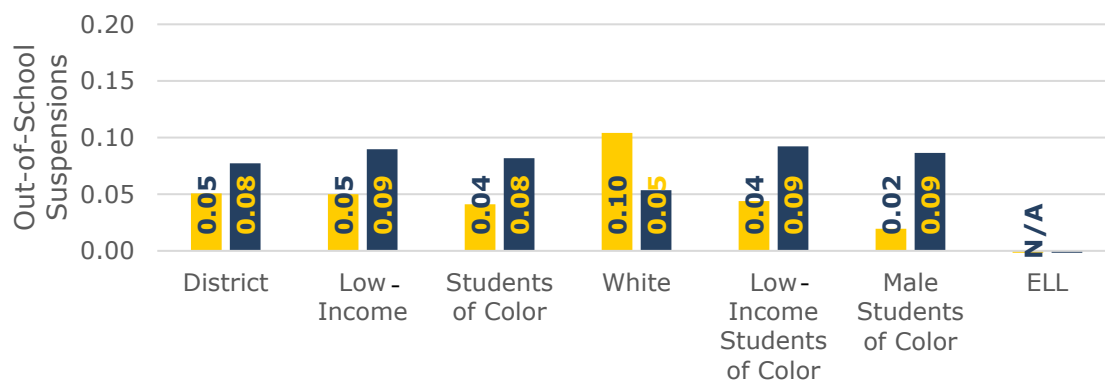
## Impact: High School Suspensions

**There is possible evidence that AVID/TOPS participation reduced the number of out-of-school suspensions among high school participants.** We did not find evidence of significantly different out-of-school-suspension rates or average out-of-school suspension days in high school for AVID/TOPS students (Figures 9 & 10). However, at the district level and across most focal subgroups, AVID/TOPS students had fewer out-of-school suspensions than their comparison group peers, with the exception

of white students. AVID/TOPS students also had, on average, fewer out-of-school suspension days than their peers across the district and for most subgroups, with the exception of male students of color.

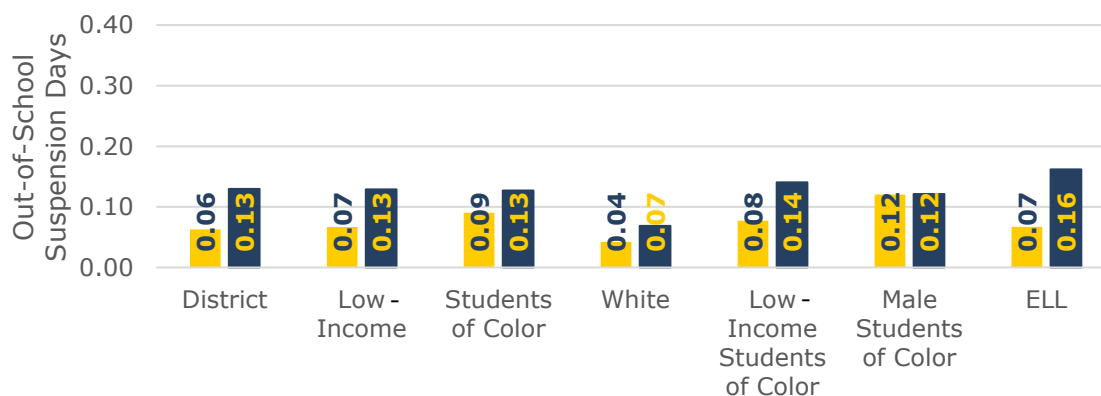
**Key Finding:**  
AVID students  
received fewer  
out-of-school  
suspensions in  
high school than  
their peers.

**FIGURE 9: OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to noisy estimates caused by a lack of variation in the outcome measure.

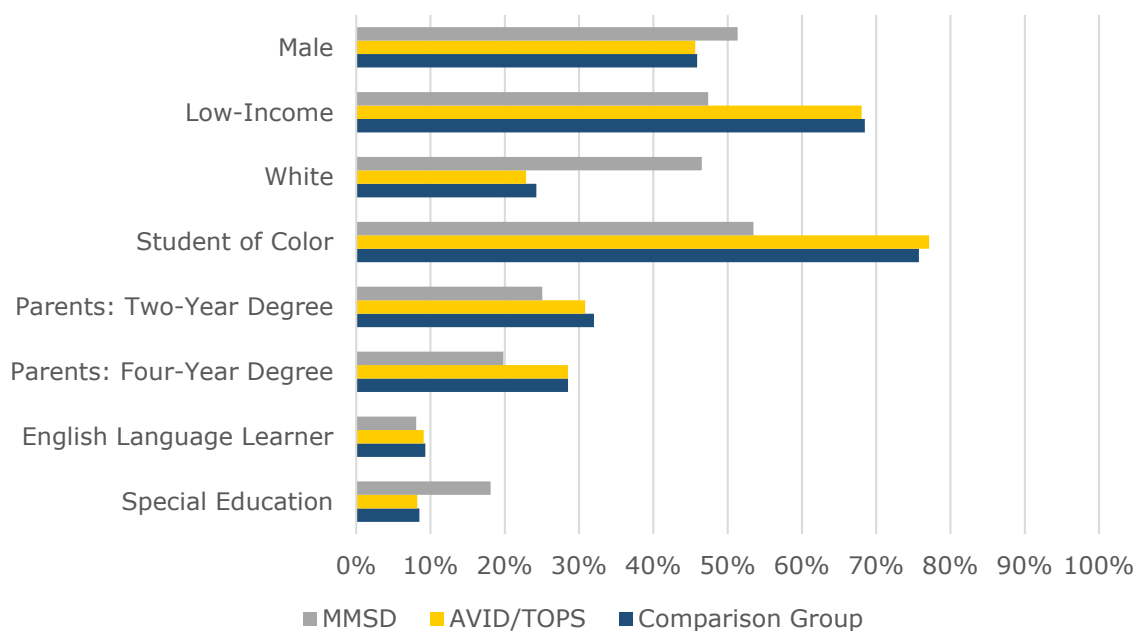
**FIGURE 10: OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DAYS BY AVID/TOPS PARTICIPATION**



## End-of-High School and Postsecondary Impacts of AVID/TOPS

Helping students prepare for college, make a successful transition to postsecondary education, and earn a college diploma are the primary goals of AVID/TOPS. To better understand whether the program is accomplishing these goals, we constructed several samples of cohorts who enrolled in MMSD in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and did not transfer to a different district before graduating or dropping out (for more information on these cohort samples, see Table 5 above). Unlike the single year, cross-sectional analyses described above, cross-cohort analyses account for all years that students spent in MMSD and in AVID/TOPS. While many students remained in AVID/TOPS for all four years in high school (see Tables 3 & 4 above for details on program retention), some students participated for only one, two, or three years. Differences in program participation are particularly important for AVID/TOPS because many program elements occur in students' senior years and during college. Students who leave early, (approximately 80% of students who participate less than four years, with the other 20% comprised of students who joined AVID/TOPS after 9<sup>th</sup> grade and persisted through

12<sup>th</sup> grade), receive no coaching pre-college or during college. To test whether these varying levels of AVID/TOPS "exposure" were related to estimated program impacts, we present end-of-high school and postsecondary impacts for three levels of exposure – "full exposure" equal to four years of program participation, "partial exposure" of between one and three years of participation, and "any exposure" including any student who participated in AVID/TOPS. Overall, our statistical matching process resulted in a combined cohort research sample with very similar AVID/TOPS and comparison group students. For the sample of students who either graduated or dropped out of MMSD without transferring, Figure 11 presents the demographic makeup of the two groups compared to the general population of district students prior to matching. Both AVID/TOPS and comparison group students were over two-thirds low-income and three-quarters students of color. Slightly less than half of each group was male, and approximately 10% were English language learners. Just under a third of both groups had at least one parent with a four-year degree or higher.

**FIGURE 11: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF COMBINED COHORT MAIN SAMPLE**

Consistent with the AVID/TOPS selection process, students in the matched cohort sample came from the academic middle, with an average 3.0 cumulative GPA in eighth grade. Table 7 shows that overall, AVID/TOPS students and their comparison group counterparts in our sample were similar in the eighth grade in terms of their GPA, as well as their WKCE Reading and Math scores. All measures in Figure 11 and Table 7 were statistically equivalent between the two groups.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The information presented in Figure 11 and Table 7 is consistent with the demographic and academic eighth grade characteristics for the other cohort samples analyzed.



TABLE 7: ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF COMBINED COHORT MAIN SAMPLE

	MMSD	AVID	Comparison Group
Eighth Grade Cumulative GPA	3.00	3.01	3.00
Eighth Grade Core GPA	2.83	2.87	2.86
Eighth Grade Attendance Rate	94%	96%	96%
Eighth Grade Behavior Events	2.49	1.17	1.01
Eighth Grade WKCE Math Score	546.6	536.2	535.9
Eighth Grade WKCE Reading Score	527.4	516.3	515.5

### End-of-High School Impacts

The impact estimates in this section are based on analyses combining six ninth grade cohorts of students: 2009-10 through 2014-15. They thus represent the average impacts of high school AVID/TOPS participation across time. **We find evidence that AVID/TOPS participation has had significant positive average effects on high**

**school graduation rates for low-income students and low-income students of color. Full AVID/TOPS program exposure had a significant positive impact on AP and Honors credit taking for white students.** We detail each of these findings below.

## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

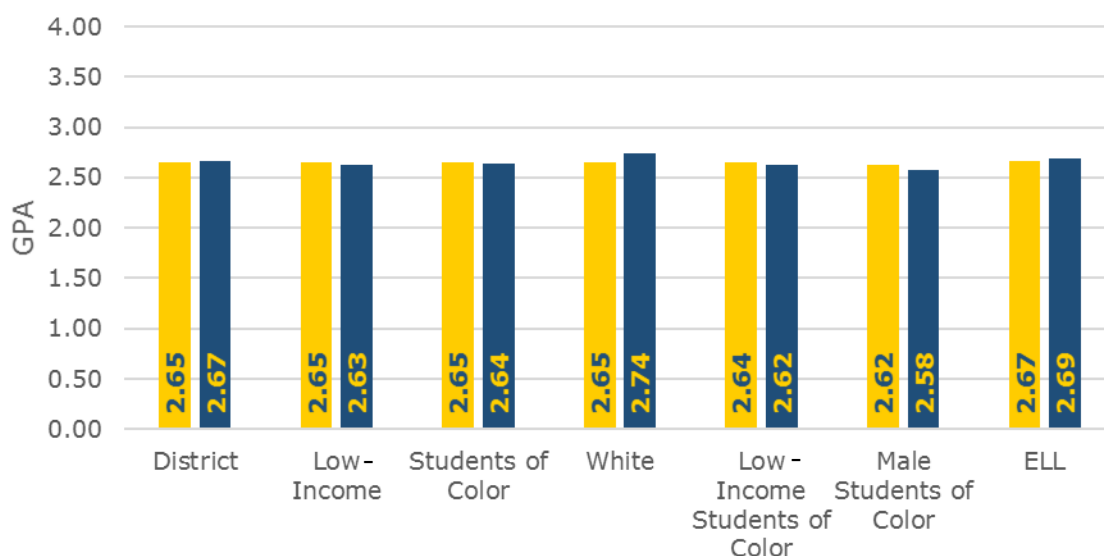
### Impact: Twelfth-Grade Cumulative Grade Point Average

**There is some evidence of positive program impacts on twelfth-grade academic performance as measured by cumulative GPA, but only for students with full AVID/TOPS exposure.** On average, students who participated in high school AVID/TOPS had similar cumulative GPA's at the end of high school compared to their non-AVID/TOPS peers (Figure 12). This finding conceals differences in impact by level of program exposure, however. Students with partial program exposure had lower twelfth-grade cumulative GPA's

(Figure 13), and students with full exposure to AVID/TOPS in high school had higher end-of-high school GPA's than their peers (Figure 14). These differences were not statistically significant overall or for any of the subgroups.

**Key Finding:** Students with full exposure to AVID/TOPS earned higher cumulative twelfth grade GPAs than their peers.

**FIGURE 12: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON TWELFTH-GRADE CUMULATIVE GPA**



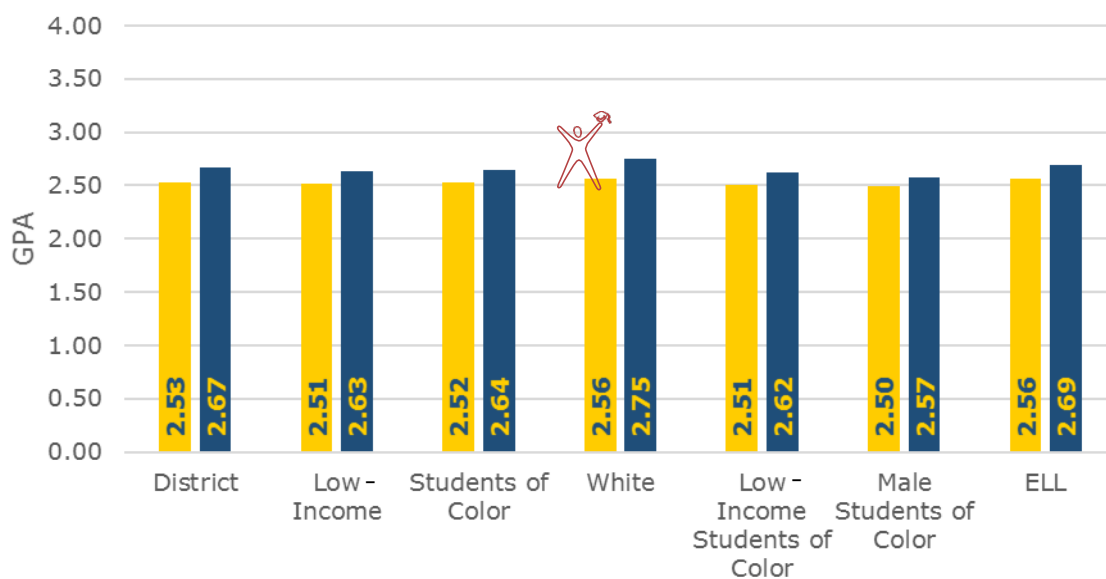
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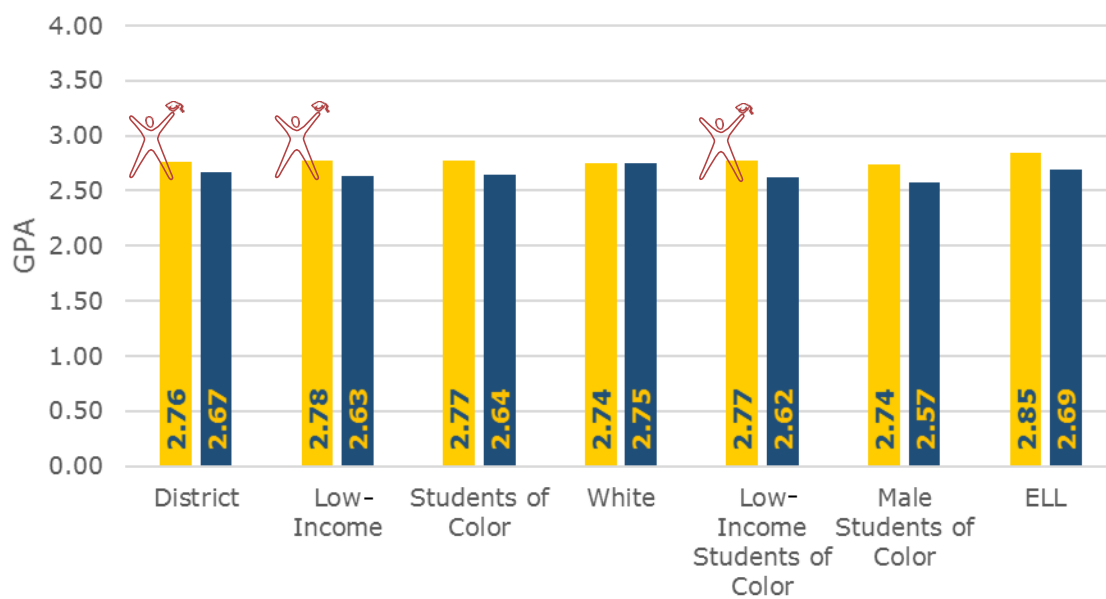
AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 13: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON TWELFTH-GRADE CUMULATIVE GPA**



**FIGURE 14: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON TWELFTH-GRADE CUMULATIVE GPA**



## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

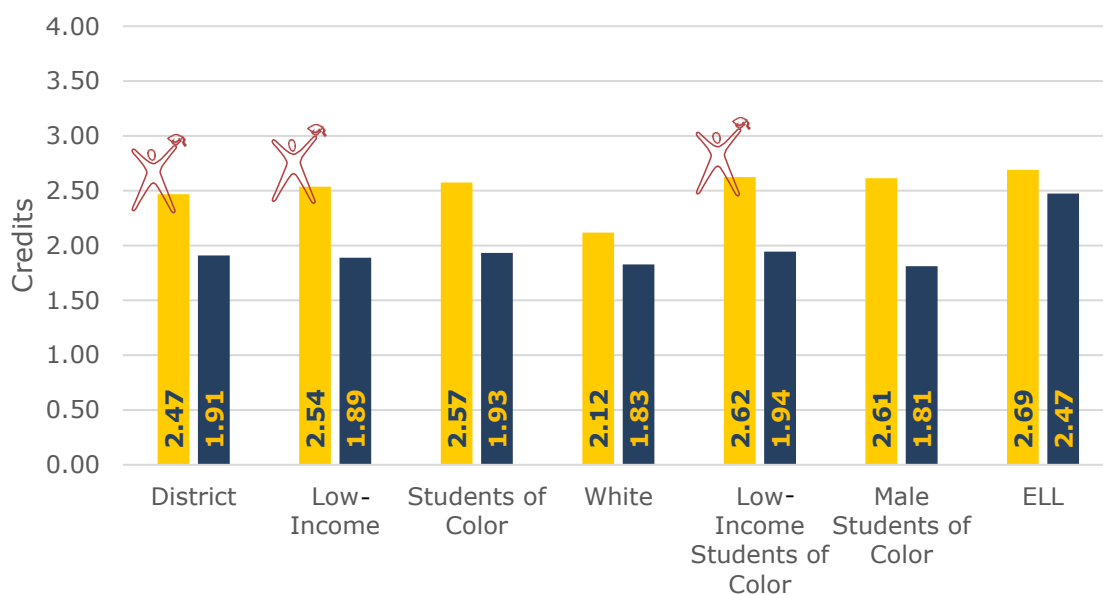
## Impact: AP & Honors Course Credits

There is evidence that AVID/TOPS high school participation increased the number of AP and Honors course credits taken by the end of high school. On average, AVID/TOPS high school participants enrolled in more credits in AP and Honors courses throughout high school than comparison group students, regardless of the level of program exposure and student subgroup, with the exception of white students with partial exposure (Figures 15-17). This difference was statistically significant only for white students with full exposure to the AVID/TOPS high school

program, although district-level results were significant at the 0.10 level for both any and full exposure participants. These students enrolled, on average, in more than one more credit of AP/Honors courses than their peers who did not participate in any AVID/TOPS.

**Key Finding:**  
AVID/TOPS  
students enrolled  
in significantly  
more AP and  
Honors credits  
by the end of  
high school than  
their peers.

**FIGURE 15: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON NUMBER OF AP & HONORS CREDITS**



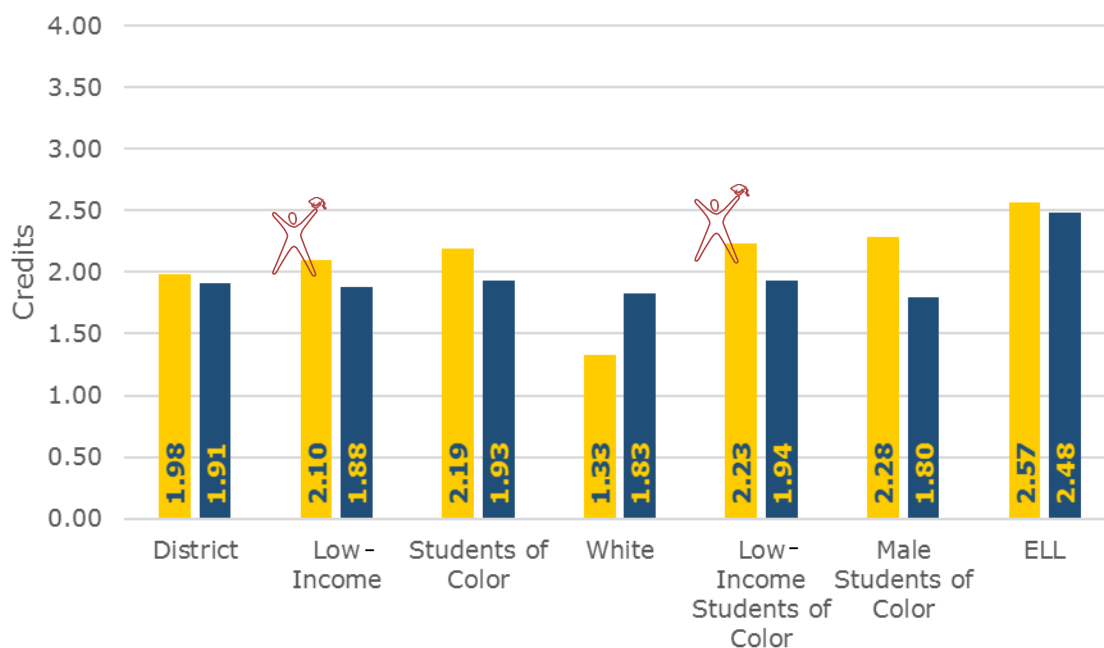
## Legend



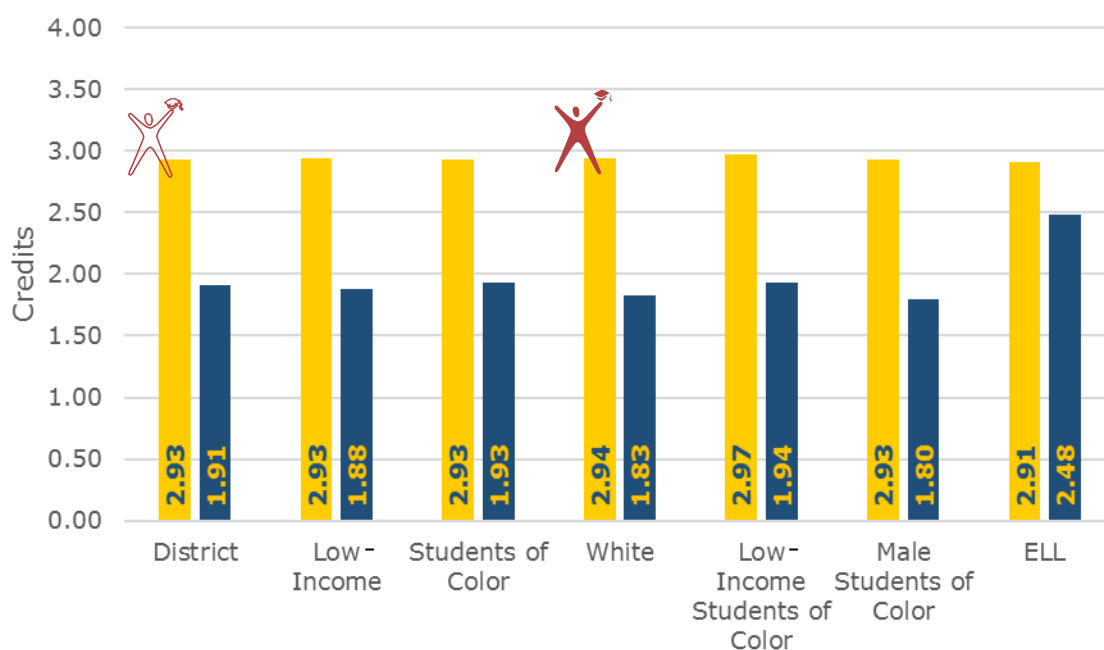
AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 16: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON NUMBER OF AP & HONORS CREDITS**



**FIGURE 17: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON NUMBER OF AP & HONORS CREDITS**



## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

## Impact: High School Graduation

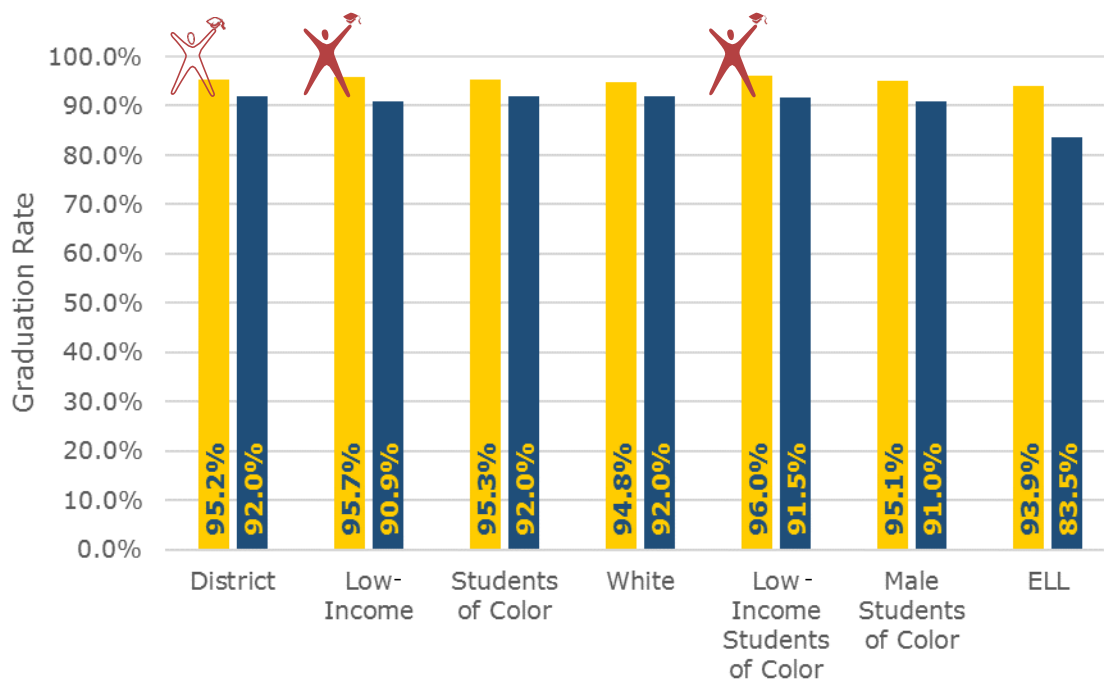
There is evidence that AVID/TOPS high school participation increased the four-year high school graduation rate for certain subgroups of students. There were no significant effects of AVID/TOPS at the district level due to high graduation rates among both the AVID/TOPS (95%) and comparison groups (92%). (In the 2014-15 analysis, AVID/TOPS students had similar graduation rates, but comparison group rates were lower.)<sup>13</sup> AVID/TOPS high school participants who were low-income or low-income students of color had significantly higher four-year high school graduation rates than their comparison

group peers. This was true for any program exposure to AVID/TOPS (Figures 18 & 19). While overall and for all subgroups AVID/TOPS high school participants with full program exposure had higher graduation rates

than their peers, these differences were not statistically significant (Figure 20).

**Key Finding:**  
AVID/TOPS  
low-income  
students and  
low-income  
students of  
color graduated  
high school at  
higher rates  
than their  
peers.

**FIGURE 18: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**



<sup>13</sup> The intention of AVID/TOPS is to shift school culture toward a more equitable college readiness system of support. Determining the causes of increases in comparison group graduation rates is beyond the scope of this study, but it is possible that AVID/TOPS contributions to schoolwide culture have supported improvements in comparison group graduation.



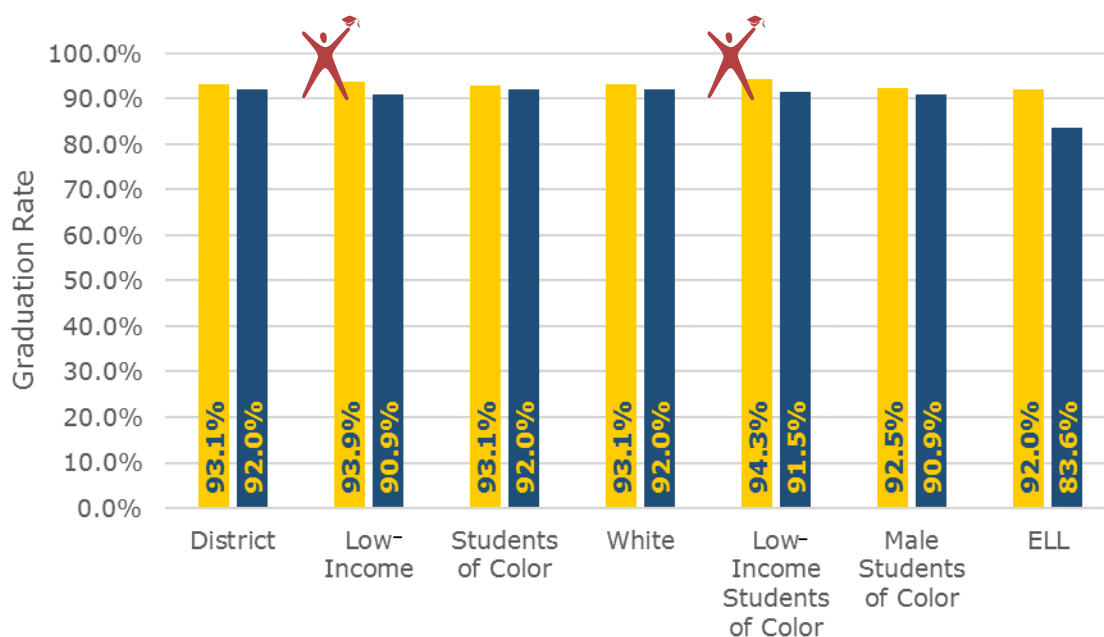
## Legend



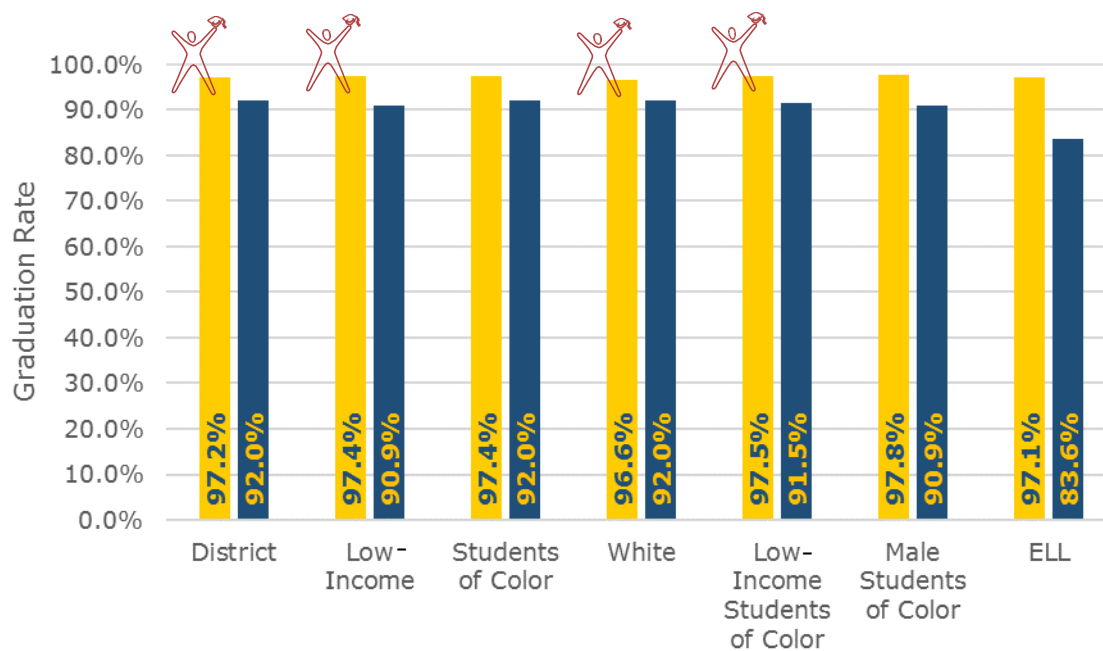
AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 19: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**



**FIGURE 20: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**



## Postsecondary Impacts

Postsecondary impacts were examined using a combined cohort of students enrolled in the ninth grade from 2009–10 through 2013–14.<sup>14</sup> **Our evaluation indicates that AVID/TOPS has had**

**large and significant impacts on initial postsecondary enrollment but non-significant average effects on postsecondary enrollment within six semesters and postsecondary persistence.** We detail each of these findings below.

### Impact: Initial Postsecondary Enrollment

By the fall following high school graduation, students who had participated in the AVID/TOPS high school program enrolled in a postsecondary institution at significantly higher rates (15 percentage points) than their matched peers. For students with any level of program exposure this was true at the district level and across several subgroups including low-income students, students of color, low-income students of color, and male students of color (Figure 21). For students with full exposure to AVID/TOPS in high school, at the district level and across all subgroups, students had statistically significant higher initial postsecondary enrollment rates (Figure 23). At the district level, AVID/TOPS students with full program exposure enrolled in college at a rate 22 percentage points higher than

their comparison peers. While students with partial exposure had higher initial postsecondary enrollment than their peers, this difference was not statistically significant (Figure 22).

Here, and for other postsecondary outcomes below, it is important to note that less than 20% of students in the partial exposure group received TOPS enrollment or success coaching in high school or college. These students were ineligible for coaching due to leaving AVID/TOPS early.

**Key Finding:** AVID/TOPS students had significantly higher initial postsecondary enrollment rates compared to peers, overall and across most subgroups.

<sup>14</sup> For postsecondary enrollment within six semesters and two-year institution graduation, the ninth grade cohorts included 2009–10 through 2011–12. For postsecondary persistence, the

ninth grade cohorts included 2009–10 through 2012–13.

## Legend



AVID



COMPARISON  
GROUP

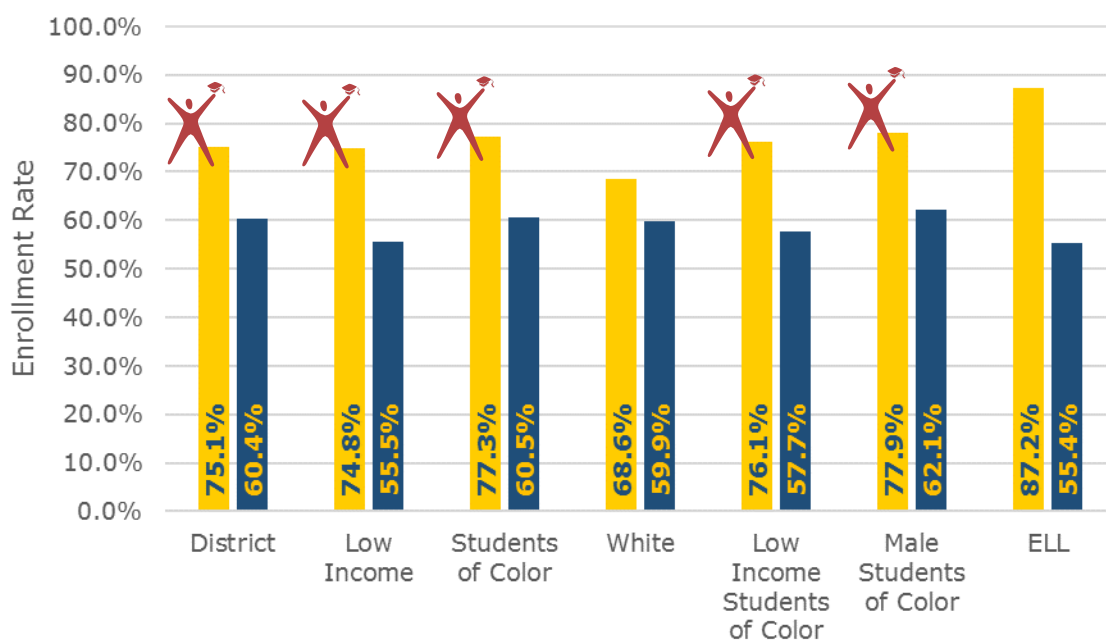


DIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVEL

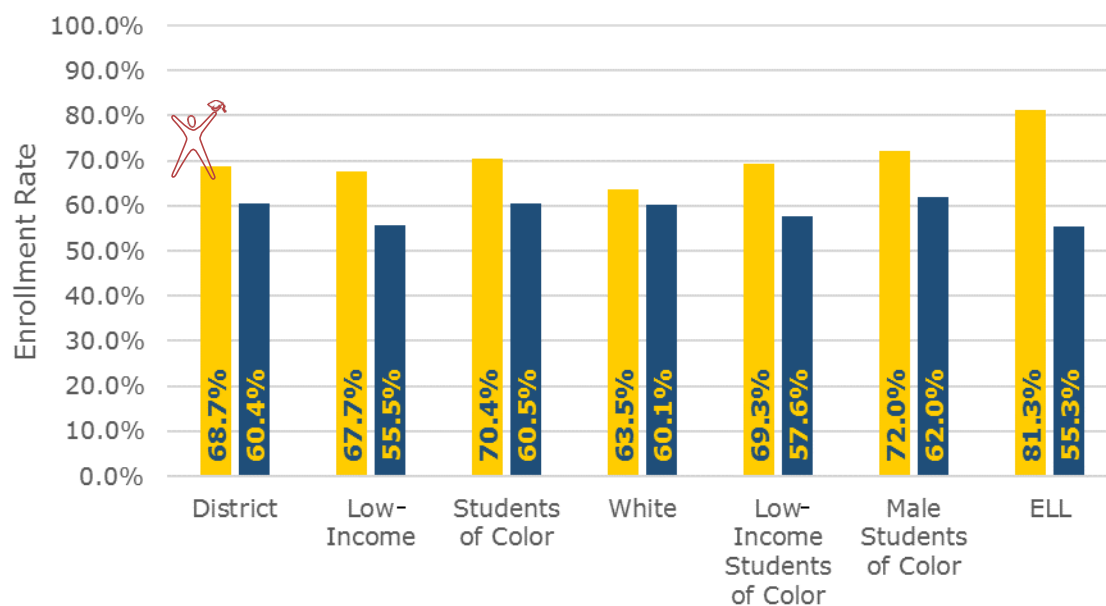


DIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 21: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON INITIAL POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT**



**FIGURE 22: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON INITIAL POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT**



## Legend



AVID



COMPARISON  
GROUP

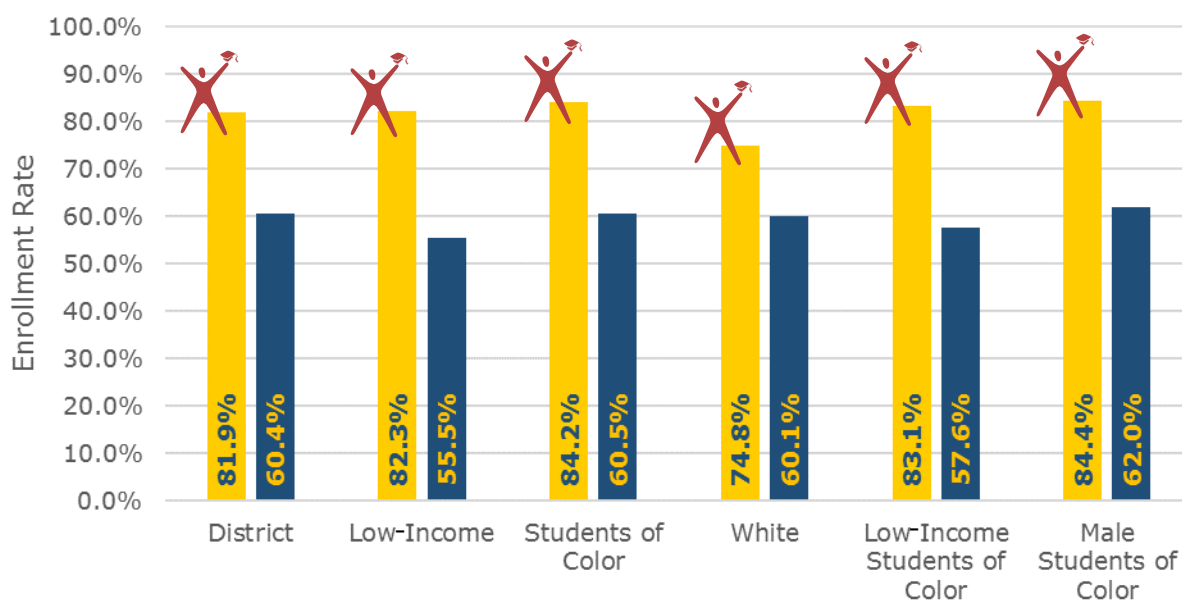


DIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVEL



DIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 23: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON INITIAL POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

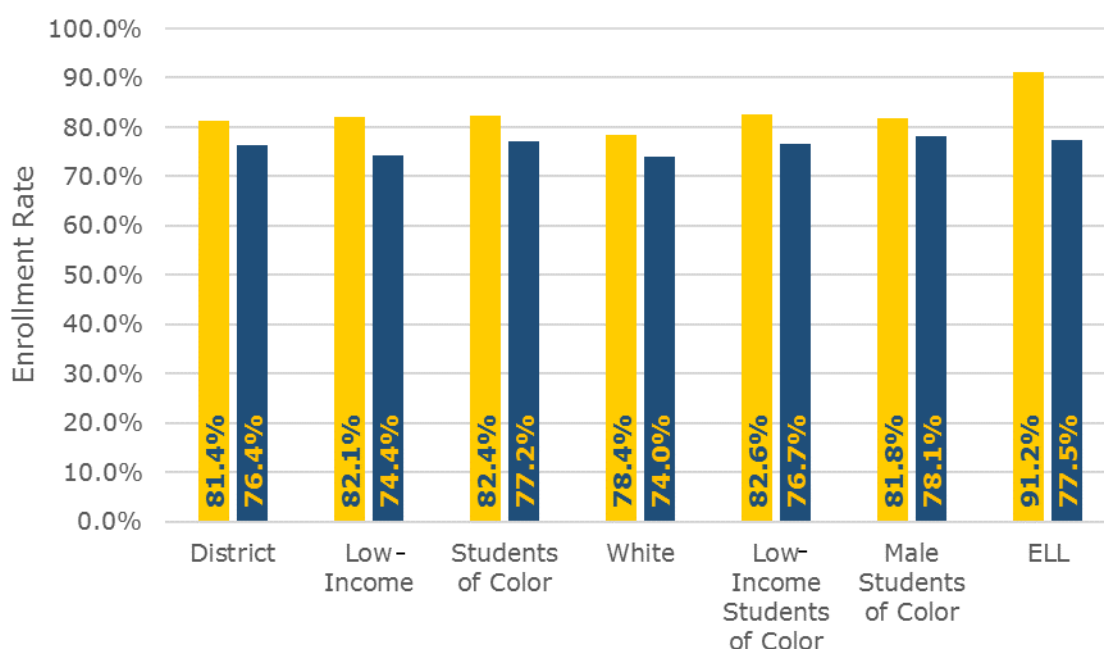
### Impact: Postsecondary Enrollment within Six Semesters

There is evidence that AVID/TOPS high school participation had a positive but not statistically significant effect on postsecondary enrollment within six semesters of graduating high school. Students with any or full exposure to AVID/TOPS in high school had higher rates of postsecondary enrollment within six semesters of high school graduation than the matched control group (Figure 24 & 26). This was true overall and across

all subgroups. Students with partial exposure to AVID/TOPS had similar rates of postsecondary enrollment within six semesters (Figure 25).

**Key Finding:**  
Students who were in high school AVID/TOPS had a higher rate of postsecondary enrollment within six semesters than their peers.

**FIGURE 24: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT WITHIN SIX SEMESTERS**



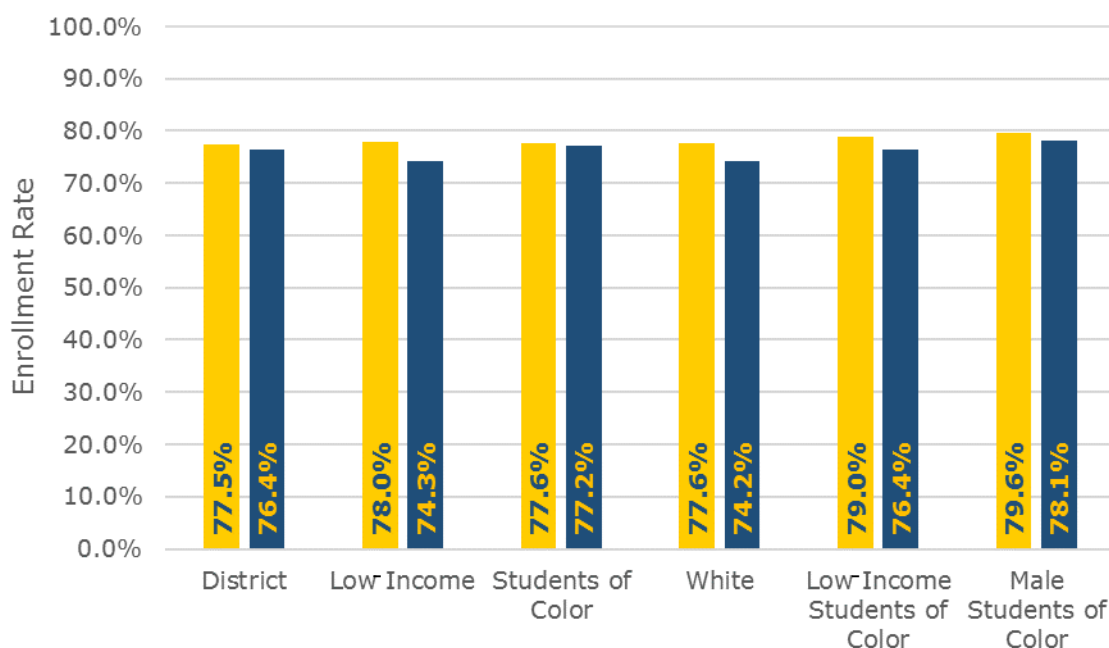
## Legend



AVID

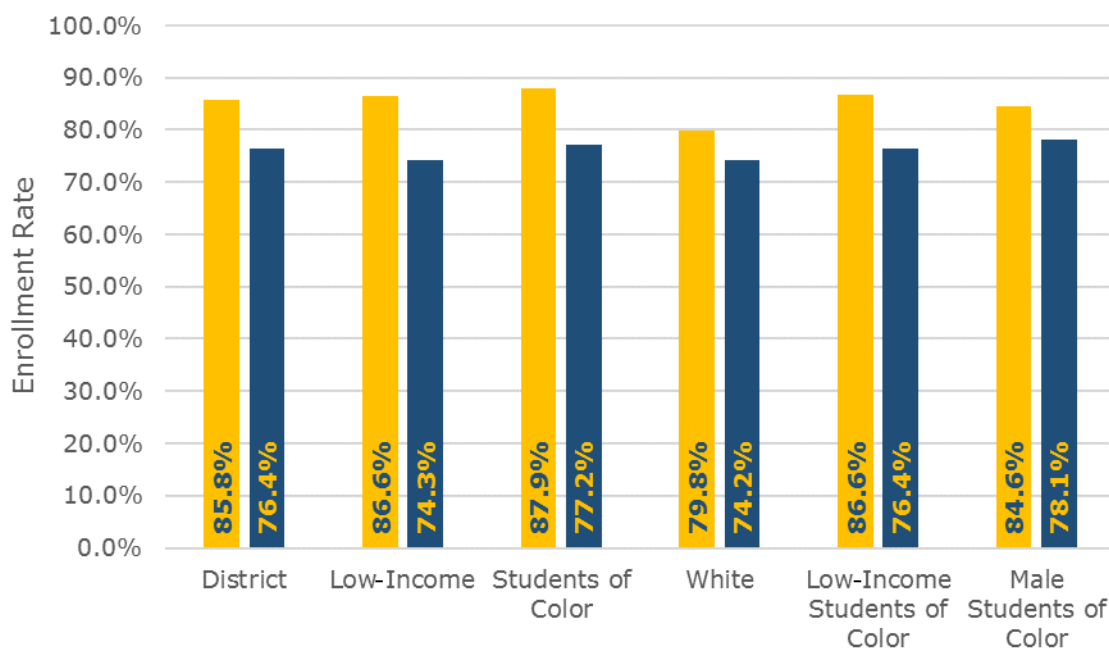
COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 25: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT WITHIN SIX SEMESTERS**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

**FIGURE 26: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT WITHIN SIX SEMESTERS**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.



## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

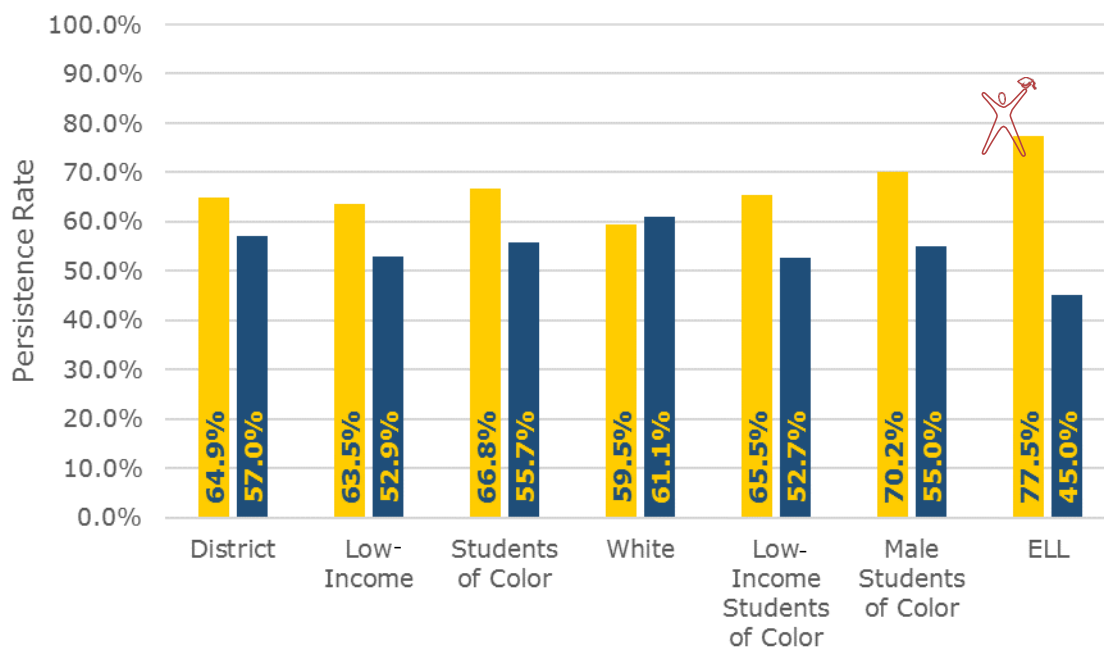
## Impact: Postsecondary Persistence

**There is some evidence that students who were in high school AVID/TOPS had higher rates of postsecondary persistence than their non-AVID/TOPS counterparts, though results were not statistically significant.** This analysis examined persisting through three semesters of postsecondary education as the outcome of interest.<sup>15</sup> Regardless of the level of program exposure, at the district level, AVID/TOPS students persisted in postsecondary education at rates higher than their matched peers.

Persistence rates were higher for AVID/TOPS students across all subgroups, with the exception of white students (Figures 27 – 29). None of these differences were statistically significant.

**Key Finding:** Students who were in high school AVID/TOPS had higher persistence rates in postsecondary education than their peers.

**FIGURE 27: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE**



<sup>15</sup> The analysis includes 9th grade cohorts from 2009-10 through 2012-13. For more details, see Table 2.

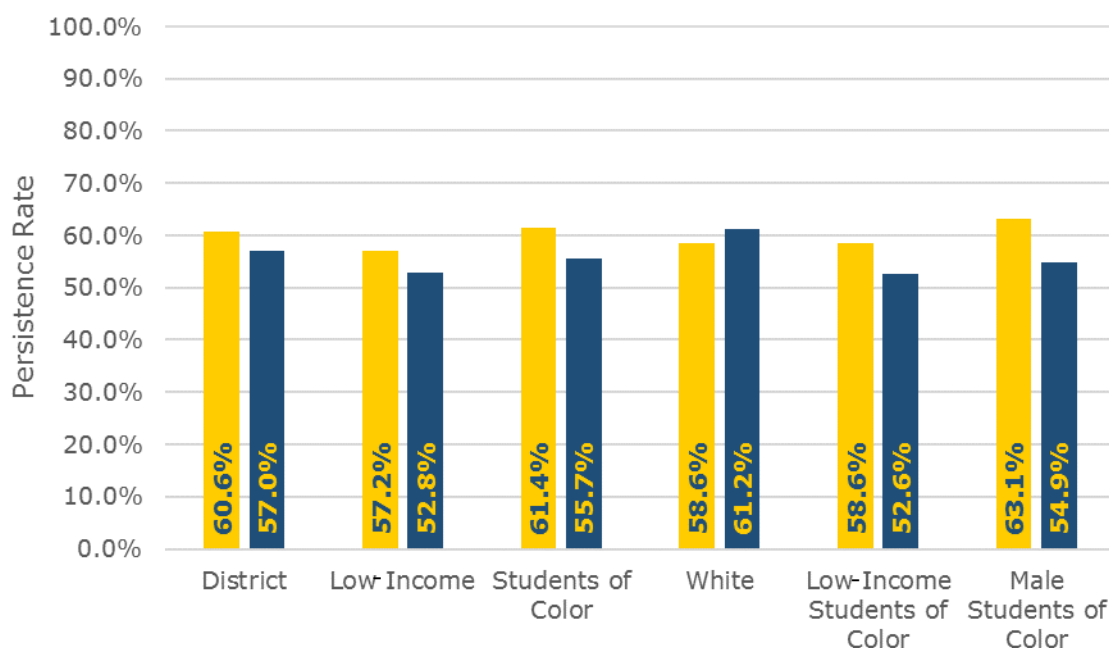
## Legend



AVID

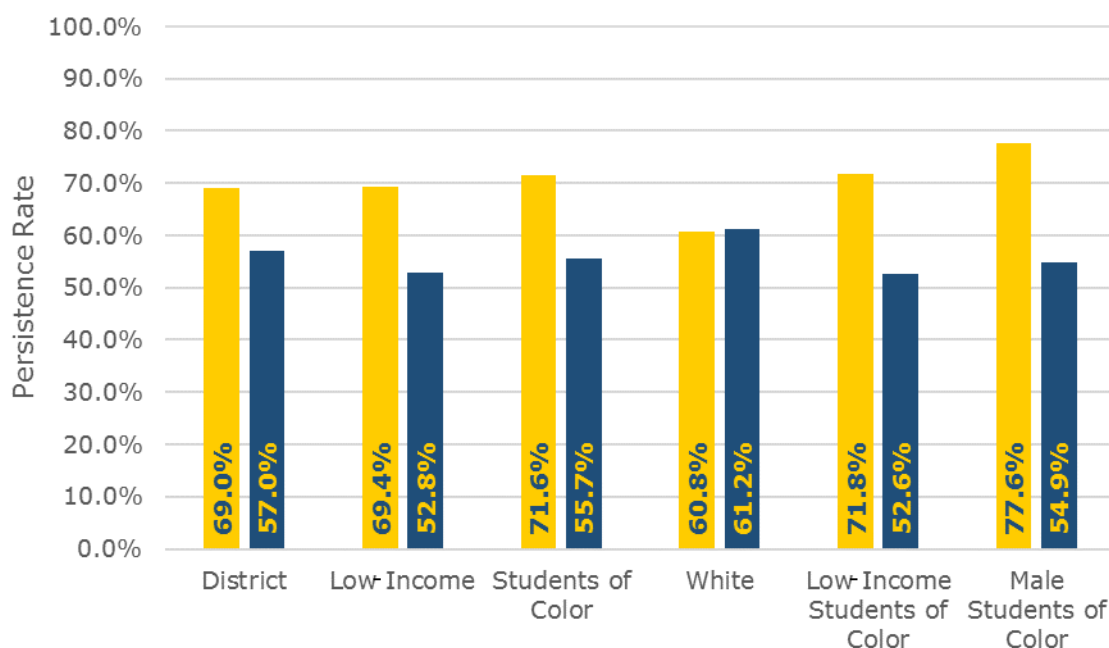
COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 28: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

**FIGURE 29: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON POSTSECONDARY PERSISTENCE**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

## Legend



AVID

COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

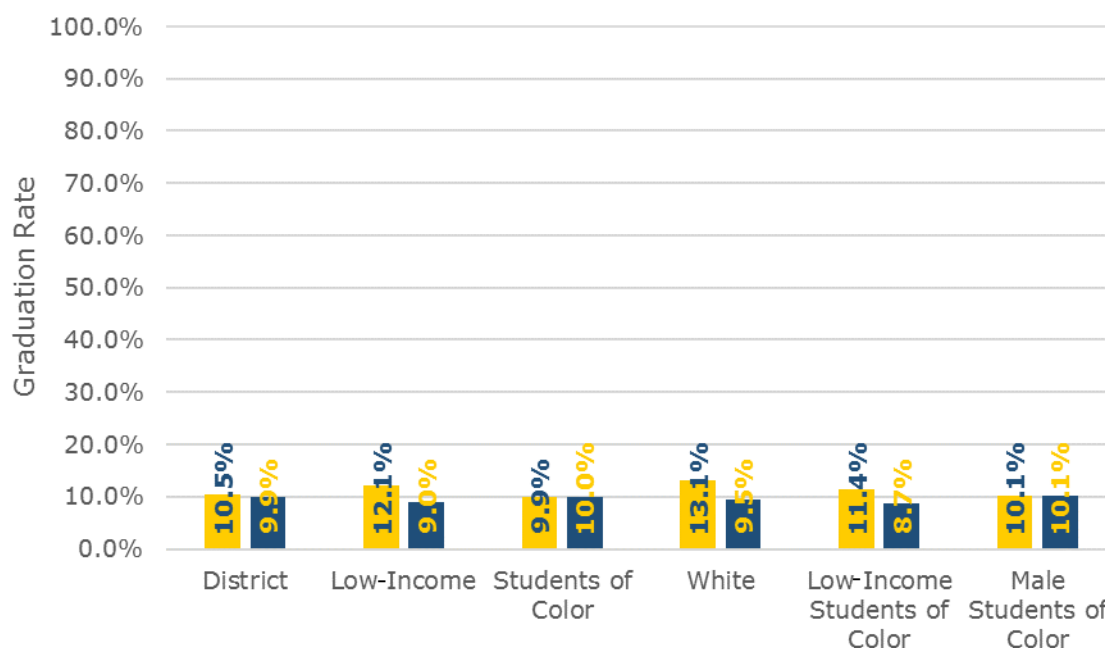
### Impact: Two-Year Postsecondary Institution Graduation

There is some evidence that full exposure to AVID/TOPS in high school had a positive but non-significant effect on graduating from a two-year postsecondary institution within three years.<sup>16</sup> While AVID/TOPS students with any exposure to the program had similar graduation rates from two-year institutions within 150% of the normal time (Figures 30 & 31), students that had full exposure to the program graduated at higher rates (4 percentage points) from two-year

postsecondary institutions than their matched control group of peers. None of these differences were statistically significant.

**Key Finding:** Students with full exposure to AVID/TOPS had higher graduation rates from two-year postsecondary institutions.

**FIGURE 30: IMPACTS OF ANY AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION GRADUATION**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

<sup>16</sup> The analysis includes students from 9th grade cohorts 2009-10 through 2011-12 who ever attended a 2-year college. For more details, see Table 2.

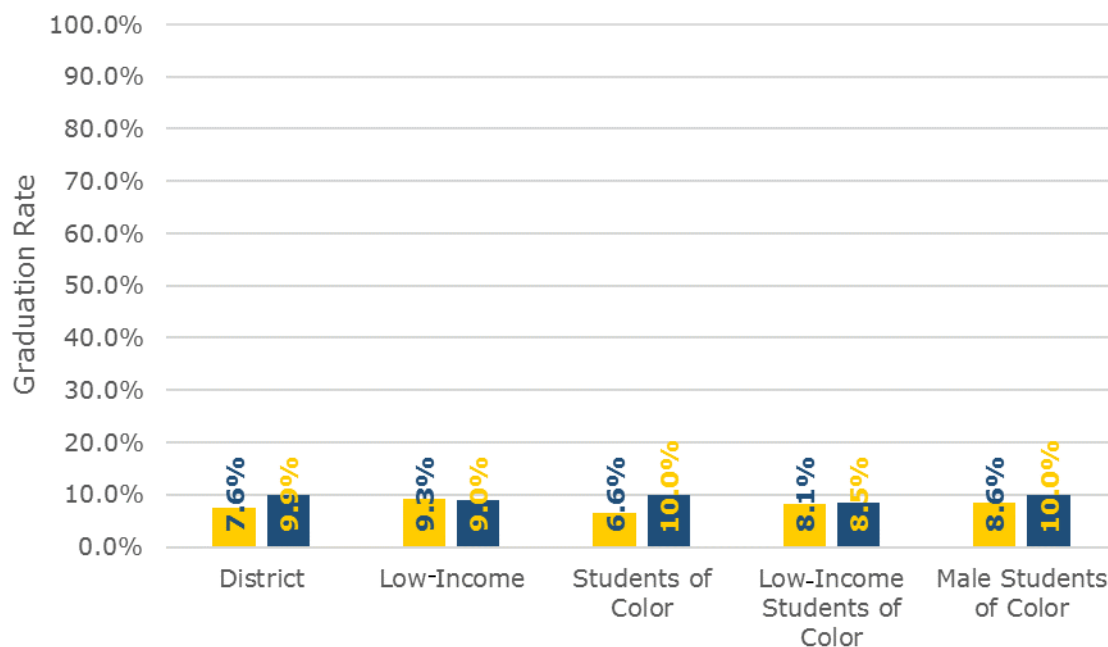
## Legend



AVID

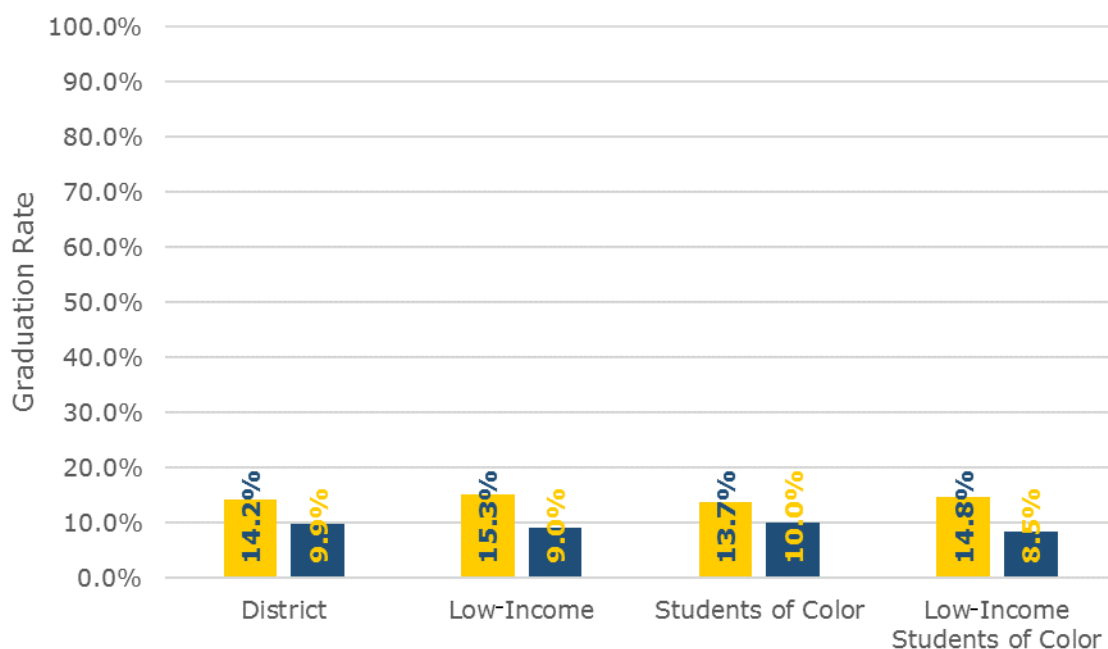
COMPARISON  
GROUPDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 90%  
LEVELDIFFERENCE IS  
STATISTICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT  
AT THE 95%  
LEVEL

**FIGURE 31: IMPACTS OF PARTIAL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION GRADUATION**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

**FIGURE 32: IMPACTS OF FULL AVID/TOPS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM EXPOSURE ON TWO-YEAR POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION GRADUATION**



Note: ELL subgroup excluded due to low sample size.

## Satisfaction Survey Results

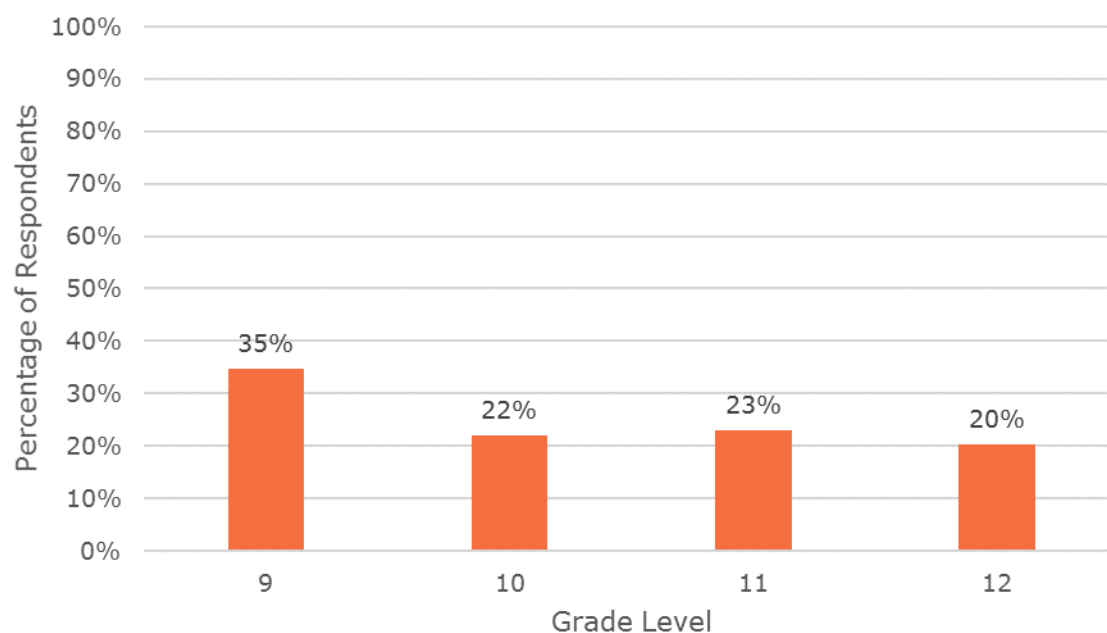
To better understand how AVID/TOPS students and staff experience the program, MMUSD conducted two surveys to gather information on program satisfaction. In December 2018, one survey was distributed to AVID/TOPS students and the other survey was distributed to MMUSD AVID staff and BG CDC TOPS staff. A total of 438 students and 40 staff responded to the survey for a student response rate of 48 percent and a staff response rate of 78 percent. Our evaluation of satisfaction with the AVID/TOPS program revealed high levels of satisfaction with the program overall for both staff and students. Both groups indicated a high level of satisfaction with college field trips, while staff indicated that family

outreach may be an area for improvement. We detail the survey results in detail below.

### Student Survey Results

Respondents to the student survey consisted of AVID/TOPS students across grades 9–12, as seen in Figure 33. A plurality of student respondents were in ninth grade (35 percent), with the remainder of students roughly evenly distributed among grades 10–12. Of the respondents, 67 percent also participated in AVID in middle school, which provides further context to their perceptions of satisfaction.

**FIGURE 33: STUDENT SURVEY RESPONDENT GRADE LEVEL**



**Our examination of AVID/TOPS satisfaction revealed that nearly three-quarters of student respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with AVID/TOPS overall (Table 8).** In particular, we found that student respondents had the highest levels of satisfaction with college field trips (83 percent) and AVID/TOPS services (74 percent). While students responded that they had the lowest satisfaction with TOPS mentoring (52 percent) and tutoring provided in the AVID

elective class (58 percent), dissatisfaction levels with these services was low (many students responded that they were “neutral”) and a majority of students were satisfied with each of the listed components on the survey.

**Key Finding:** 74 percent of AVID/TOPS students responding to the survey were very satisfied or satisfied with the program.

**TABLE 8: STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH AVID/TOPS COMPONENTS**

	Respondents	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Neutral	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied
AVID/TOPS overall	410	30%	44%	19%	5%	2%
AVID elective class	412	19%	44%	29%	5%	2%
Tutoring provided in AVID elective class	410	16%	42%	30%	10%	2%
AVID/TOPS services	410	24%	50%	21%	4%	1%
College field trips	407	47%	35%	13%	3%	1%
Community/guest speakers	410	28%	44%	22%	5%	1%
TOPS mentoring	391	15%	37%	42%	4%	2%
Career development by TOPS	396	22%	39%	35%	3%	2%
College enrollment coaching and/or application support	392	31%	37%	27%	4%	1%



The survey also inquired about students' perceived level of preparedness for postsecondary education on a variety of factors. Table 9 shows the results from this inquiry. Student respondents indicated that they are most

prepared with their organizational and study skills (three-quarters of respondents indicated very prepared or prepared) and least prepared financially (36 percent indicated very prepared or prepared).

**TABLE 9: STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

	Respondents	% Very Prepared	% Prepared	% Somewhat Prepared	% Unprepared
Academic knowledge and skills	403	17%	51%	27%	5%
Organizational and study skills	400	28%	47%	20%	5%
Financially	403	8%	28%	42%	22%
Socially	402	22%	42%	27%	9%
Emotionally	404	14%	38%	32%	16%

Descriptive analysis of the student survey also included an examination of differences between white students and students of color and revealed high similarities in response distributions between the two groups.

### Staff Survey Results

Our survey of AVID/TOPS staff indicated that over 80 percent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the program overall (Table 10). At the component level, we found that staff had the highest levels of satisfaction with college field trips (94 percent), program's focus on serving

students in the middle academically with an interest in postsecondary education (91 percent), and career development by TOPS (88 percent). The AVID/TOPS components with the lowest levels of

indicated satisfaction included schoolwide system of family outreach (35 percent), schoolwide system of data collection (47 percent), and schoolwide system of professional learning (47 percent).

**Key Finding:** 82 percent of AVID/TOPS staff responding to the survey were very satisfied or satisfied with the program overall.

**TABLE 10: STAFF SATISFACTION WITH AVID/TOPS COMPONENTS**

	Respondents	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Neutral	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied
AVID/TOPS overall	34	32%	50%	18%	0%	0%
Focus on students in academic middle with interest in postsecondary	34	50%	41%	9%	0%	0%
AVID elective class tutoring	34	24%	59%	15%	3%	0%
AVID elective class curriculum	34	21%	62%	15%	3%	0%
AVID elective class instruction	34	24%	62%	15%	0%	0%
College field trips	34	26%	68%	6%	0%	0%
Career Development by TOPS	34	41%	47%	12%	0%	0%
Student mentoring	33	9%	48%	39%	3%	0%
College enrollment coaching and/or application support	33	21%	58%	18%	3%	0%
TOPS College Success enrollment and matriculation support	33	18%	45%	33%	3%	0%
TOPS College Success coaching during postsecondary	33	18%	52%	30%	0%	0%
Schoolwide instructional strategies	34	15%	44%	26%	15%	0%
Schoolwide system of governance	34	6%	44%	32%	15%	3%
Schoolwide system of curriculum and instruction	34	3%	59%	24%	12%	3%
Schoolwide system of data collection	34	6%	41%	32%	18%	3%

TABLE 10 CONTINUED

	Respondents	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Neutral	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied
Schoolwide system of professional learning	34	12%	35%	32%	18%	3%
Schoolwide system of family outreach	34	3%	32%	44%	15%	6%
Schoolwide leadership vision of college readiness	34	9%	44%	29%	12%	6%
Schoolwide leadership vision of high expectations	34	12%	56%	15%	12%	6%
Schoolwide culture	33	9%	45%	24%	15%	6%
Staff professional development opportunities	34	9%	56%	18%	15%	3%

Staff perceptions of student preparedness for postsecondary education were similar to student responses, but staff perceptions tended to have less variance. Nearly all of staff responding to the survey indicated that students were either prepared or very prepared socially and with

organizational and study skills (94 percent for each). Staff also agreed with student perceptions that students were least prepared financially for postsecondary education, with only 29 percent indicating that students are prepared (and zero percent indicating very prepared).

**TABLE 11: STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF PREPAREDNESS FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

	Respondents	% Very Prepared	% Prepared	% Somewhat Prepared	% Unprepared
Academic knowledge and skills	34	18%	65%	18%	0%
Organizational and study skills	34	38%	56%	6%	0%
Financially	34	0%	29%	50%	21%
Socially	33	24%	70%	6%	0%
Emotionally	34	6%	62%	32%	0%

### Summary

The results presented in this evaluation indicate that AVID/TOPS participation is associated with large and significant gains in initial enrollment in postsecondary education. Over the past five years of implementation, AVID/TOPS students on average enrolled in postsecondary education by the fall following high school graduation at a higher rate than their comparison group peers—a difference of 14.7 percentage points. This finding persists across most subgroups of interest and is somewhat stronger for low-income students and students of color. The program is also associated with small positive gains in high school academic performance and high school graduation, particularly for some subgroups of students. Analysis of 2017-18 school year outcomes revealed that AVID/TOPS high school students earned an average cumulative GPA 0.11 higher than their matched peers. Over the course of the past six years of program implementation, AVID/TOPS high school students

that were low-income or low-income students of color have graduated high school within four years at higher rates than comparable non-participants. All of these findings are consistent with the most recent report of AVID/TOPS high school and postsecondary outcomes in 2014-2015 which also found positive impacts of the program on cumulative GPA, high school graduation, and college enrollment.

The results from surveys of satisfaction distributed to AVID/TOPS staff and students indicated high levels of satisfaction with both the program overall and many of the program components. Both staff and students responded with high satisfaction for college field trips, AVID/TOPS services, and career development by TOPS. One area of low satisfaction among staff respondents that may benefit from a further examination is schoolwide family outreach.