

Education Update

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MIDDLE SCHOOL AVID UPDATE

The Greater Albany School district has extended the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program to West Albany High School and district middle schools. Already in place at South Albany High School for the past several years, the program seeks to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society. AVID as an organization provides a framework, curricular materials and professional development to build a program for underserved and underrepresented students in the middle (with a focus on minority groups that would be first generation college students) that could go to college but typically do not.

The program, which was effective in increasing grades and student attendance at south Albany High School last year, includes all 4 middle school programs including the elementary students at Timber Ridge School. The program provides a high degree of collaboration between principals, counselors and teachers of nearly all content areas. Students learn organizational and note taking skills in the first year.

The middle schools received a \$174,820 grant from the Miller Family Foundation which will cover most of the district's costs during the first year and will contribute a declining amount in years two and three. School district funds will make up the difference in the out years.

CLASS SIZES

The School Board, at its October 26, 2015 meeting, heard a report from district staff on class sizes across the district. At the high school level, the core subjects of Language arts, Math, Science and Social Studies had an average class size of 30.0 students at South Albany High School and 31.8 at West Albany High School. Middle school classes were slightly smaller, averaging 28.5 students per class across the four middle schools. Although actual enrollment varied across the elementary schools, classes tended to be smallest at the kindergarten level (23.4) and larger at the 5th grade level (27.3). District Report Cards indicate that Greater Albany class sizes are larger than comparator school districts.

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