

TALON – School Newspaper – Article on AVID Program

New class prepares students for life in, beyond high school
AVID, a new class this year, has the goal of preparing students for life in and outside the walls of East Lake High.

Dakota Jackson

This year, East Lake High School has adapted a new program called AVID. You may have heard discussion about it from your friends or in the hallways, but what is it really?

“AVID is a college readiness program,” says East Lake High School AVID teacher Dina Prairie. “It teaches students the skills they need to be successful in high school and college. Some of the skills include how to be organized, how to take good notes, problem-solving, collaboration, and other strategies to help them with reading and writing.”

Prairie says that students at first did not know what AVID is all about. She says that students initially believed that it was a remedial class when it is, in fact, just the opposite. In order to be in AVID, students must be enrolled in at least one honors class. Along with the requirement of enrollment in an honors class, students must also have fairly good grades and attendance and cannot have any discipline referrals. Prairie says now that the first grading period has passed, she thinks students are now beginning to see the value of this class.

AVID is currently only available to students in the ninth and tenth grades, but there are plans to eventually make the program available to all grade levels. AVID has been a class at several Pinellas County middle and high schools in the last couple of years, but this is the first year that the AVID program is available in every Pinellas County Schools middle and high school. Prairie says that she is very excited to have this program here at East Lake and is looking forward to expanding the program in future years to include even more students.

AVID is not simply just for one small part of the student body, though. AVID strategies are being taught to the entire faculty of each school the program is being implemented at, including here at East Lake, in order to better help all students, especially those in AVID, practice the skills and strategies that the program teaches and advocates.

Freshman Kendall Jackson says that she and other students in the AVID class are required to have a three-inch binder with a section for each class separated by dividers that is to be carried around to each class daily.

“We have binder checks every week and we also have tutors come in every Tuesday and Thursday,” says Kendall.

Kendall says she feels that the class has already begun to help her with her organizational skills. Although, Kendall does say that she has not really noticed a change in her grades yet, but understands that the school year has only just begun and expects this to change as the school year goes along.

It is also important to note that AVID is a “voluntary class” and no student is in the program against their will. Participation in the class is entirely voluntary, but students are still held to the expectation that they will complete all required work that is assigned to them in the class. The program was created with the intentions of preparing students academically and strategically for their classes both in high school and in higher education, however, this goal can only be met if students are willing to put forth the effort and vigor to not only learn these skills, but also apply them as they are intended to be in their academic work.

Regardless of if you are or are not a part of the AVID program, everyone here at East Lake can benefit from the program being here. Not only will East Lake’s faculty be more prepared to help students practice the strategies of the AVID program, but students will also be more prepared to help themselves.