

Report shows programs help low-income students become college-ready

\$9.5 million College Spark Washington grant helps low-income and students of color plan their future

SEATTLE -- Two programs that aim to help more low-income students become college and career ready are effective at improving key measurements of student success that raise the likelihood a student will enroll in college, according to a new report. (Click [here](#) for an infographic summarizing the results of the report.)

The report, *College Readiness Initiative: AVID and Navigation 101*, conducted by The BERC Group provides College Spark Washington and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction evidence of the impact of two programs for schools that received College Spark Washington funding from the nine-year, \$9.5 million College Readiness Initiative, which was implemented by OSPI. Read the full report [here](#).

- Navigation 101 - A guidance and counseling program for middle school and high school students that helps students make choices for their future, including course selection, goal setting and career and college planning.
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) – An academic preparation program designed to prepare all students for college and success by focusing on creating a school-wide college readiness culture through increased learning performance.

“I’ve been a big supporter of Navigation 101 and AVID for many years now,” said Randy Dorn, superintendent of public instruction. “Each one helps students not only plan for their future, but realize it – no matter what their future might be. Budget cuts in previous years have hurt the programs, but I’m confident that recent court cases can restore much of what was cut, giving schools more room financially to re-fund the programs.”

The 45 schools in 19 school districts that participated in the initiative had higher poverty rates than the rest of the state, but showed improvements in enrollment and pass rates for 8th grade algebra and higher level math and science courses in high school. According to the U.S. Department of Education, participating in Algebra I in 8th grade has been shown to improve the likelihood of college graduation by allowing students to take higher levels of math in high school. Other key findings in the report include:

- Navigation 101 schools had a 20 percent higher graduation rate than comparison schools with similar demographics. Both AVID and Navigation 101 schools have higher graduation rates than comparison schools with similar demographics.
- A significant improvement in the percentage of high school seniors who graduate with a four-year college-eligible transcript, especially for Native American, African American and Latino students.
- College enrollment rates of high school graduates increased for African American, Latino and Native American students by 10-15 percent in the first four years of the six-year grant period.
- An increase in the number of students signing up for the College Bound scholarship at the middle school level, which suggests that students had an increased awareness of college opportunities.

“These programs work and are a good investment for the future of Washington state’s students,” said Christine McCabe, Executive Director of College Spark Washington. “The legislature should be supporting programs with proven records of success like Navigation 101 and AVID.”

One school seeing positive outcomes for students is Bremerton High School. The high school has implemented Navigation 101 for the past 10 years, initiated an AVID elective program eight years ago, and added school-wide AVID strategies the past two years. While the high school experienced a growth in the number of low-income students eligible for free and reduced lunch rates over the past 10 years from 32 percent to 57 percent, the on-time graduation rate increased from 57 percent to 83 percent, the number of Advanced Placement classes offered increased from three to 13, and visits to an after-school mentoring program increased from 570 to more than 5,600 last year.

“AVID and Navigation 101, with the support of College Spark Washington has improved our students’ career and college readiness,” said Chris Swanson, a career and college counselor at Bremerton High School. “Our students are more informed and want to take on rigorous coursework. These programs are having a deep and enduring impact on our academic culture and on students’ career and college readiness.”

###

[College Spark Washington](#) funds programs across Washington state that help low-income students become college-ready and earn their degrees. Grantees include community-based organizations, K-12 schools and districts, community and technical colleges, four-year colleges and universities, educational nonprofits, and public agencies. College Spark began supporting access to higher education in 1978 and, since 2005, has awarded more than \$38 million to college readiness and degree completion programs throughout the state.