

April 24, 2021

Joint Ways and Means Committee
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2412A – Funding for AVID, ASPIRE, BUILD EXITO, College Possible & TRIO

Co-Chair Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair Dan Rayfield, and Co-Chair Elizabeth Steiner Hayward,

I am writing today to encourage support and funding of HB 2412A. This bill provides funding for five different programs and nonprofit organizations that were included in the Governor's Recommended Budget. These five college readiness programs/organizations provide valuable access and supports for low-income and historically underserved students and help them to achieve their post-secondary goals.

One of the nonprofit organizations is Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). AVID partners with K-12 schools on equitable, student-centered approaches to preparing all students for college and career through differentiated social and academic supports. AVID is changing the trajectory of students' lives and transforming teaching practices and school systems across the State of Oregon. As a former Instructional Coach, Assistant Principal, and Principal in Oregon, I had the pleasure of witnessing firsthand the AVID College Readiness System positive impacts related to Instruction, Systems, Leadership and Culture. In addition, in my experience as an AVID Program Manager and Area Director supporting multiple Districts across the State of Oregon, I continue to observe how AVID positively impacts Oregon educators and students, as well as transforms schools' college and career cultures.

These positive impacts include students taking ownership of their own learning. Students explicitly share what instructional strategies they are utilizing, why they utilize the strategies, and how they will apply the strategies in additional educational settings, as well as in their future careers and life. Students share how AVID has increased both their academic and social skills and prepared them in pursuing their dreams, passions, and careers of interest. AVID scholars enthusiastically share how High School graduation is a starting line, not the finish line in their educational journeys.

The AVID College and Career Readiness Framework supports providing students with rigorous academic preparedness, opportunity knowledge, and student agency. Our AVID educators are insisting on rigor, breaking down barriers of access and equity, aligning the work in clarifying the connection between social and emotional skills and college and career readiness for all students, and advocating for students. I have had numerous AVID educators share with me how AVID has reignited their passion for teaching and commitment to continuous improvement of their own practices, as a result of engaging in AVID's highly engaging professional learning. AVID professional learning continues to support educators in implementing research-based best practices, building relational capacity and high expectations for all students, and supports creating culturally relevant classrooms and school campuses. These elements are at the core of our approach to closing the opportunity gap.

Thank you for your time and consideration to pass and fund HB 2412A.

Sincerely,

Bridget Weldon
AVID Pacific Northwest, Area Director