

Abstract

Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) respectfully submits the proposal “Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID): Promoting Non-Cognitive Skills and School Success in High-Need Students” to the U.S. Department of Education for funding under the Skills for Success Program solicitation. This project will implement and evaluate an expanded version of the district’s AVID program. The school system uses this nationally-known program to teach non-cognitive skills to middle school students. These skills enhance overall academic performance for students enrolled in the program. The AVID program specifically targets high-need students who are in the academic middle, have the desire to go to college, and exhibit the determination to complete a rigorous curriculum. Typically, AVID participants are the first in their families to attend college, and many are from low-income or minority families. The proposed project will double the number of BCPS middle school students enrolled in AVID.

The national Center for School Mental Health (CSMH) within the University of Maryland School of Medicine will partner with BCPS to conduct the evaluation of this project. The evaluation will employ a rigorous quasi-experimental study design and systematic quality improvement process. The project is specifically designed to collect and synthesize longitudinal, multi-method data with the goal of having high implementation fidelity and robust student outcomes by the end of the project that can be maintained and replicated in BCPS middle schools and beyond. The anticipated products from this project will be substantial, including positive educational outcomes for a large population of high-need students within BCPS, and a rich understanding of the impact of AVID on middle school student non-cognitive factors and educational outcomes and ways to support high quality implementation of AVID with this population.