



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Middle School Named Among 2022 AVID Teacher Advocacy Award Recipients in San Bernardino County

FONTANA, CA – Sequoia Middle School has been honored for its stellar implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) – a college-prep elective that works to narrow the achievement gap between the lowest- and highest-performing students – and named one of three San Bernardino County schools to earn a 2022 AVID Teacher Advocacy Award.

The AVID Teacher Advocacy Award honors and supports outstanding California AVID teachers and school site teams while encouraging the implementation of AVID schoolwide and the sharing of best practices among peers. Sequoia was awarded \$10,000 to be used for further implementation of AVID.

The AVID Teacher Advocacy Award was presented to Sequoia's AVID team, including AVID coordinators Lisa Hayes and Ryan Murphy, Multi-Tiered System of Supports teacher on assignment Christine Clark, seventh grade science teacher Tammy Devries and former Sequoia principal Antonio Viramontes, who is now principal of Jurupa Hills High School.

"It's great to be honored but even better to work with such a dedicated and caring staff," Hayes said. "We make AVID work schoolwide and that gives all of our students a chance at a brighter future."

Now in its 12th year as an AVID school, Sequoia currently has 170 AVID students – nearly 25 percent of its student body. Sequoia was named an AVID National Demonstration School in 2019, and serves as a model for other schools and districts that are interested in implementing AVID.

Sequoia's AVID elective classes prepare students for the next level of their academic journey. Students work on communication, collaboration, organization and writing skills, incorporating AVID strategies that have been learned by all Sequoia teachers and have been adopted by all Sequoia students, such as using student planners and binders, making annotated notes, and forming collaborative study groups.

Sequoia's AVID team is made up of teachers from all departments, with every teacher on campus trained in AVID strategies. The school also has a team of AVID college tutors who are former Sequoia students.

AVID provides opportunities for students to explore college and career through field trips, guest speakers and research projects, and gives the students – many of whom will be first-generation college students – the vocabulary necessary to navigate the world of higher education, including how to fill out a college application and how to write an essay.

Sequoia also hosts training sessions for its Riverside, Inyo, Mono and San Bernardino (RIMS) county AVID partners, and the school receives regular visits from teachers and groups who want to see what AVID looks like at the middle school level.

“Seeing our AVID program implemented schoolwide and the impact it has on student achievement is attributed to our staff’s hard work and dedications,” Sequoia assistant principal Brittney Davis-Fox said. “Their commitment to AVID allows all of our students the opportunity for high levels of achievement and success.”

The AVID award is the latest in a series of accolades that shine a spotlight on the middle school that has made student achievement and creating a positive campus atmosphere its highest priorities. In 2021, Sequoia Middle School was redesignated as a California School to Watch, was named a California PBIS Coalition Platinum Medal school and was recognized as a Microsoft Showcase School.

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