STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF AVID EXCEL

Study Report

Submitted to
AVID Center

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The goal of Advancement Via Individual Determination's (AVID) Excel program (hereafter referred to as "Excel") is to accelerate long-term English learners' (ELs) language acquisition, literacy skill development, and college and career readiness. Excel consists of middle school elective courses and, in schools that choose to implement them, two-week Summer Bridge programs that occur prior to students' 7th and 8th grade years. Sixth grade Excel classes are also provided in some schools. Excel teachers and other educators in the schools are provided with ongoing professional learning opportunities to increase their capacity to support ELs. A key component of Excel is equipping educators to integrate teaching strategies that increase students' writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading (WICOR®) skills. Excel provides explicit instruction organized across six learning strands: (a) reading, (b) writing, (c) oral language, (d) academic vocabulary, (e) study skills, and (f) self-determination and leadership.

RMC Research Corporation (RMC) partnered with AVID Center to conduct a study of the implementation and impact of Excel. Specifically, RMC conducted a quasi-experimental, retrospective study designed to provide an understanding of the impact of Excel on the outcomes of students who participated in Excel during the 2021/22 through 2024/25 school years. RMC also gathered information from educators and school leaders to describe Excel program implementation and to obtain recommendations for program improvements.

Key Findings

Study findings indicated that levels of Excel implementation were relatively high, educators had positive experiences with Excel professional learning (PL) activities, and Excel had a positive impact on most student outcomes. Details on key study findings are discussed below.

While Excel implementation varied across schools which met minimum implementation requirements for being included in the study, levels of implementation were relatively high. Schools with higher Secondary Coaching and Certification Instrument (CCI) certification ratings tended to meet most implementation expectations. While most educators reported that Excel professional learning (PL) was of high quality and helped them address the needs of EL students, only half of Excel teachers and site coordinators met PL participation expectations, and even fewer Excel teachers were observed or coached by AVID Center staff. The majority of Excel schools did not meet the expectation of having at least 8 AVID site team members; however, site teams at most schools met at least monthly. Most Excel teachers reported regular use of Excel curriculum materials, instructional strategies, and scholar groups.

Survey and interview responses consistently indicated that Excel PL and program participation had a positive influence on educator outcomes. Educators indicated that Excel positively influenced their ability to support EL students, and that participating in Excel influenced their general approach toward education, such as having a better understanding of students' needs and increasing the emphasis on academic vocabulary with all students.

Participation in Excel had statistically significant and positive impacts on students' grade 8 English language proficiency (ELP) scores and both grades 8 and 9 EL reclassification rates. Excel students were significantly more likely to enroll in the grade 9 AVID elective and less likely to enroll in other courses of rigor in both grades 8 and 9. Participation in Excel did not have a significant influence on students' grade 7 or 8 state ELA and math assessment scores. Findings regarding participating in the AVID elective and other courses of rigor may be at least partially driven by students having a limited number of elective classes they can take in a given academic year.

Students who participated in Excel in both grades 7 and 8 had significantly higher grade 8 EL proficiency scores than students who participated in Excel in only one of the grades. After accounting for baseline assessment scores and student characteristics, students who participated both years also had significantly higher grade 8 state ELA assessment scores than students who only participated in grade 8. Other findings suggest that students who participate in Excel over consecutive grades have lower outcomes than those who participate during just one grade. For example, students who participated in Excel in both grades 6 and 7 had lower grade 7 ELA scores than those who participated only during grade 6. Students who participated in Excel during grades 6, 7, and 8 had significantly lower grade 8 ELP scores than those who participated in just grades 7 and 8. These findings suggest that students who participated in Excel during multiple consecutive years are indeed those in need of continued support. It should be noted that the grade 6 Excel class was only available in slightly over half of the study schools, so interpretations about the influence of participation in grade 6 Excel should be made with caution.

Several aspects of Excel implementation fidelity were positively related to student outcomes. Meeting implementation fidelity expectations regarding use of Excel curriculum resources, AVID site team functioning and composition, and CCI certification levels had the most consistent positive influences on student outcomes. The largest relationship between Excel implementation and student outcomes was between frequent use of scholar groups and grade 9 EL reclassification rates. Measures of Excel implementation fidelity and CCI certification levels tended to have no relationship or a negative relationship with student enrollment in grade 9 courses of rigor.

Recommendations

Recommendations derived from the study findings, including feedback provided through the educator survey and interviews, are provided below. Elaboration is provided in the Discussion, Limitations, and Recommendations section of this report.

1. **Provide more opportunities for ongoing support of Excel teachers.**
2. **Consider ways to engage families and core content teachers in Excel activities.**
3. **Encourage Excel tutors to receive training that specifically addresses the needs of Excel students.**
4. **Increase the focus of the Excel curriculum on core content addressed by state achievement tests.**
5. **Provide additional support for students to take courses of rigor.**

INTRODUCTION

AVID Excel's (hereafter referred to as "Excel") goal is to accelerate long-term English learners' (ELs) language acquisition, literacy skill development, and college and career readiness. Long-term ELs are ELs who have not become proficient in English after multiple (typically 4) years of learning in a U.S. school. Excel consists of middle school elective courses and, in schools that choose to implement them, two-week Summer Bridge programs that occur prior to students' grade 7 and grade 8 years. Sixth grade Excel classes are also provided in some schools. Excel elective class and core content teachers are provided with ongoing professional learning (PL) opportunities to increase their capacity to support long-term ELs. These opportunities include the AVID Excel Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 Community of Practice (CoP) trainings and the Academic Language and Literacy (ALL) CoP offered at PL events such as at AVID Summer Institutes or AVID Path trainings. Additional PL opportunities include Excel leadership and elective teacher symposiums and workshops offered throughout the year. A key component of Excel is equipping educators to integrate teaching strategies that increase students' writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading (WICOR®) skills. Excel is structured such that participating students progress through program activities as a cohort where student agency and a sense of connection among students is promoted. Excel provides explicit instruction organized across six learning strands: (a) reading, (b) writing, (c) oral language, (d) academic vocabulary, (e) study skills, and (f) self-determination and leadership.

Prior research examining the impact of the AVID elective and associated PL activities has found positive outcomes for students and educators (e.g., Huerta et al., 2008[1]; Todhunter-Reid et al., 2020[2]). However, there has yet to be a rigorous investigation of the Excel program.

To address this gap, RMC partnered with AVID Center to conduct an evaluation of the implementation and impact of Excel. Specifically, RMC conducted a quasi-experimental, retrospective study designed to provide an understanding of the impact of Excel on the outcomes of students who participated in Excel during the 2021/22 through 2024/25 school years. RMC also gathered information from educators and school leaders to describe Excel program implementation and to obtain recommendations for program improvements.

[1] Huerta, J., Watt, K., & Alkan, E. (2008). Exploring the relationship between AVID professional development and teacher leadership. *Academic Leadership: The Online Journal, 6*(1).

[2] Todhunter-Reid, A., Burke, A., Houchens, P., & Howard, M. (2020). AVID participation in high school and post-secondary success: An evaluation and cost analysis. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, *13*(4), 679–701

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the study research questions, designs, data sources, samples, and analyses. Additional information about study methodology may be found in Appendix A.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following seven research questions.

Educator Outcomes and Program Implementation

1. To what extent does AVID Excel affect educator outcomes, including instructional practice?
2. To what extent do educators participate in AVID Excel professional learning as intended and implement AVID Excel with fidelity?
3. How does AVID Excel professional learning support implementation and educator outcomes?
4. What are educator perceptions of how AVID Excel professional learning and implementation could be improved?

Student Outcomes

5. What is the impact of AVID Excel on student academic outcomes in grades 7 through 10?
6. How do outcomes vary for students with different levels of AVID Excel participation?
7. How do academic outcomes vary for AVID Excel students in schools with different levels of implementation fidelity?

Research questions 1 through 4 focus on understanding Excel implementation, implementation fidelity, perceived impacts on educator outcomes, and information to inform program improvements. Research questions 5 through 7 assess the impact of Excel on student outcomes, including how differences in program implementation and participation may influence outcomes.

Study Design

To address the study's research questions, RMC used two designs to examine **educator outcomes and program implementation** and **student outcomes**. A mixed-methods descriptive and correlational design was used to examine program implementation and the influence of Excel on educator outcomes (Research Questions 1 through 4). RMC used a quasi-experimental

design (QED) to examine the impact of Excel participation on student outcomes in middle and high school (Research Questions 5 through 7). Academic outcomes of grade 7 and 8 students who participated in Excel in 2021/22 through 2024/25 were compared to those of similar nonparticipating students. For all impact analyses, inverse probability of treatment (IPT) weights were applied to adjust for preexisting differences between Excel and comparison students and to reduce bias in the program impact estimates. Specifically, weights were used to estimate the average treatment effect on the treated (ATT) for the main impact analyses, while sensitivity analyses examined the average treatment effect (ATE). Because students were clustered in schools, intraclass correlation coefficients were also examined to determine the extent to which outcomes were similar among students in the same school.

Data Collection

RMC collected study data from the following sources:

- Student-level administrative data collected from participating school districts (for 2020/21 through 2024/25);
- Educator survey data (collected from AVID-trained educators in fall 2025);
- AVID District Director implementation inventory (collected from AVID District Directors in fall 2025);
- Secondary Coaching and Certification Instrument (CCI) data collected from AVID Center (for 2021/22 through 2023/24); and
- Educator interviews and focus groups (conducted with educators in 10 Excel schools in fall 2025).

Samples

The initial study sample included ELs in 32 middle schools implementing Excel and ELs in 64 middle schools not implementing Excel. AVID Center recommended Excel schools to participate in the study if they had been implementing Excel since at least 2023/24, and ideally had started implementing in 2021/22 or prior. AVID Center also focused on recruiting schools that had high levels of implementation based on their Secondary CCI certification ratings. Two Excel schools and their students were dropped from the sample based on AVID District Director recommendations due to inconsistent implementation. Slightly over half (17) of the remaining 30 Excel schools implemented a grade 6 Excel class. Comparison schools came from participating districts but which had not implemented Excel during the study's timeline. Seventeen comparison schools that had percentages of EL students lower than the study's Excel schools were dropped from the sample. Comparison schools and their students were also dropped from the sample if grade 6 baseline ELP assessment data were not available. The final sample used to examine student outcomes included EL students in 30 Excel schools and in 28

comparison schools not implementing Excel. Additional detail regarding how the student and school samples were developed can be found in Appendix Exhibit A5.

Most Excel schools were in Texas (13 schools) and California (9 schools). Colorado, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wyoming each contributed between one and four Excel schools each. The final comparison schools represented California (4 schools), Colorado (6 schools), Texas (16 schools), and Virginia (2 schools). Excel schools had a total student population of 756 students on average with 31% being ELs, while comparison schools had a total student population of 615 students on average with 27% being ELs. (Additional information about the study samples may be found in Appendix A).

Student Sample

The study included three cohorts of Excel students; those who were in grade 7 during the 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24 school years. To be included in the primary impact analyses (Research Question 5), Excel students had to have participated in both grades 7 and 8. Comparison students also had to be EL students with grade 7 and 8 data. Secondary analyses included Excel students who enrolled in the AVID elective class in grade 8. Comparison students were drawn from schools in the participating districts that had not implemented Excel during the study period.

The final pool of students included 2,112 Excel students from 30 schools and 2,338 comparison students from 28 schools. The primary student impact sample (i.e., students who participated in both grades 7 and 8) included 671 Excel students and 2,042 comparison students. For sensitivity analyses that included grade 8 AVID elective students, the sample consisted of 819 treatment students and 2,042 comparison students (see Appendix A for additional detail on how the student samples were developed and baseline characteristics of students in the primary impact sample).

Educator Sample

Educator Survey Sample

The educator survey was sent to 198 AVID-trained educators in study Excel schools identified by AVID District Directors and district staff. Surveys were completed by 55 educators, representing a 28% response rate. Survey responses represented 21 of the 30 participating Excel schools. Of the 55 survey respondents, 22 were Excel elective teachers and 12 were AVID site coordinators (6 of whom were also Excel teachers). Analyses of implementation fidelity excluded educators who had only taught Excel prior to the 2021/22 school year and those for whom the 2024/25 school year was their first year at their schools. The final sample for fidelity analyses included 49 respondents (representing 19 Excel schools), of which 18 were Excel teachers (representing 15 schools).

Interview/Focus Group Sample

Qualitative data collected for the study included 25 interviews and focus groups with a total of 32 educators in ten Excel schools, representing nine districts. AVID Center identified Excel schools who could provide good examples of program implementation to include in the qualitative data collection. Excel teachers, other AVID-trained educators, and individuals responsible for supporting or overseeing Excel implementation in the schools were invited to participate. Of the 32 participants, 16 were current (11) or former (5) Excel teachers. Other participants included principals, assistant principals, district personnel, AVID site coordinators, counselors, AVID elective teachers, and content teachers.

District Director Sample

The AVID District Director implementation inventory was administered to AVID District Directors in all study districts with participating Excel schools. All AVID District Directors (10 total) completed the inventory, providing responses that represented all 30 Excel schools in the study.

Analyses

Analysis of Qualitative Data

All interviews and focus groups were transcribed through Microsoft Teams. Following methods explicated by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2019[3]), RMC developed a codebook of themes following the interview protocols. RMC also used open coding to allow new themes in the data to emerge (Strauss & Corbin, 1998[4]).

Analysis of Educator Survey and District Director Implementation Inventory Data

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize data collected from the educator survey and the AVID District Director implementation inventory. Specifically, for each survey and inventory item, we report item means, standard deviations, and percentages or counts of individuals who provided each item response option. Descriptive statistics can be found in the AVID Excel – Educator Survey Summary and AVID Excel – District Director Implementation Inventory Summary (RMC Research, 2025a[5]; RMC Research, 2025b[6]). Survey and implementation inventory data were also used to assess the implementation fidelity of the participating Excel schools. Educators were first scored as meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting

[3]Miles, B. M., Huberman, A. M., Saldaña, J., (2019). Qualitative Data Analysis (4th edition). Thousand Oaks, Sage.
[4]Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
[5]RMC Research (2025a) AVID Excel – Educator Survey Summary. Denver, CO: Author.
[6]RMC Research (2025b) AVID Excel – District Director Implementation Inventory Summary. Denver, CO: Author.

implementation expectations based on their survey responses. School-level fidelity ratings were then calculated by aggregating the fidelity ratings across all educators' fidelity ratings within a school (all educators within a school had to meet implementation expectations for a school to be rated as meeting expectations for a given indicator). Additional detail on the process for assigning school-level implementation fidelity ratings is provided in Appendix B.

Student Impact Analyses

To examine the impact of Excel on students' academic outcomes, a series of linear and logistic regression analyses were conducted comparing the outcomes of Excel students to a comparison group of EL students in non-Excel schools. Covariates included in the analyses were baseline (i.e., grade 6) English language proficiency (ELP) and state ELA assessment scores, ethnicity, special education status, student cohort, and if a student participated in grade 6 Excel. For all analyses, IPT weights were applied. Similar statistical models were run to examine the influence of different levels of Excel participation and Excel implementation fidelity on student outcomes. However, because these analyses only included Excel students, IPT weights were not applied. Additional detail about the student impact analysis specifications can be found in Appendix A.

FINDINGS

Findings are organized and presented within seven major themes: student outcomes, educator participation in professional learning, quality of professional learning, recommendations for improvements of professional learning, program implementation, educator outcomes, relationships between Excel implementation fidelity and student outcomes, and general recommendations. Detailed study findings can be found in Appendix B.

Student Outcomes

The impact of Excel participation was examined on a variety of grade 7 to 10 student outcomes. Significant results are highlighted in the following sections.

Impact of Excel Following Participation in Both Grades 7 and 8

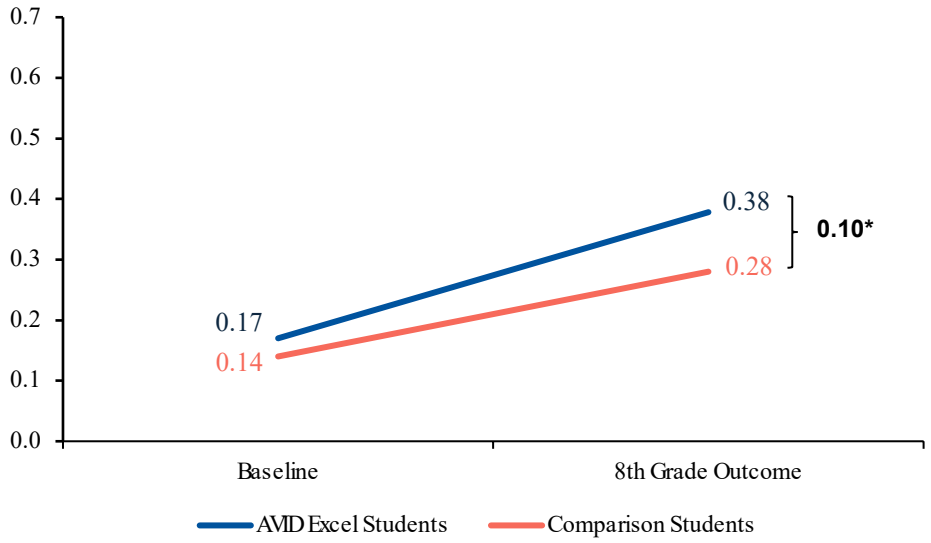
Research Questions						
1	2	3	4	**5**	6	7

The following findings describe program impacts on students who participated in Excel in both grade 7 and 8. For all impact analyses, IPT weights were applied to estimate the average program impact (ATT) on Excel students, and student baseline covariates were included in the analytic models. Findings reported below regarding grade 8 ELP and ELA assessment scores and grade 9 EL reclassification rates were supported by sensitivity analyses (see Exhibit B8) using average treatment effect (ATE) impact estimates, indicating that if comparison students participated in Excel, similar impacts would be present.

Compared to EL students in non-Excel schools, Excel students performed .10 standard deviations higher on their ELP assessment at the end of grade 8 (see Exhibit 1). For additional results, see Exhibit B4.

Exhibit 1. Excel Impact on Grade 8 English Language Proficiency

Students who Participated in Excel in Both Grades 7 and 8 Performed Significantly Higher than Comparison Students on Grade 8 English Language Proficiency Assessments.



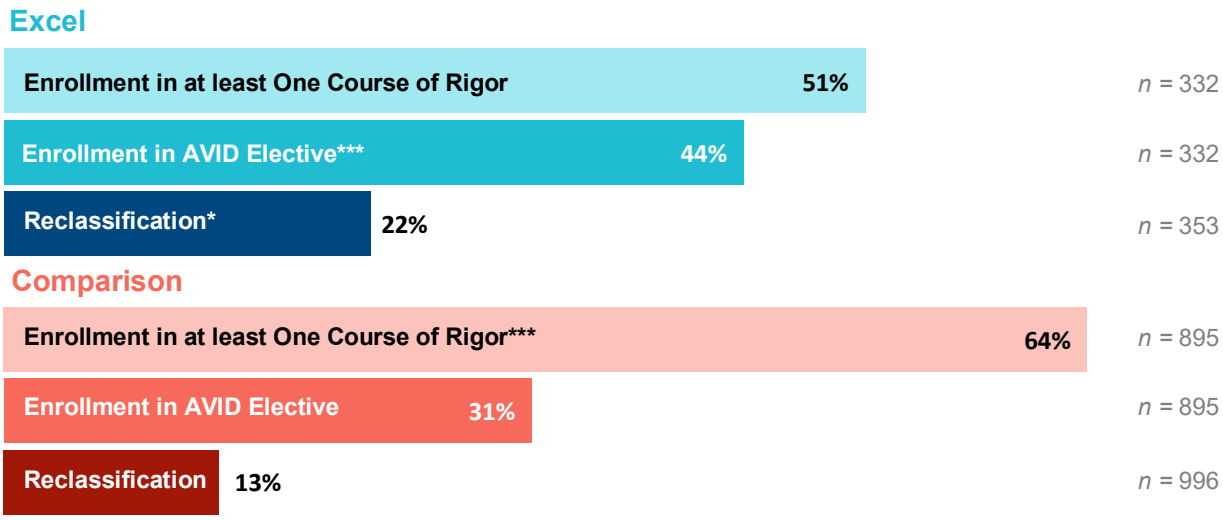
Note. n_{Excel} = 572; $n_{Comparison}$ = 1,739. Values are the estimated marginal means, represented in standardized units. Significance indicates Excel students performed significantly higher than comparison students.

* $p < .05$.

Excel program effects were observed when examining the impact of Excel on grade 9 outcomes, including enrollment in at least one course of rigor, enrollment in the AVID elective course, and EL reclassification (see Exhibit 2). After accounting for student covariates and applying IPT weights, Excel students were two times more likely to enroll in the AVID elective course and be reclassified than comparison students. Excel students were 29% less likely than comparison students to enroll in at least one course of rigor in grade 9. For full model results see Exhibit B5.

Exhibit 2. Excel Impact on Grade 9 Course Enrollment and EL Reclassification

Students who Participated in Excel in Both Grades 7 and 8 were More Likely to Enroll in the Grade 9 AVID Elective and be Reclassified, but Less Likely to Enroll in a Course of Rigor.



Note. Values are percentages using average treatment effect on the treated weights. Significance highlights the group with the higher outcome proportion.

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

After accounting for baseline covariates and applying IPT weights, the following outcomes were not statistically significant:

- **Grade 8 Outcomes**
  - Standardized state ELA scores
  - Standardized state math scores
  - Standardized formative math scores
- **Grade 9 Outcomes**
  - Number of rigorous courses taken
- **Grade 10 Outcomes**
  - Number of rigorous courses taken
  - Enrollment in AVID Elective
  - Enrollment in at least one course of rigor

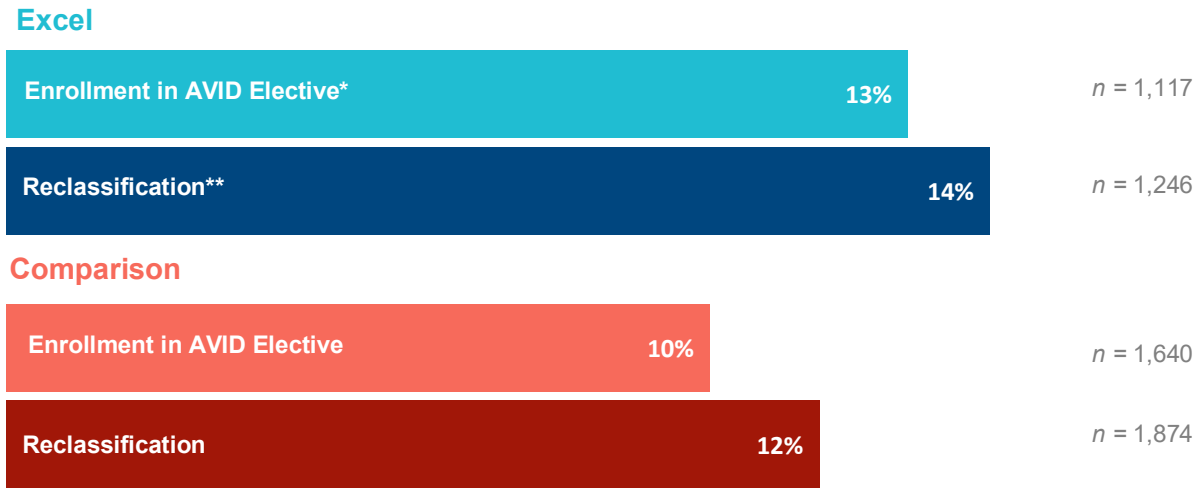
Impact of Excel Following Participation in Grade 7

The following findings describe program impacts on Excel students after they participated in grade 7. After accounting for student covariates and applying IPT weights, Excel students were

51% more likely to be reclassified and 30% more likely to enroll in the AVID elective course in grade 8 (see Exhibit 3). For full model results, see Exhibits B6 and B7.

Exhibit 3. Excel Impact on Grade 8 AVID Elective Enrollment and EL Reclassification

Students who Participated in Excel in Grade 7 were More Likely to Enroll in the Grade 8 AVID and be Reclassified.



Note. Values are percentages using average treatment effect on the treated weights.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

After accounting for baseline covariates and applying IPT weights, the following outcomes were not statistically significant:

- **Grade 7 Outcomes**
  - Standardized ELP scores
  - Standardized state ELA scores
- **Grade 8 Outcomes**
  - Enrollment in at least one course of rigor

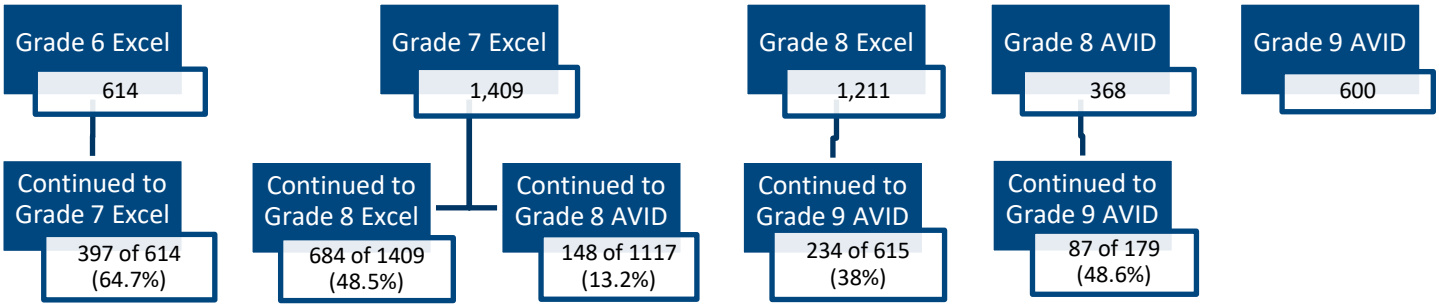
Influence of Number of Years of Excel Participation on Student Outcomes

Research Questions						
1	2	3	4	5	**6**	7

Outcomes were examined separately for students who had different levels of Excel participation. For example, about 65% of students who participated in grade 6 Excel also enrolled in grade 7 excel, while about 49% of grade 7 Excel students continued on to Grade 8 Excel (see Exhibit 4). Significant differences in student outcomes by Excel participation rates are highlighted in the following sections.

Exhibit 4. Patterns of Student Excel Participation

Approximately 49% of Students who Participated in Grade 7 Excel also Enrolled in Grade 8 Excel.



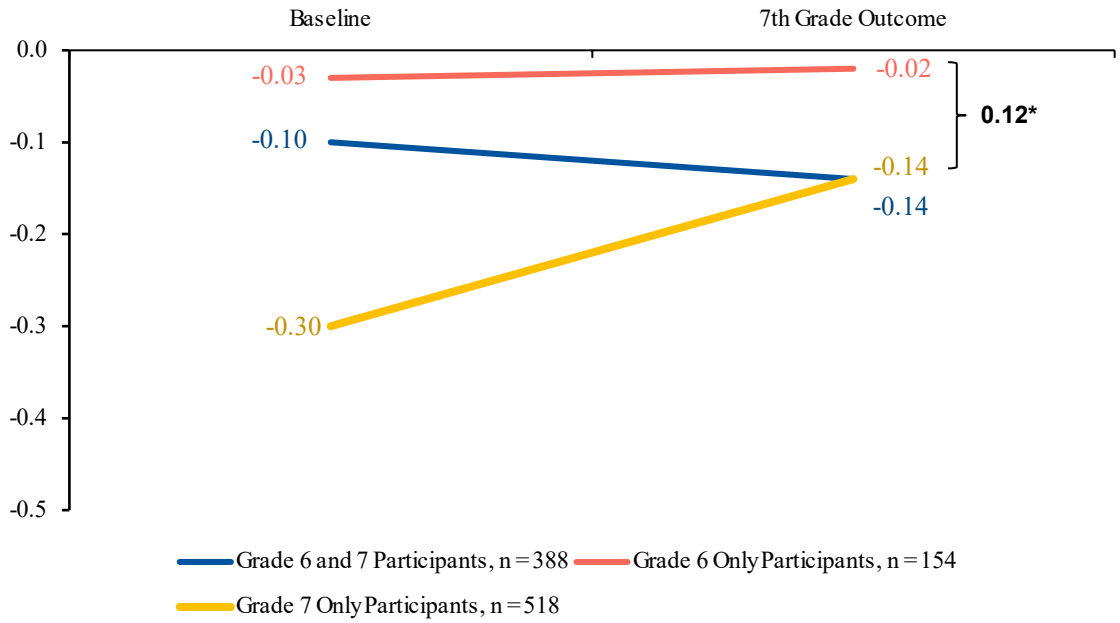
Note: Excel participation is from class roster data. AVID participation is from transcript data which had some missing data.

Comparison of Outcomes of Students who Participated in Grade 6 and/or Grade 7 Excel

The following analyses examine the impact of Excel on students who participated in Excel during both grades 6 and 7, compared to students who participated in grade 6 only or in grade 7 only. After controlling for baseline covariates, Excel students who participated in both grades 6 and 7 performed .12 standard deviations lower on their grade 7 state ELA assessment than students who only participated in grade 6 (see Exhibit 5). Grade 7 standardized ELP scores were not significantly different between the student groups. For full results, see Exhibit B9.

Exhibit 5. Impact of Grade 6 and/or Grade 7 Excel Participation on Grade 7 State ELA Scores

Excel Students Participating in Grade 6 Only had Higher ELA Scores than Students who Participated in Both Grades 6 and 7.



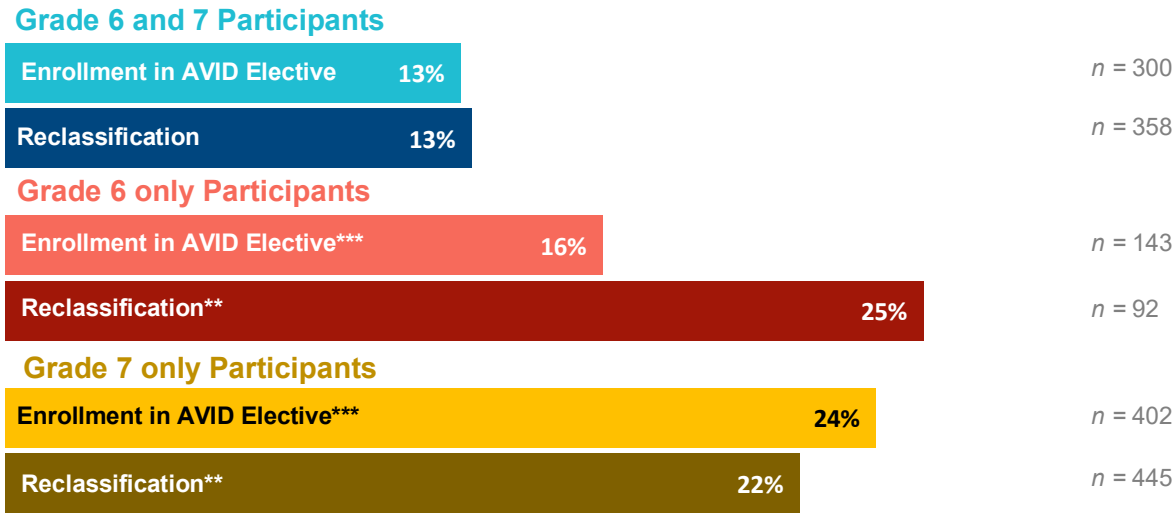
Note. Values are the estimated marginal means, represented in standardized units. Students in Excel in grades 6 and 7 were the referent group.

* $p < .05$.

Analyses also examined the impact of grade 6 and/or grade 7 Excel participation on grade 8 outcomes, including EL reclassification and enrollment in the grade 8 AVID elective. After accounting for student covariates, students participating in both grades 6 and 7 were less likely to be reclassified and less likely to enroll in the grade 8 AVID elective than students who participated in Excel only in grade 6 or only in grade 7 (see Exhibit 6). Findings suggest that the students participating in Excel in both grade 6 and 7 may require the additional services that are available in grade 8 Excel classes. For full model results, see Exhibit B9.

Exhibit 6. Impact of Grade 6 and/or Grade 7 Excel Participation on Grade 8 AVID Elective Enrollment and Reclassification

Excel Students Participating in Both Grade 6 and Grade 7 were Less Likely to be Reclassified and to Enroll in the Grade 8 AVID Elective.



Note. Values are adjusted percentages. Students in Excel in grades 6 and 7 were the referent group.
$^{**}p < .01$. $^{***}p < .001$.

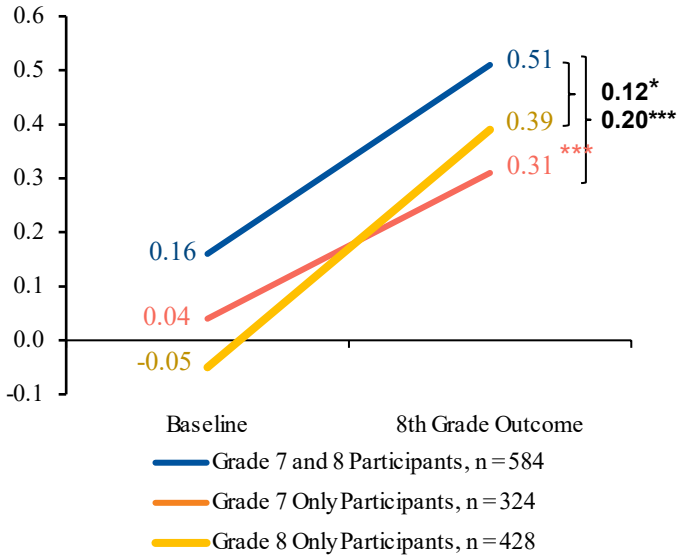
Comparison of Outcomes of Students who Participated in Grade 7 and/or Grade 8 Excel

The following analyses address the impact of Excel on students who participated in Excel during both grades 7 and 8, compared to students who participated in grade 7 only or in grade 8 only. Excel students who participated in both years had significantly higher grade 8 ELP scores than students who participated only in grade 7 and students who participated only in grade 8. Students who participated both years also had significantly higher ELA scores than students who only participated in grade 8 (see Exhibit 7). After accounting for baseline covariates, grade 9 EL reclassification was not significantly different between the student groups. For full model results, see Exhibit B10.

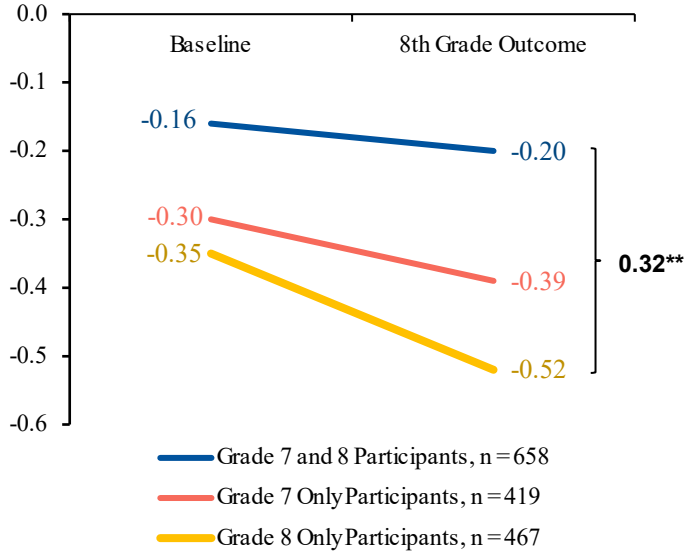
Exhibit 7. Impact of Grade 7 and/or 8 Excel Participation on Grade 8 English Language Proficiency and State ELA Scores

Excel Students Participating in both Grade 7 and Grade 8 had Higher ELP scores than Students Participating in a Single Year.

Standardized ELP



Standardized ELA



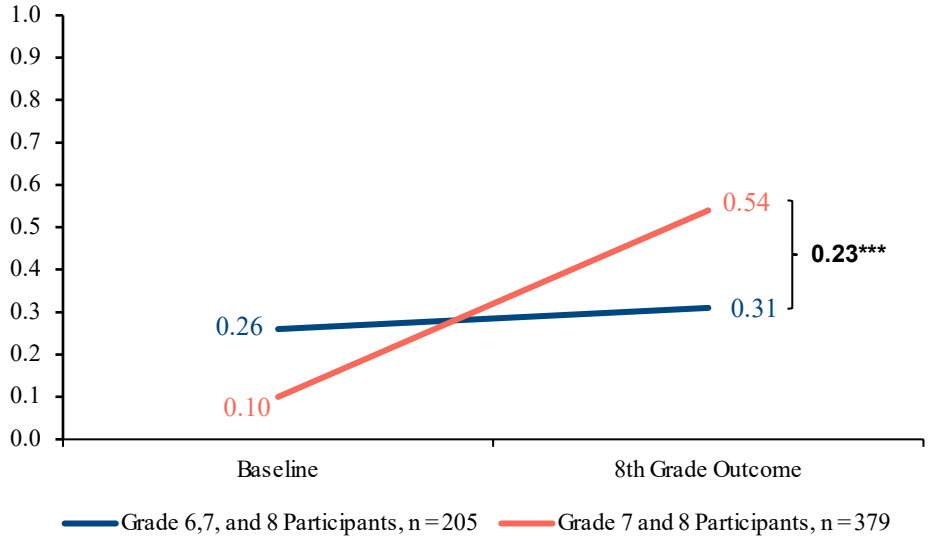
Note. Values are the estimated marginal means, represented in standardized units. Students in Excel in grades 7 and 8 were the referent group.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Supplemental analyses were conducted to examine if outcomes varied between students who participated in Excel in each of grades 6 through 8 to those who participated in both grades 7 and 8 to determine if participating in a third, earlier year of Excel provided any additional benefits. After accounting for baseline covariates, compared to students participating in grades 7 and 8, Excel students participating in all three years performed .24 standard deviations lower on the grade 8 ELP assessment (see Exhibit 8). Grade 9 EL reclassification rates were not significantly different between the two groups. For full model results, see Exhibit B11.

Exhibit 8. Impact of Grade 6 Excel Participation on Grade 8 English Language Proficiency Scores

Excel Students Participating in Each of Grades 6 through 8 had Lower ELP Scores than Students Participating in Only Grade 7 and 8 Excel.



Note. Values are the estimated marginal means, represented in standardized units.

***$p < .001$.

Educator Perceptions of the Impact of Excel on Student Outcomes

Perceptions of Student Academic Outcomes. Interview participants described substantial impacts on Excel students, including:

- Reclassification out of EL status;
- Increased college admissions, enrollment, and scholarships;
- Enrollment in an AVID elective course in middle or high school;
- Development of academic language skills;
- Increased participation in content classes;
- Development of executive and organizational skills;
- Development of study skills like notetaking and highlighting;
- Improved reading and writing ability; and
- Increased self-advocacy in academic settings.

Educators who participated in interviews and focus groups commonly provided examples of individual students who demonstrated academic improvements. Educators also cited data showing improved test scores after implementation of Excel.

"By the midway through the year, kids were dying to be the one that would stand and deliver. Here are kids that don't really like to speak, but you have created a safe environment and given them opportunities to practice with a partner before they share out loud. People are encouraging. No one is making fun. Now they can't wait to share, and I can't get them to stop talking." –Excel teacher

"Just practicing academic English is probably the biggest thing. . . . My AVID Excel students speak in complete sentences more than my average students, even English-only students." – AVID elective teacher

"Once we started really targeting kids and going through AVID Excel and hitting that population, we grew from 39% progress to 55% progress in one year. We went from reclassifying 4 students to 67." – AVID site coordinator

Perceptions of Student General (non-academic) Outcomes. Beyond academic outcomes, interviewees cited various other outcomes for students who participated in Excel, including:

- Hope for their futures;
- Confidence and self-esteem;
- Increased feelings of collective efficacy and belonging with their Excel cohorts;
- Preparedness for college and career;
- Relationships with other students and role models who are emerging bilingual;
- Lasting relationships with Excel teachers and tutors;
- Understanding of their unique gifts and talents;
- Improved problem-solving skills and resilience;
- Increased motivation for academic and non-academic pursuits; and
- Access to opportunities like speaking at Summer Bridge or returning as an AVID tutor.

Educators also noted that the impact of Excel went beyond students and teachers in the Excel classroom. Educators reported that all students in Excel schools benefitted from the use of Excel strategies in their core content classes, as well as from the increased classroom participation and leadership of their EL peers.

"[Excel students] don't necessarily make a remarkable difference in grade point average. The fact is that they can actually feel like they're in control of something when for so many years they've always have accepted that they're just going to always get the D or fail." – Assistant Principal

"Being in AVID, more even in Excel, the little achievements that the kids make . . . build up to be real. When they see themselves, they get that 'aha moment' and they see themselves like, 'Oh man, I can do this.' Then the seeds have been planted . . . And all of a sudden you have 8th graders that are all bought in and say, 'I'm already looking into Texas A&M, maybe I can make it into a Yale or one of these other Ivy League schools.' I also have these guys that are tough guys saying, 'You know what? Maybe I'll go to a technical school, maybe I'll get a certificate, maybe I'll get a welding degree.'" –Excel teacher

Participation in Professional Learning

Research Questions						
1	**2**	3	4	5	6	7

AVID Center expects that all Excel teachers and AVID site coordinators participate in Excel levels 1-3 CoP activities as appropriate for the number of years they have been in their position and their school. For example, an Excel teacher in their second year of teaching the Excel class would only be expected to have participated in the level 1 and 2 trainings at that point. However, Excel teachers are encouraged to complete the sequence of trainings as quickly as possible. If Excel teachers and AVID site coordinators participated in fewer trainings than their years of experience, they were considered to have partially met expectations. AVID Center also expects that Excel teachers receive in-class observations and/or coaching at least once by an AVID Center staff, and that all counselors and core content teachers on the AVID site team participate in at least one ALL CoP training. Half of the Excel teachers and site coordinators participated in the expected amount of PL, while 28% of Excel teachers received in-class observation or coaching and 27% of school counselors and core content teachers attended the ALL CoP (see Exhibit 9).

Exhibit 9. Educator Participation in Professional Learning
Half of Excel Teachers and Site Coordinators Met Excel Professional Learning Expectations.

Note: Excel PL = Excel teachers and AVID site coordinators participated in expected number of Excel trainings (*n* = 24). Observations/coaching = Excel teachers received in-class observation or coaching at least once by an AVID Center staff (*n* = 18). ALL CoP = School counselors and core content teachers participated in at least one ALL CoP (*n* = 11).

Educator Reports of Professional Learning Participation. Almost all current and former Excel teachers who participated in interviews or focus groups attended at least one Excel CoP training at an AVID Summer Institute, with nine teachers attending multiple CoP sessions or even leading Excel PL sessions. Two Excel teachers, one former and one current, had not attended an Excel CoP at a Summer Institute but had attended other AVID CoPs. Most interviewees attended their Excel training when they first started teaching Excel, which for some teachers means they had not attended Summer Institute in many years and, for others, means they received most of their training virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of those teachers who had attended beyond the first Excel CoP, at least two pointed to the second Excel CoP focusing on scholar groups as the most memorable and impactful.

"[Scholar Group PL] was a really good training because I remember being a little skeptical and unsure of the efficacy of scholar groups. . . . And I thought they offered really good PD both in terms of how you carry it out and in terms of what the purpose is." –Excel teacher

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Only five of 16 interviewees who had not taught Excel described attending Excel-focused PL; two of these were teachers who participated an Excel training in preparation to teach the elective, but never did.

Interview respondents noted that school administrators usually decided who attended Excel PL. In most cases, only active Excel teachers were sent. Many schools described having the Excel teacher share what they learned from their Excel PL with non-Excel educators through in-house professional learning.

"My philosophy is that every teacher has to be trained in EL methodology . . . So, most of my content teachers are EL endorsed . . . So, during [professional learning] time we have had our AVID and AVID Excel teacher provide the needed learning to these teachers." – School principal

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Educator Reports of Support from AVID Center. Interviewees were asked about the support they received from AVID Center staff, such as receiving coaching or in-class observations. Engagement with AVID Center staff varied greatly by school. Some Excel teachers described reaching out to AVID Center when they needed to, and others felt that there were so many resources available through AVID online or through their local collegial networks that they had sufficient support without going to the Center. Multiple teachers recalled being observed by AVID Center visitors but not getting actionable feedback or support.

"I was like, can I have some help? Can I have some support? And they're like, 'Oh, you're doing great' . . . I wish I could have somebody from AVID come in here and spend a couple of days helping me get through those scholar groups . . . I need to see it being implemented." - AVID teacher

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Quality of Professional Learning Activities

Research Questions						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Survey Results Regarding Professional Learning Utility. All AVID-trained educators in study schools were asked the extent to which they agreed that Excel PL prepared them to support EL students and use AVID instructional strategies. Excel teachers were also asked whether the PL prepared them to successfully implement Excel. Across the 9 survey items related to the utility of the PL activities, over 90% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with each statement.

Educator Reports of Professional Learning Quality. Most educators agreed that Excel PL was high quality and often surpassed the quality of other PL experiences. The majority of interviewees described the PL as supportive, hands-on, relevant, comprehensive, practical, and informative. When describing the quality of Excel PL, two aspects stood out:

- Excel PL was focused on the needs of long-term ELs within the AVID framework, and educators left PL sessions with a better understanding of the importance of academic language for long-term ELs. One said, *"learning the language-forward piece . . . was the biggest adjustment for me and I think that's where I got the most out of the trainings."*
- Excel PL was active and interactive, giving participants the opportunity to have hands-on learning in cooperation with other educators. One said, *"they're the [PL] that get us up and moving the most. They're the ones that stick with me the longest."*

Though Excel PL was viewed as high quality, Excel teachers generally agreed that Excel PL on its own was not enough to ensure good implementation of the program. They said that successful implementation requires additional practical training and ongoing support for the Excel teachers from colleagues, administrators, and AVID Center staff. Importantly, many administrators in Excel schools said they felt their teachers were prepared after attending Excel Summer Institute PL, although a number of Excel teachers mentioned a need for additional support.

Recommendations for Improvements of Professional Learning

Research Questions						
1	2	3		5	6	7

The educator survey and focus groups/interviews included questions asking participants for recommendations about how Excel PL could be improved. Of the 22 survey respondents who provided responses, the most common recommendations included:

- Model strategies and implementation (*n* = 10);
- Provide interactive PL that includes opportunities for practice and collaboration, and resources (*n* = 8);
- Connect professional learning to state standards, curriculum, ELP assessments, and other language acquisition strategies (*n* = 6); and
- Differentiate professional learning based on educators' own knowledge of English acquisition and students' level of English language proficiency (i.e., beginning learners to those emerging to general English classes) (*n* = 6).

During interviews, educators who taught Excel offered suggestions for how to improve future Excel PL, including:

- Offer training on specific topics like notetaking, engaging unengaged students, and how to navigate Excel online resources;

- Coach Excel teachers on metacognition so teachers understand the "why" behind the curriculum;
- Train Excel teachers on how to interpret and parse the curriculum to identify the most important pieces they should implement at the beginning of their rollout;
- Include more Excel topics in the other AVID CoP trainings so other educators and leaders can support the Excel teachers;
- Ensure that Excel tutors receive Excel-specific training; and
- Consider small modifications that could improve PL, like having current Excel teachers and students lead a session and being sensitive to time zones when planning virtual sessions.

Other interviewees in site coordinator, teacher, and administrator roles had similar feedback:

- Include more Excel and AVID Emerge strategies in all AVID PL sessions;
- Offer flexible online options as well as in-person PL during the school year for those who cannot attend the Summer Institute;
- Ensure the locations and logistics of PL are consistent to allow participants to plan ahead;
- Train Excel teachers on how to prioritize the curriculum to identify the most critical components; and
- Offer more training on the digital planning guide and how to navigate Excel resources.

Support from AVID Center. Fourteen Excel teachers who completed the survey reported receiving online or in-person training or coaching from AVID Center staff. While educators felt the support was beneficial, they suggested more consistent coaching and check-ins, refresher trainings when program implementation has changed, and time to process and engage in the information since there is a lot to track and implement.

AVID District Director Feedback. Forty percent of AVID District directors reported that they or the AVID site coordinator conducted in-class observations or coaching for Excel classes at least once a month, with another 40% reported conducting them two to three times per year. When asked what AVID Center could do to support these activities, the two most common recommendations were providing a checklist of look-fors to use during classroom observations (e.g., checklists aligned with different program and focus areas throughout the academic year) and providing additional tools or resources (e.g., exemplar lessons, work samples, coaching videos).

Program Implementation

General, Schoolwide Implementation of Excel

Research Questions						
1	**2**	3	4	5	6	7

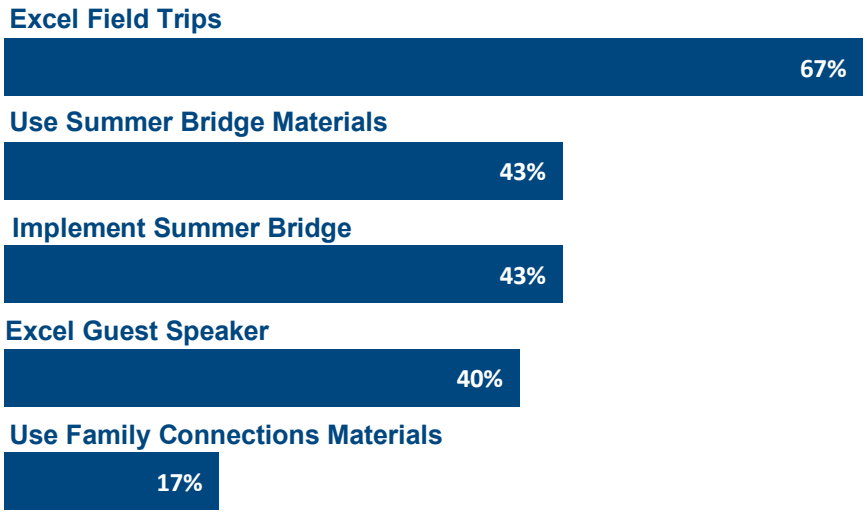
The educator survey, District Director implementation inventory, and interviews/focus groups all gathered data to describe Excel implementation in study schools, including how long Excel had been implemented, the composition and functioning of the AVID site team, practices used to recruit Excel students, and perceptions of the value of the AVID Summer Bridge.

General Excel Components. Most schools had an Excel program at their school for five or more years and employed Excel teachers with long tenures. Most schools offered one Excel class to each of the grades served, and half of the schools had only one Excel teacher serving multiple grades. Almost all schools offered Excel alongside an AVID program which fed into an AVID program at the high school level.

AVID District Directors were asked about implementation of specific Excel components. Over 40% of study schools implemented the Summer Bridge program, used the Summer Bridge materials in the Excel class, or invited guest speakers into their class (see Exhibit 10). Over 60% of schools hosted Excel-focused field trips, while 17% reported using the family connection materials.

Exhibit 10. School Implementation of Excel Components

The Most Commonly Implemented Components were Excel Field Trips and Use of Summer Bridge Program and Materials.



Note. N = 30. Schools were coded as implementing each component if they did so during the 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years.

Summer Bridge. Educators from 10 schools were asked about the implementation of Summer Bridge programs at their schools. Respondents from four schools said that the school had not offered a Summer Bridge experience recently. Respondents from three schools enthusiastically described two-week Summer Bridge programs that had a positive impact on AVID and Excel students entering the program. Three other schools either implemented Summer Bridge activities that were of shorter duration or implemented at the district level rather than being school-specific.

"We do a scholar group, we do a Socratic seminar, we do a mini-research project on a college that they choose and then they have to present. . . . It's kind of a boot camp. I tell them at the very beginning, 'You're going to go in with so much more knowledge than anybody else in your AVID Excel class. So when your teacher asks you, hey, has anyone seen focus notes, you're going to be able to sit there and say, 'yes, I have'. And that's how you're a leader in the classroom. You're able to help your fellow classmates who haven't done this before, do things that you saw in Summer Bridge.'" –Excel teacher

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AVID Site Team. At each school, AVID implementation is managed by an AVID site team, with the expectation that they are composed of at least 8 members including the site coordinator, Excel teacher, AVID Elective teacher (where relevant), school counselor, and four core content teachers. However, how large, frequent, and formal the site team meetings are varied widely by school. Information provided by AVID District Directors indicated that only 37% of the participating Excel schools' site teams were composed of 8 or more individuals with almost 70% meeting at least monthly. Additionally, over 60% of site team members who completed the survey reported that their site team meetings focused on Excel-related topics 'quite a bit' or 'a lot.'

Student Recruitment. Interview participants reported that English language proficiency assessment data was the key to identifying and enrolling Excel students. In some schools, students were assigned to Excel based solely on their assessment scores indicating that they qualified for services. However, other schools recruited only motivated and college-bound long-term EL students into the elective. Where possible, investment in selective recruitment included partnership-building with elementary educators, expo and informational events, spreading the word about desired Excel student attributes, and reaching out to parents and students to explain the program. District Directors reported that 30% of the schools used at least 6 of 9 recommended Excel recruitment strategies addressed by the implementation inventory, with the most frequent strategies being review of students' English language proficiency data (100% of schools), review of district benchmark/assessment data (90%), and teacher recommendations/feedback (77% of schools). However, in two cases schools

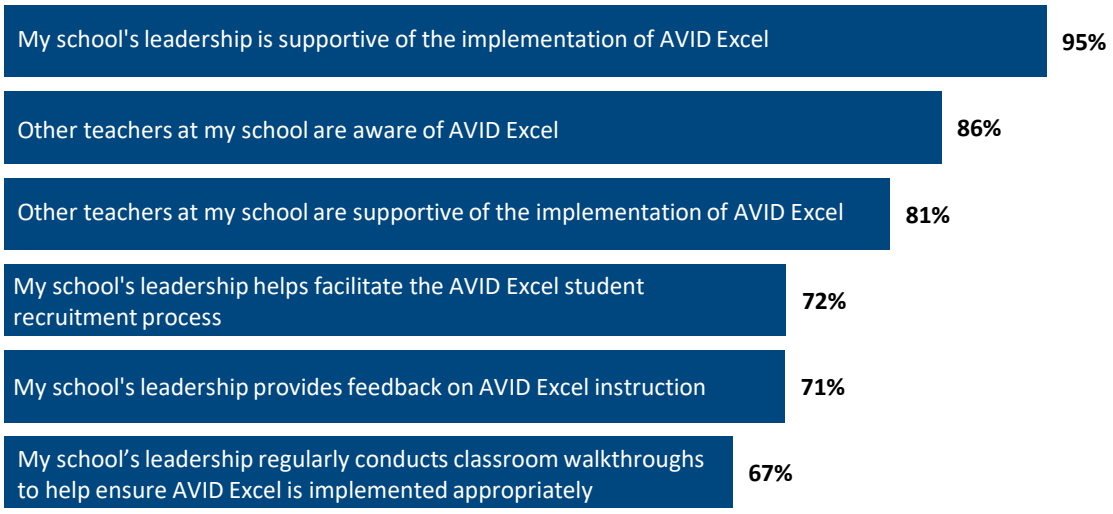
implemented the expected number of recruitment strategies based on District Director responses but educators in the schools reported assigning students into Excel based solely on their EL status and not on students' interest or application to the program. District directors also noted that in all Excel schools, the Excel class was primarily composed of long-term EL students.

Parent and Community Involvement. Nearly all interview participants acknowledged the value of engaging parents and community in Excel, focusing on activities that help parents and families understand Excel and its purpose, program activities, and ways that they can support student engagement. Despite valuing these connections, most respondents mentioned that there was little parent and family involvement in Excel and a need to invest in growing that area of the program.

School and Leadership Support for Excel Implementation. Excel teachers were asked about the extent to which they felt their school leadership and other educators at their school were supportive of the implementation of Excel. The majority of Excel teachers agreed or strongly agreed with all statements regarding their school's support of Excel. The greatest percentage of Excel teachers agreed that their school's leadership was supportive of Excel (95%), while the lowest percentage of teachers agreed that their school's leadership provided feedback on Excel instruction or conducted walkthroughs of the Excel class (67%; see Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11. Excel Educator Perceptions of School Support

Over Two-thirds of Excel Teachers Agreed with Statements Regarding School Support.



Note. N = 21. Numbers represent the percentage of educators who agree or strongly agree with each statement. Items were rated on a scale of strongly disagree (1) – strongly agree (4).

Most interviewees also described a supportive atmosphere for Excel in their schools, noting that non-Excel educators have respect for the program and high expectations for Excel

students. Educators regularly cited the importance of school and district administrator support to help facilitate:

- Resources including tutors, substitutes, field trips, and Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) support;
- Use of Excel strategies throughout the school;
- Excel teachers leading PL;
- Materials including whiteboards, planners, and binders;
- Common planning time and AVID site team meetings; and
- Feedback based on Excel classroom walkthroughs or observations.

Some educators felt that Excel was not supported enough, mentioning that some non-AVID colleagues did not understand or were unenthusiastic about AVID strategies and that administrative support could be strengthened to help these areas. Excel teachers also described feeling unsupported in cases where the Excel program was used as a "catch all" for EL students, not a selective program for specifically identified students.

"I think [AVID Center] needs to hold administrators more accountable because we [the Excel teachers] can't make the decisions to use these resources and to send people to these trainings. We have such a wealth of knowledge on our team that could be utilized to spread AVID strategies more and there just isn't a focus on that." –Excel teacher

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Schoolwide Integration. Many schools described efforts to integrate Excel strategies by incorporating content from core classes into Excel classes, coordinating strategies across classes such as note-taking and binder checks throughout the school, and scheduling Excel students into the same core classes together, sometimes with an Excel-trained content teacher. Notably though, some Excel teachers reported feeling isolated in their buildings or stuck providing EL services to newcomer students who did not fit the typical profile of an Excel student.

"Anytime we bring in a new initiative, we vet it against what is in AVID or AVID Excel that is already happening." – AVID site coordinator

"Our AVID Excel teacher will say, this is going to be the theme for our next unit. How can you guys work that into your next unit?" – AVID site coordinator

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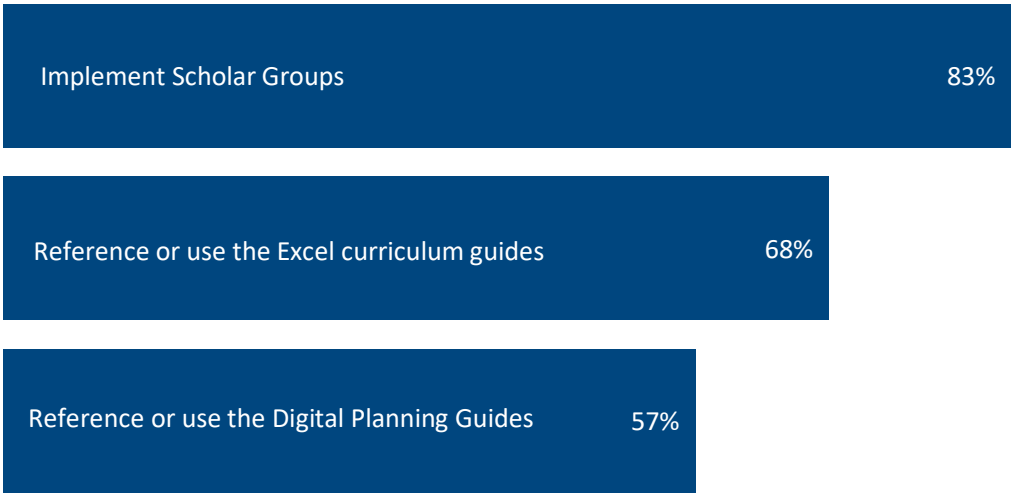
Excel Class Implementation

Excel teachers were asked various survey questions about their use of Excel resources and implementation of Excel instructional strategies, including how frequently they referenced or implemented Excel curriculum guides, scholar groups, or the Digital Planning Guides. More than half of respondents indicated using each resource in their classroom at least once per week (see Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12. Use of Excel Curriculum and Resources
More Than Half of Excel Teachers Implemented Scholar Groups and Referenced the Curriculum Guides or Digital Planning Guides At Least Once Per Week.



Note: N = 21. Numbers represent the percentage of educators who reported implementing each activity weekly or daily. Items were rated on a scale of never or almost never (1) – daily (5).

Class Time Spent on Curriculum. Among Excel teachers who responded to the survey, about 40% spent more than 80% of class time on the Excel curriculum, while only 12% reported spending 50% or less of class time on the curriculum. Excel teachers were also asked about what other curriculum or activities they used during Excel class time. Among those who provided responses, the most common were incorporating ELA resources from online websites, applications, or programs (*n* = 5), prepping for ELP assessments (*n* =3), and incorporating core class content (*n* = 3).

Recruitment and Training of Excel Tutors. While AVID District Directors reported that almost 80% of the 30 participating Excel schools had an Excel recruitment and retention plan for tutors in place, only about half of the schools used the Excel Elective Tutor Training Module to train them. Several interview respondents indicated that Excel tutors received the training designed

for tutors in the AVID elective, which were not designed to meet the particular needs of EL students.

Use of Excel Instructional Strategies. Excel teachers were asked the extent to which they implemented a variety of Excel instructional strategies including AVID foundations of instruction strategies, Excel instructional scaffolds, and Excel classroom routines. When reflecting on their use of the AVID foundations of instruction strategies, all or nearly all Excel teachers reported creating an appropriate environment conducive for learning and developing positive relationships with students. More than 75% of respondents reported implementing strategically planned lessons, establishing clear learning objectives, and using diagnostic teaching to make instructional decisions (see Exhibit 13). Significantly more Excel teachers reported creating an appropriate learning environment ($p < .05$) and developing positive student relationships ($p < .05$) than who reported using diagnostic teaching.

Exhibit 13. Excel Teacher Use of Excel Foundations of Instruction
Over 75% of Excel Teachers Used All Foundations of Instruction Strategies Quite a Bit or A Lot.

Note. N = 21. Numbers represent the percentage of Excel teachers who reported using each strategy quite a bit or a lot. Items were rated on a scale of not at all (1) – a lot (4).

Similar results were observed when Excel teachers reported their use of Excel instructional scaffolds. Nearly all educators used sentence frames and a gradual release of responsibility in their classrooms. More than 70% of survey respondents reported using word banks, rehearsal and revision, academic language scripts, and graphic organizers to scaffold student learning (see Exhibit 14). Significantly more Excel teachers reported using sentence frames and a gradual release of responsibility than those who reported using graphic organizers ($p < .05$). During the survey development process, Excel subject matter experts noted that use of graphic organizers were somewhat less important than use of the other instructional scaffolds.

Exhibit 14. Excel Teacher Use of Excel Instructional Scaffolds
Over 70% of Educators Reported Using Instructional Scaffolds Quite a Bit or A Lot.

Note. N = 21. Numbers represent the percentage of Excel teachers who reported using each scaffold quite a bit or a lot. Items were rated on a scale of not at all (1) – a lot (4).

Compared to the foundations of instruction and instructional scaffolds, use of some Excel classroom routines was less frequent. All survey respondents reported using structured collaboration routines quite a bit or a lot. More than 60% reported using other classroom routines such as focused note-taking, critical reading processes, opening routines, language coaching, and closing routines. The fewest number of respondents reported frequently using writing style and bugs, socratic seminars, and philosophical chairs; the three classroom routines Excel subject matter experts noted as being less important than other routines (see Exhibit 15). Significantly more Excel teachers reported frequent use of structured collaboration routines than reported frequent use of language coaching ($p < .05$), closing routines ($p < .01$), writing style and bugs ($p < .05$), socratic seminar ($p < .001$), and philosophical chairs ($p < .001$). Use of socratic seminars and philosophical chairs was also significantly less than use of focused note-taking ($p < .01$), critical reading processes ($p < .01$), opening routines ($p < .01$), and language coaching ($p < .05$).

Exhibit 15. Excel Teacher Use of Excel Classroom Routines

More Than 65% of Educators Used Structured Collaboration, Focused Note-taking, Critical Reading Processes, Opening Routines, Language Coaching, and Closing Routines Quite a Bit or a lot.

Note. N = 18—21. Numbers represent the percentage of Excel teachers who reported using each routine quite a bit or a lot. Items were rated on a scale of not at all (1) – a lot (4).

Educator Reports of Implementation Fidelity. Most educators who participated in interviews or focus groups reported that the Excel curriculum was implemented with fidelity, but described some variation in classroom implementation. Excel teachers described putting a "creative spin" on materials, coordinating with content teachers, differentiating for student needs, and collapsing or skipping material due to pacing and time constraints. Multiple teachers described working hard to closely follow the curriculum because they believed it was the best approach for their students.

> *"AVID builds up to them so slowly that sometimes I'm frustrated. But now I'm like, 'You know what? There's a reason they're doing it this way. And so I'm just going to follow it.'. . . AVID says go slow to go fast. And I'm really trying to embody that."–Excel teacher*

School-Level Implementation Fidelity and CCI Certification Classifications. Measures of implementation fidelity were developed with input provided by AVID Center leadership and Excel subject matter experts and were based on educator survey and AVID District Director implementation inventory data. Details about how school-level fidelity ratings were assigned are in Appendix B.

The relationships between Excel implementation fidelity measures and CCI certification levels were examined. Specifically, the percentages of schools that met each implementation fidelity expectation (across 8 measures) were compared for low- and high-rated CCI schools. When compared to schools with lower CCI certification ratings, a higher proportion of schools with high CCI ratings used the curriculum materials with fidelity, implemented scholar groups at least weekly, had a tutor recruitment and training plan in place, had a site team composed of at least 8 members who met monthly or more, and implemented at least 6 of 10 recommended student recruitment activities (see Exhibit 16). Low CCI schools had a higher proportion of schools that engaged all staff in expected professional learning and reported strong school support for Excel.

Exhibit 16. Excel Implementation Fidelity by CCI Certification Levels

A Higher Percentage of Schools with High CCI Ratings Met Fidelity Expectations.

Note. N = 14—28. Values represent the percentage of schools that met each fidelity criterion. Two schools did not have CCI data and were dropped from analyses. See Exhibits B1, B2, and B3 for additional information about fidelity expectations.

Educator Outcomes

Research Questions						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Educators were asked the extent with which having Excel in their school increased their abilities to teach and support EL students. At least 80% of respondents indicated that Excel increased their ability to foster a sense of community; support academic success; engage and motivate students; support high school, college, or career readiness; and accelerate the English language acquisition of L-TEL students (see Exhibit 17).

Exhibit 17. Impact of Excel on Educator Abilities

At Least 80% of Educators Felt Excel Increased Their Ability to Support L-TEL Students in 5 Areas.

Note. N = 51. Numbers represent percentage of educators in Excel schools who responded quite a bit or a lot. Items were rated on a scale of not at all (1) – a lot (4).

Interviewees reported that their classroom instructional practices were influenced by attending Excel PL. Excel teachers cited examples of how they incorporated scholar groups, word banks, academic language scripts, AVID claps, turn-and-talk activities, and Cornell notes. They also described changing their approaches to meet the needs of their long-term EL students by adjusting their pace, differentiating the curriculum, scaffolding, and adjusting expectations. Beyond the Excel classroom, Excel PL was described as having a broader impact on how educators incorporated communication practices, equitable talk, academic vocabulary, and language scaffolds with all students. Educators also reported that their participation in Excel affected them as educators by changing their understanding of students' needs, as well as how to shape students' motivation and preparedness.

"The more I do exactly what they say to do in the curriculum, then the better my outcomes are because [AVID] are such masters of culture and language acquisition." –Excel Teacher

"I really think it's overall just taught me how to be a teacher, even though this has only been my 4th year. But without it, I think I would be a very different

teacher. So I do think [AVID Excel professional learning has] been very, very helpful." –Excel Teacher

"Everything really builds on how we acquire language. These are things that I learned getting a master's degree in language acquisition, but to have them applied in such a specific way that it's so methodical that it is now literally how I teach. Like if you took AVID Excel away from me, this is still how I would teach. It'd be a lot harder cause I'd have to build all the structures. But to the point that when we lead professional development now this is how we do it . . ." –Excel Teacher

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Relationships between Excel Implementation Fidelity Measures and Student Outcomes

Research Questions						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The relationship between school-level Excel implementation fidelity ratings and student outcomes was examined to determine whether there were positive associations between different aspects of implementation fidelity and student outcomes. After accounting for student baseline covariates, use of Excel curriculum resources, AVID site team composition and functioning, and CCI certification levels had the most consistent positive relationships with student outcomes (see Exhibit 18). The largest positive relationship was between frequent implementation of scholar groups and grade 9 student reclassification (effect size = 3.77). Most null or negative findings were observed for enrollment in a course of rigor in grade 9. Additional findings are presented in Exhibits B12, B13, and B14. Due to inconsistencies in available courses of rigor across districts, results should be interpreted with caution.

Exhibit 18. Relationship between Implementation Fidelity Measures and Student Outcomes

Use of Excel Curriculum Resources, AVID Site Team Functioning, and CCI Certification Rating were Most Consistently and Positively Related to Student Outcomes.

	Grade 8 ELP	Grade 8 State ELA	Grade 9 EL Reclassification	Grade 9 Courses of Rigor
Participation in Excel Trainings				
Use of Excel curriculum resources				
Implementation of scholar groups				
Use of Excel instructional strategies				
Excel tutor recruitment and training				
AVID site team composition and functioning				
Excel student recruitment activities				
School support of Excel				
CCI certification rating				

Note: Cells with darker shades of green represent larger, statistically significant positive effects. Cells with darker shades of red represent larger, statistically significant negative effects. Grey cells represent nonsignificant findings.

Educator Recommendations

Suggestions for Improvement of Excel. When asked to reflect on ways their school or the AVID Center could help improve the implementation of Excel, educators gave a variety of suggestions:

- Improved vertical alignment between middle school and high school AVID;
- Training during the school year to receive feedback on ongoing lessons;
- More highlighting of Excel in other Summer Institute CoPs;
- Opportunities to collaborate with and/or visit other Excel sites; and
- Improvements to Excel curriculum resources including more engaging slide decks, slower pace at the start of the year, modifications for mixed-grade classes, a hierarchical

structure so teachers can identify the essential items, and a way to give direct feedback to AVID from within the digital materials.

Various suggestions had to do with the allocation of resources within schools, including:

- Having a dedicated Excel teacher rather than a teacher wearing many hats;
- Allowing for more planning time with other Excel teachers;
- Release time to train tutors on Excel and/or a dedicated Excel tutor;
- Incorporating more experiential learning opportunities for Excel students; and
- Redesignating Excel as an academic class so it would get a longer class period than it does as an elective.

Excel Success Barriers. Across interviews, three themes emerged around the barriers schools face when implementing Excel.

- **Funding.** Educators, especially administrators, said that the Excel program and training is expensive, and they are limited by the financial burden. They wished they could train more Excel teachers, have a larger site team, and hire more tutors.
- **Recruitment.** Educators explained multiple ways that Excel struggled to recruit students, namely that there were many other elective options for students to consider. There was also a pipeline issue with parents and teachers not understanding Excel well enough to encourage the ideal Excel students to apply.
- **Educator Mindsets.** A reported barrier to Excel implementation was that content teachers could be averse to using AVID strategies, dismissing them as "one more thing" they must do in an already overwhelming curriculum.

Excel Success Facilitators. Across interviews, there were three critical pieces described as necessary for the successful implementation of an Excel program.

- **High-quality, Motivated, Dedicated Excel Teachers.** Other attributes of successful Excel teachers were flexibility, passion, charisma, and willingness to collaborate. Many interviewees mentioned that the Excel curriculum was only as good as the educator who implemented it, and administrators reported that they sought out top quality teachers who were invested in ELs and AVID to send for Excel training.
- **Support from the Administrators and District.** Effective support from school and district leaders was described as provision of general enthusiasm for the program, funding for materials, resources like substitutes and TOSAs, dedicated planning time, and support for organizing field trips.
- **A Schoolwide Embrace of AVID and Excel Culture and Strategies.** Educators mentioned that Excel worked best when all teachers set high expectations for EL students and buy-in to using AVID strategies in their classrooms. It was also seen as important to have all students aware of Excel and its goals, a pervasive college and career readiness culture, and active parent involvement at the school.

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study used a quasi-experimental design and employed IPT weights to estimate the impact of Excel on participating students' grade 7 through grade 10 outcomes. The primary impact analyses found statistically significant and positive impacts of Excel on students' grade 8 ELP scores EL reclassification rates in grades 8 and 9. However, Excel students were less likely than comparison students to enroll in a course of rigor in grade 9, and equally likely to enroll in a course of rigor in grade 10. Excel did not have a significant influence on students' ELA or math state assessment scores. Findings in the present study align with those of prior research examining the impact of EL programs that focus on English proficiency, academic language, and ELA achievement (Johnson & Mercado-Garcia, 2025[7]; Kim et al., 2018[8]). These studies found positive effects on students' English language proficiency scores and similar ELA scores between treatment and comparison students.

Examination of the influence of different levels of Excel participation (e.g., participating in one versus two years of Excel), revealed mixed results. For example, students who participated in Excel in both grades 7 and 8 had higher grade 8 ELP scores than those who participated in only one of the grades, suggesting a positive, cumulative effect of Excel participation. However, students who participated in Excel in both grades 6 and 7 or in all three grades (grades 6 through 8) had lower ELP scores, suggesting that students who began participating earlier and participated for multiple years were those in need of continued support.

The lack of significant findings on state assessments could be in part due to the relative insensitivity to change of standardized educational assessments (Wolf, 2021[9]). However, with Excel's focus on accelerating EL students' English language acquisition, the fact that Excel students showed higher ELP scores and greater EL reclassification rates is promising. The lack of positive findings regarding enrolling in courses of rigor could be due to lack of awareness of relevant courses or feelings of not being prepared to take advanced courses due to Excel's focus on increasing students' academic vocabulary. Future research might examine the reasons why Excel students do not enroll in courses of rigor and identify ways to better promote students' interest and preparedness for these courses.

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[7] Johnson, A., & Mercado-Garcia, D. (2025). Targeted Intervention for Long-Term English Learners' English Language Development and Reading Outcomes. *AERA Open, 11.* *https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584251362747*

[8] Kim H. Y., Hsin, L. B., & Snow C. E. (2018). Reducing academic inequalities for English language learners: Variation in experimental effects of Word Generation in high-poverty schools. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism**.** *24 (7)*, 1024-1042.

[9] Wolf, R. (2021). *Average differences in effect sizes by outcome measure type*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, What Works Clearinghouse.

Most Excel-trained educators reported that participating in Excel PL and having Excel in their school increased their ability to support long-term EL students. This included reported increases in their ability to support EL students' English acquisition, academic success, and college and career readiness. Excel teachers who participated in interviews also noted that participating in Excel PL increased their ability to incorporate EL-focused instructional strategies, understand student needs, differentiate instruction, and engage EL students. These findings suggest that Excel can have a positive impact that extends beyond the Excel classroom and participating long-term ELs.

Implementation analyses showed that implementation fidelity was relatively high, but varied across individuals and schools. Schools with higher CCI certification ratings tended to meet most implementation expectations addressed in the study. One finding of note is that relatively few Excel teachers participated in the expected number of PL opportunities and received in-class observations or coaching. Several teachers suggested that this may be due to lack of funding or easy access to Excel PL, particularly for educators in states that do not host Summer Institutes. When looking at the relationships between levels of implementation and student outcomes, meeting implementation expectations regarding use of Excel curriculum resources, AVID site team functioning and composition, and CCI certification levels had the most consistent positive influences on student outcomes. The largest, positive Excel implementation effect showed the influence of frequent implementation of scholar groups on rates of grade 9 EL reclassification.

Limitations and Considerations for Interpretation

The study includes limitations that suggest caution for interpreting findings. First, the study used a quasi-experimental design to address questions related to the impact of Excel on student outcomes. Although causal inferences are warranted using such a design, they should be made with caution as several factors may introduce bias in the impact estimates or otherwise influence student outcomes beyond the effect of Excel. Between 12 and 19 percent of the study sample had missing baseline data which were imputed. Additionally, while outcomes were compared between Excel and similar comparison students, significant differences existed between the treatment and comparison groups on baseline measures of student outcomes. Even with the use of covariates and applying IPT weights to estimate program impacts, differences between the treatment and comparison groups on outcome measures may be a function of existing baseline differences. Second, educator survey response rates were relatively low (28%), such that only 15 of the 30 Excel schools had survey data provided by Excel teachers. Given this, most (5 of 9) fidelity ratings could be calculated for only these 15 schools. Ratings of Excel implementation fidelity and their relationships to student outcomes may therefore not generalize to the full population of Excel schools. Third, student sample sizes were small for analyses of grade 9 and 10 outcomes. Interpretation of those outcomes, particularly when they present disaggregated results by levels of school implementation, should be made with caution as they may not generalize to the full population

of EL students. Fourth, analyses examining program impacts on students taking courses of rigor should be also interpreted with caution. Analyses of student transcript data revealed that the number and types of courses classified as rigorous varied across districts. Differential representation of treatment and comparison students across districts may therefore influence impact analyses. For example, if a higher proportion of one group of students (Excel or comparison students) happened to be in districts that offered more rigorous courses or classified more courses as rigorous, information about their participation in these courses may be positively biased.

Recommendations

1. **Provide more opportunities for ongoing support of Excel teachers.** While Excel teachers (and other educators in Excel schools), consistently rated the quality of Excel PL as high, common themes included a need for more consistent support (i.e., in-class observations and coaching) from AVID Center staff, and for more opportunities for Excel teachers to interact and learn from each other. Another recommendation was that refresher Excel PL opportunities be provided, particularly for educators who were trained prior to updates to the Excel curriculum.
2. **Consider ways to engage families and core content teachers in Excel activities.** While educators in Excel schools reported the value of engaging parents and community members in Excel programming, interview respondents described low parent and family engagement. Several Excel teachers also reported feeling isolated in their school and that other educators in their school either did not understand or were unenthusiastic about AVID strategies. It may be valuable for AVID Center to develop training and resources to help Excel teachers and school administrators engage with content teachers and with families to promote Excel.
3. **Encourage Excel tutors to receive training that specifically addresses the needs of Excel students.** While most Excel schools had an Excel tutor and recruitment plan in place, few reported having used the Excel Elective Tutor Training module to train them. During interviews, several Excel teachers mentioned the need for the tutors to receive training to address the specific needs of EL students and to provide support that aligns to the Excel curriculum.
4. **Increase the focus of the Excel curriculum on core content addressed by state achievement tests.** While Excel had consistent positive impacts on participating students' ELP scores and EL reclassification rates, there were limited and varied effects of Excel on students' academic achievement. If improving Excel students' academic achievement is a primary goal of the program, additional emphasis on these topics may be needed in the program's curriculum.
5. **Provide additional support for students to take courses of rigor.** Excel students were significantly less likely to take courses of rigor in both middle and high school, while significantly more likely to enroll in the AVID elective class. Additional support could be

provided to help Excel students identify courses of rigor they could take in conjunction with the AVID elective. Given the limited program impact on Excel students' academic achievement, it is also possible that Excel students are still not prepared to take more advanced coursework in high school, despite the goals of the Excel program

APPENDIX A: TECHNICAL METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following seven research questions.

Educator Outcomes and Program Implementation

1. To what extent does AVID Excel affect educator outcomes, including instructional practice?
2. To what extent do educators participate in AVID Excel professional learning as intended and implement AVID Excel with fidelity?
3. How does AVID Excel professional learning support implementation and educator outcomes?
4. What are educator perceptions of how AVID Excel professional learning and implementation could be improved?

Student Outcomes

5. What is the impact of AVID Excel on student academic outcomes in grades 7 through 10?
6. How do outcomes vary for students with different levels of AVID Excel participation?
7. How do academic outcomes vary for AVID Excel students in schools with different levels of implementation fidelity?

Research questions 1 through 4 focus on understanding Excel (hereafter referred to as "Excel") implementation, implementation fidelity, perceived impacts on educator outcomes, and information to inform program improvements. Research questions 5 through 7 assess the impact of Excel on student outcomes, including how differences in program implementation and participation may influence outcomes.

Study Design

To address the research questions, RMC used two designs to examine **educator outcomes and program implementation** (Research Questions 1 through 4) and **student outcomes** (Research Questions 5 through 7.

Educator Outcomes and Program Implementation Design

A mixed-methods descriptive and correlational design was used to examine program implementation and the influence of Excel on educator outcomes (Research Questions 1

through 4). This design focused on educators who could report on how Excel was implemented during the 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years. This time period provided the greatest overlap with the student outcomes covered by the study (see student outcome design section below), while optimizing educator recall during these more recent years. AVID District Directors were also asked to complete an implementation inventory for each participating Excel school. Educators and school leaders in 10 Excel schools were also invited to participate in focus groups or interviews to qualitatively examine program implementation and perceptions of program impacts. Data from an educator survey, interviews, and focus groups were used to collect information about educator impressions of the quality of Excel implementation, relevant professional learning (PL) activities, and feedback on how the program might be improved.

Student Outcomes Design

RMC used a quasi-experimental design (QED) to examine the impact of Excel participation on student outcomes in middle and high school. Academic outcomes of grade 7 and 8 students who participated in Excel in 2021/22 through 2024/25 were compared to those of similar nonparticipating students. Because Excel is primarily a two-year program with students progressing through program activities as a cohort, the target sample for the main impact analyses (Research Question 5) included students who were enrolled in the Excel class during both their grade 7 and 8 academic years and thus fully participated. Analyses used to address Research Question 6 compared the outcomes of Excel students with varying program participation patterns, including those who participated in the grade 6 Excel class and those who only participated in the Excel class during either their grade 7 or grade 8 year. Separate analyses were conducted to compare the outcomes of Excel students in schools with different levels of implementation fidelity (Research Question 7). This approach allowed us to combine and compare the outcomes of three cohorts of Excel and comparison students from the end of their grade 7 through grade 10 years. Exhibit A1 presents the student cohorts, academic years, and student grade levels that are the focus of the student outcomes study design.

Exhibit A1. Excel Study Student Sample

	Academic Year				
Student Cohort	**2020/21**	**2021/22**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
Cohort 1	Grade 6 (baseline) →	Grade 7 →	Grade 8 →	Grade 9 →	Grade 10
Cohort 2		Grade 6 (baseline) →	Grade 7 →	Grade 8 →	Grade 9
Cohort 3			Grade 6 (baseline) →	Grade 7 →	Grade 8

Note. The yellow and green highlights show that grade 7 and grade 8 student outcomes can be examined for three cohorts of students in schools that implemented Excel from 2021/22 through 2024/25.

Intervention and Comparison Conditions

The initial study sample included ELs in 32 middle schools implementing Excel and ELs in 64 middle schools not implementing Excel. AVID Center recommended Excel schools to participate in the study if they had been implementing Excel since at least 2023/24, and ideally had started implementing in 2021/22 or prior. AVID Center also focused on recruiting schools that had high levels of implementation based on their Secondary CCI certification ratings. Two Excel schools were dropped from the study based on AVID District Director recommendations due to inconsistent implementation. All but three of the remaining 30 Excel schools had been implementing Excel since at least 2021/22 such that three cohorts of participating Excel students from these schools were included in the study sample. Only one cohort of students was included in the study sample from three schools that began implementing Excel during the 2023/24 school year. Slightly over half (17) of the 30 Excel schools implemented a grade 6 Excel class. Comparison schools were drawn from the same districts as Excel schools, but had not implemented Excel during the study's timeline. Because multiple educators may have been trained by AVID in the Excel schools, there is a high likelihood of contamination such that nonparticipating EL students may be positively influenced by the implementation of Excel in their school. Because contamination may result in attenuating the study impact estimates, comparison students were drawn from schools that did not implement Excel during the study period. To help ensure a valid comparison of Excel and comparison student outcomes, 17 comparison schools that had a lower percentage of EL students than the Excel schools were excluded from the study sample. An additional 19 comparison schools were dropped from the sample because of missing student baseline data. Among the schools included in the final sample, Excel schools had a total student population of 756 students on average with 31% being ELs, while comparison schools had a total student population of 615 students on average with 27% being ELs. Exhibit A2 shows the states that were represented in the study sample and the number of Excel and comparison schools in each.

Exhibit A2. States Represented by Excel and Comparison Schools

State	# of Excel Schools	# of Comparison Schools	# of Comparison Schools in the Primary Impact Sample
California	9	6	4
Colorado	4	7	6
Tennessee	1	28	0
Texas	13	21	16
Virginia	2	2	2
Wyoming	1	0	0

Data sources

The study utilized administrative data collected from participating school districts, an educator survey administered to participating Excel schools, an AVID District Director implementation inventory, AVID program implementation data, and interviews and focus groups conducted with educators in a sample of participating Excel schools. Details about the data types and variables are discussed below.

Administrative Data

Administrative data collected from participating districts included student demographic characteristics, English language proficiency (ELP) and academic achievement data, course transcripts, and Excel class rosters. Data were requested for all EL students who were in grades 7 and 8 during the 2021/22 through 2024/25 school years. Grade 6 baseline data were requested for these students and, depending on students' grade level in 2024/25, data were requested through their grade 10 year (e.g., a grade 7 student in 2021/22 may have data available through their grade 10 year in 2024/25). To address the study research questions, RMC calculated or recoded the study variables described below:

- **Cohort.** Student cohort was calculated based on the year students were in grade 7. When students were missing grade 7 data, cohort was calculated using the year they were in grade 6 or 8.
- **EL reclassification.** EL reclassification was determined when an EL student was not designated as an EL student in a subsequent year.
- **Courses of rigor.** Student course transcript data were coded to indicate if a student took one or more courses of rigor in a given year. Courses were considered courses of rigor if they were core courses taken above grade level (e.g., algebra in grade 8), the third or more year of a foreign language, advanced or honors, gifted and talented, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Dual Enrollment courses. District-specific advanced coursework was also included among courses of rigor (e.g., Project Lead the Way, OnRamp, and industry recognized credentials).
- **Formative assessments.** Standardized scores (*z*-scores[10]) were calculated for fall and spring district ELA and math assessments within year, test type, and grade level. Publicly-available national norms were used to standardize scores when available. When national data were not available, data from the full student dataset were used. Formative assessments included NWEA MAP, iReady, RenSTAR, and FastBridge. Because of a high level of missing formative ELA data, only formative math scores were used in the study.

[10] A *z*-score is a standardized score with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1. It is calculated for each score by subtracting the population average or mean from a score, and dividing that difference by the population standard deviation

- **State assessments.** Standardized scores (*z*-scores) were calculated for ELA and Math state assessments within year, test type, and grade level. Publicly-available national norms were used to standardize scores when available. When national data were not available, data from the full student dataset were used. State assessments included STAAR, SOL, CAASPP, CMAS, TCAP, and WYTOPP.
- **ELP assessments.** Standardized scores (*z*-scores) were calculated for ELP assessments within year and test type. Scores were calculated based on the full student dataset. ELP assessments included WIDA, TELPAS, ELPAC, and ELPA21.
- **Excel participation.** Student level of participation in Excel was calculated based on roster and transcript data. Excel students were grouped as participating only in grade 6, only in grade 7, only in grade 8, in grades 6 and 7, in grades 6 and 8, in grades 7 and 8, or in grade 6 through 8. The primary student impact sample included students who participated in Excel in both grades 7 and 8 (including students who participated in grade 6). Secondary analyses included students who participated in Excel in grade 7 and the AVID elective course in grade 8.

Educator Survey

RMC administered an electronic survey to Excel-trained educators in study schools during the fall 2025 semester. The survey was developed with input provided by AVID Center leadership and Excel subject matter experts. The survey asked about educators' role at their school, demographic characteristics, years in which they taught the Excel class, and if they had an English language development teaching certification (e.g., TEFL/TESOL). The survey also asked about what additional support from the AVID Center would be helpful, how Excel PL activities could be improved, and how the implementation of Excel could be improved. Additional topics addressed by the survey, number of items included in each section, sample items, and item response categories are provided in Exhibit A3.

Exhibit A3. Educator Survey Content

Scale	Number of Items	Sample Item	Response Categories
Participation in Excel PL Activities	9	Excel Elective Level 1 CoP In-class observations and/or coaching by an AVID Center Staff	Select all that apply
Utility of AVID PL Activities [a]	9	Prepared me to support the academic success of L-TEL students Provided me with the knowledge necessary to successfully implement AVID Excel	Strongly disagree (1) – Strongly agree (4)

Scale	Number of Items	Sample Item	Response Categories
Use of Excel curriculum guides, Digital Planning Guides, and scholar groups[b]	3	How often did you reference or use the AVID Excel curriculum guides How often did you implement AVID Excel Scholar Groups	Never or almost never (1) – Daily (5)
Use of Excel instructional strategies[b]	20	Established clear learning objectives Sentence frames	Not at all (1) – A lot (4)
AVID site team collaboration[c]	2	To what extent did the AVID site team focus on AVID Excel-related topics	Not at all (1) – A lot (4)
School and leadership support of Excel[b]	6	My school's leadership is supportive of the implementation of AVID Excel Other teachers at my school are aware of AVID Excel	Strongly disagree (1) – Strongly agree (4)
Excel impact on educator outcomes	5	Support the academic success of L-TEL students (and all multilingual learners) Engage and motivate students	Not at all (1) – A lot (4)

Note: [a]Two items were only asked of Excel elective teachers. [b]Items were only asked of Excel elective teachers. [c]Items were only asked of AVID site team members.

AVID District Director Implementation Inventory and AVID Program Data

AVID District Directors were asked to complete an online site implementation inventory for each participating Excel school in their district. The inventory was developed with input provided by AVID Center leadership and Excel subject matter experts. The inventory addressed the following topics:

- District Director background (e.g., years serving as the District Director)
- Frequency of conducting in-class observations and/or coaching for the Excel class
- General Excel implementation (e.g., Summer Bridge programs, Excel guest speakers)
- Excel tutor recruitment and training
- Composition of the AVID site team and frequency of site team meetings
- Excel student recruitment procedures

District Directors were also asked to provide suggestions on how the AVID Center could support their ability to conduct in-class observations and coaching for the Excel class.

Coaching and Certification Instrument (CCI) data. The AVID Center also provided AVID implementation data for study schools, including school ratings on the Secondary CCI for each of the study years. The CCI rates schools on a variety of implementation domains and assigns

schools ratings of either: non-certified site, AVID certified site, AVID emerging schoolwide site, AVID schoolwide site, or AVID schoolwide site of distinction. While not specifically focused on the Excel program, CCI ratings provide an overall indicator of the quality of AVID program implementation. CCI certification ratings were used for analyses of implementation fidelity. Two Excel schools were excluded from fidelity analyses because they did not have CCI data that represented the academic years addressed by the study.

CCI certification levels were provided for each participating Excel school from the 2021/22 through 2023/24 school years. To determine the CCI certification level used for fidelity analyses, the following decision rules were applied:

- Use CCI certification level if same over two of the three study years
- Use CCI certification level from 2023/24 school year if certification level consistently increased over time
- If CCI certification level varies over the three years without a consistent increasing or decreasing trend, use the middle certification level
- If school is classified as non-certified in 2023/24, classify as non-certified

Educator Interviews/Focus Groups

RMC conducted virtual interviews and focus groups with Excel-trained educators and school leaders (i.e., principals or AVID site coordinators) in 10 participating schools. The interview and focus group protocols were developed with input from AVID Center leadership and Excel subject matter experts. The interviews and focus groups addressed the following topics:

- Educator background
- Participation in Excel PL
- Excel PL influence on program implementation and educator outcomes
- Excel implementation (including Excel class)
- School leadership support for Excel
- Excel influence on educator outcomes
- Excel influence on student outcomes

Educators were also asked for suggestions about how Excel PL and program implementation could be improved at their school.

Study Sample

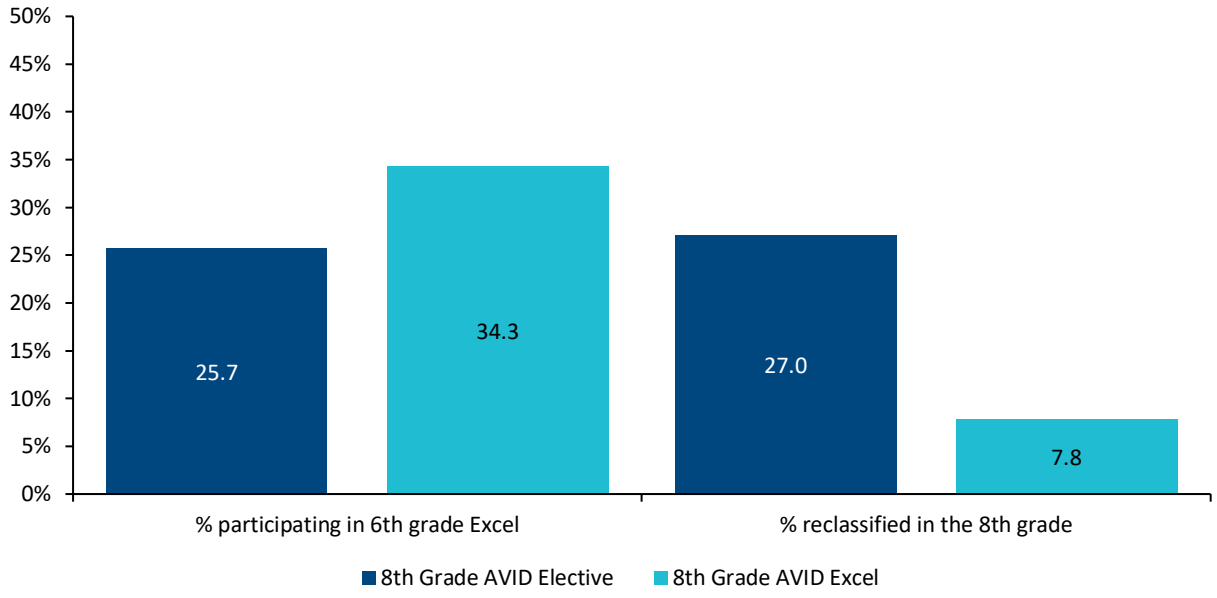
The primary impact sample included EL students in 30 Excel schools who participated in Excel and ELs students in 28 comparison schools not implementing Excel.

Student sample

The study included three cohorts of Excel students; those who were in grade 7 between the 2021/22 through 2023/24 school years. To be include in the primary impact analyses (Research Question 5), treatment students had to have participated in Excel in both grades 7 and 8. Comparison students also had to be EL students with grade 7 and 8 data. Secondary analyses included Excel students who enrolled in the AVID elective class in grade 8. Comparison students were drawn from schools in the participating districts who had not implemented Excel during the study period.

Descriptive analyses were conducted to examine differences between grade 7 Excel students enrolled in the grade 8 Excel class and those who enrolled in the grade 8 AVID elective class (see Exhibit A4). A higher percentage of students in grade 8 Excel participated in grade 6 Excel compared to grade 8 elective students. A lower percentage of Excel students were reclassified in grade 8 than students in the grade 8 AVID elective course.

Exhibit A4. Characteristics of Grade 8 Excel Students and Grade 8 AVID Elective Students



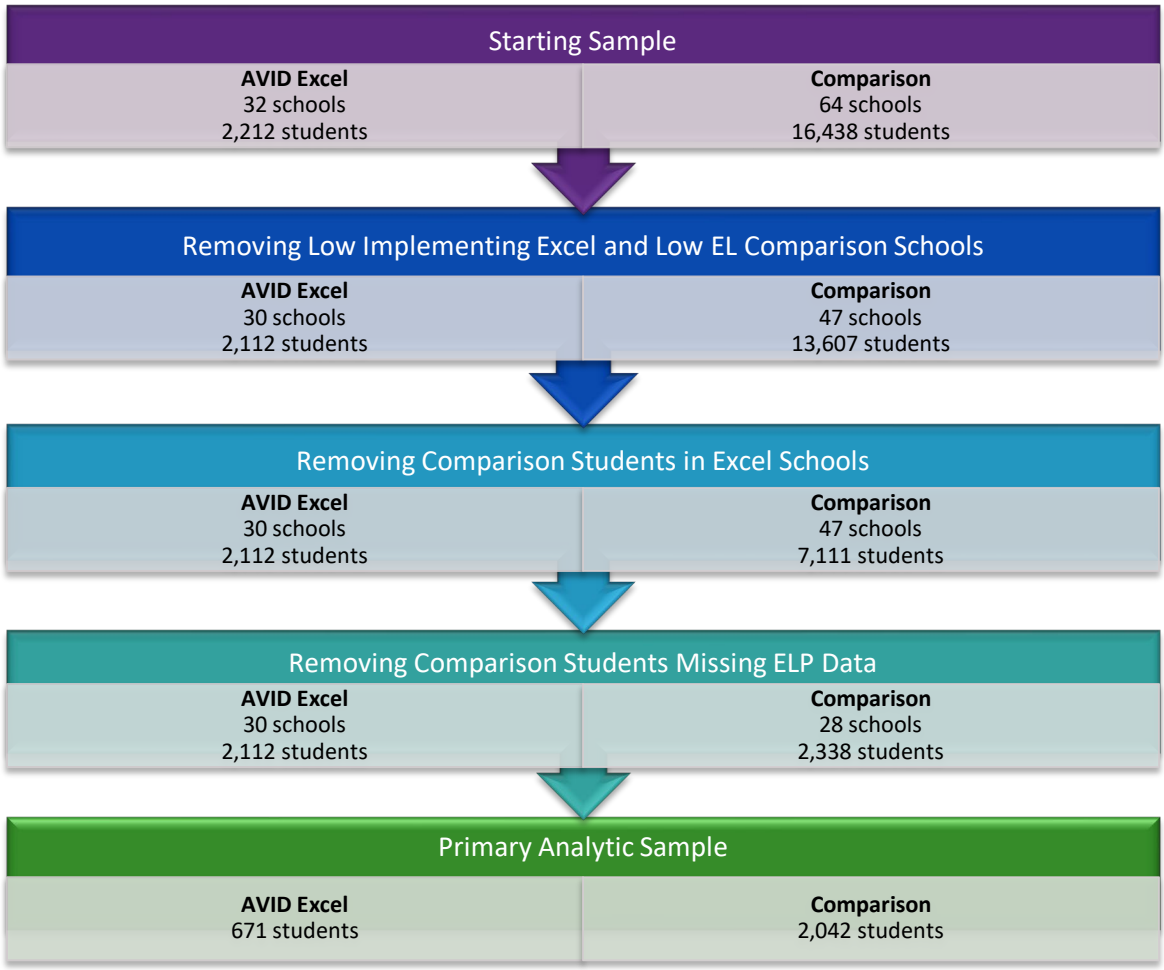
Additional analyses were conducted to examine how program impacts varied for students who had different levels of Excel participation. Two samples were defined to examine outcomes in grades 7, 8, and 9. The first sample examined outcomes of students who participated in Excel in both grades 7 and 8 compared to those who only participated in either grade 7 or grade 8. The second sample examined outcomes of students who participated in Excel in both grades 6 and 7 compared to those who only participated in either grade 6 or 7.

As described above, during the cleaning process 17 schools (and their students) were excluded due to low populations of ELs. To create the final study sample, the following additional exclusion criteria were applied to comparison students:

- Attended an Excel school at any point (6,496 students)
- Lacked baseline ELP assessment data (4,773 students)

The final pool of students included 2,112 Excel students from 30 schools and 2,338 comparison students from 28 schools. The primary student impact sample (i.e., students who participated in both grades 7 and 8) included 671 Excel students and 2,042 comparison students. For sensitivity analyses that included grade 8 AVID elective students, the sample consisted of 819 AVID students and 2,042 comparison students. Exhibit A5 presents a consort diagram describing how the student and school samples were constructed and how sample sizes changed when applying the study's sample inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Exhibit A5. AVID Excel Study School and Student Consort Diagram



Chi-square tests were conducted to examine differences between comparison students who had baseline ELP data and those who had missing assessment data. Students with and without ELP data differed by district, cohort, race, gender, free-reduced meal status, and special education status. Students with and without ELP data did not differ in terms of grade 8 or 9 EL reclassification. Due to the differences between comparison students with and without baseline ELP data, all baseline variables were included when imputing missing data and calculating propensity scores (described below).

Missing Data

To retain as many Excel students as possible, multiple imputation was conducted to replace missing baseline data with estimated standardized baseline ELP, state ELA, state math, and formative math fall assessments. Missing data were imputed using the Multiple Imputations by Chained Equations (MICE) package in R (Van Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011[11]). The program estimated imputed scores predicted by district, Excel participation, cohort, gender, ethnicity, free reduced meal status, special education status, and existing baseline assessment scores. After removing comparison students who had missing ELP data from the sample, levels of missing baseline data for the final student sample included:

- 12% missing ELP scores
- 15% missing formative math scores
- 17% missing state math assessment scores
- 19% missing state ELA assessment scores

Due to the proportion of missing data, 20 datasets were imputed over 5 iterations. Impact models estimated results by pooling outcomes from each imputed dataset.

Weighting

For each imputed dataset, a propensity score was calculated predicting the probability of being an Excel student based on ethnicity, gender, special education status, free or reduced-price meal status, standardized baseline ELP, state math, state ELA, and formative math assessment scores. Propensity scores were calculated with data from the total study sample (i.e., 2,112 Excel and 2,338 comparison students). Average propensity scores for Excel students were higher than comparison students (see Exhibit A6). The propensity scores were used to calculate the average effect on treated students (ATT) and the overall average treatment effect (ATE). The ATT weight was used in the main impact analyses, while the ATE was used for sensitivity analyses.

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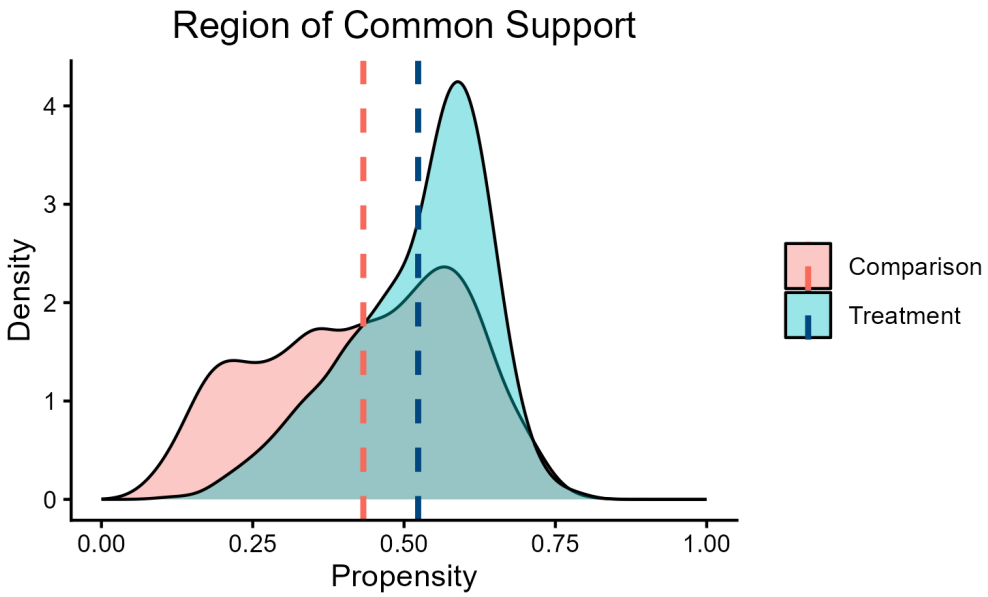
[11] Van Buuren, S., & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, K. (2011). *mice: Multivariate imputation by chained equations in R*. Journal of statistical software, 45, 1-67.

Exhibit A6. Student Probability to be an Excel Student



Note. Dashed lines represent the average propensity score for each group.

Baseline Equivalence

Baseline equivalence was calculated using unweighted and weighted data to determine the impact of weighting. When weights were applied, group baseline differences for students in the primary impact sample decreased on all variables other than standardized ELA scores (see Exhibit A7). After weighting, treatment and comparison differences on all baseline variables had effect sizes less than .20.

Exhibit A7. Unweighted vs. Weighted Baseline Characteristics

Baseline Data	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	Effect size	*N*[b]	Effect size
Standardized ELP Scores	2,713	0.27	2,564	0.04
Standardized ELP Scores[a]	2,861	0.27	2,712	0.04
Standardized ELA Scores	2,713	0.04	2,564	0.08
Standardized ELA Scores[a]	2,861	0.04	2,712	0.08
Gender	2,713	0.07	2,564	0.03
Gender[a]	2,861	0.09	2,712	0.05
Ethnicity	2,713	0.58	2,564	-0.17
Ethnicity[a]	2,861	0.55	2,712	-0.19
Free-reduced meal status	2,713	0.51	2,564	-0.08
Free-reduced meal status[a]	2,861	0.57	2,712	-0.02
Special education status	2,713	-0.58	2,564	-0.07
Special education status[a]	2,861	-0.63	2,712	-0.12

Note. Effect sizes are represented by Hedges' *g* for continuous variables and Cox's Index for categorical variables.

[a] The treatment sample included grade 7 Excel students enrolled in the grade 8 AVID elective.

[b] Sample size differs for weighted comparisons due to weighting adjustments made to the comparison group.

Educator Sample

Educator Survey Sample

RMC administered an electronic survey to Excel-trained educators in study schools during the fall 2025 semester. RMC coordinated with AVID District Directors and district staff to identify educators who should receive the survey. This included Excel teachers, AVID site coordinators, school administrators, school counselors, and core content teachers who may have participated in the Academic Language and Literacy Community of Practice (CoP) training. The survey was sent to 198 individuals and was completed by 55, representing a 28% response rate and representing 21 of the 30 participating Excel schools (RMC Research, 2025a). Of the 55 survey respondents, 22 were Excel teachers and 12 were AVID site coordinators (6 of whom were also Excel teachers). For analyses of implementation fidelity, 3 Excel teachers were excluded from the sample who had only taught Excel prior to the 2021/22 school year. Three respondents (including one Excel teacher) for whom the 2024/25 school year was their first year at their school were also excluded. The final sample for fidelity analyses included 49 respondents (representing 19 Excel schools), of whom 18 were Excel teachers (representing 15 schools).

Interview/Focus Group Sample

Qualitative data collected for the study included 25 interviews and focus groups with a total of 32 educators in 10 Excel schools, representing nine districts. AVID Center identified Excel schools who could provide good examples of program implementation to include in the qualitative data collection. Excel teachers, other AVID trained educators, and individuals responsible for supporting or overseeing Excel implementation in the schools were invited to participate. Of the 32 participants, 16 were current (11) or former (5) Excel teachers. Other participants included principals, assistant principals, district personnel, AVID site coordinators, counselors, AVID elective teachers, and content teachers. (See exhibit A8 for more information on participant roles).

Exhibit A8. Educator Interview and Focus Group Participants by Role.

Role	*N*
Excel elective teacher (current)	11
Excel elective teacher (former)	5
AVID site coordinator	7
Principal	5
AVID elective teacher	4
Content teacher	1
Assistant Principal	1
Dean of Instruction	1
Counselor	1
District CAO	1

Note: Total is greater than 32 because some current and former AVID and Excel elective also serve as AVID site coordinators.

AVID District Director Sample

The AVID District Director implementation inventory was administered to AVID District Directors in all districts that had participating Excel schools. Ten AVID District Directors[12] completed the inventory and provided responses that represented all 30 participating Excel schools. District Director characteristics can be found in the Implementation Inventory Summary (RMC Research, 2025b).

Analytic Approach

Analysis of Qualitative Data

RMC conducted virtual interviews and focus groups with Excel-trained educators and school leaders (i.e., principals or AVID site coordinators) in 10 participating schools. The interviews and focus groups were conducted over Microsoft Teams, with the sessions transcribed. The sessions were not audio or video recorded. All transcripts were imported into Dedoose qualitative coding software. Following methods explicated by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2019[13]t), RMC developed a codebook of themes following the interview protocols. RMC also used open coding to allow new themes in the data to emerge (Strauss & Corbin, 1998[14]). Three RMC researchers piloted the codebook by jointly coding one transcript and refining the code definitions and applications. One RMC researcher applied the refined codebook to the remaining transcripts. Subsequently, excerpts from each code were reviewed and analyzed to inform the report findings. Findings from the qualitative analysis were compared to the quantitative findings to triangulate findings and provide a comprehensive picture of program implementation and effectiveness, including how implementation varied, factors affecting outcomes, and targeted feedback to guide program improvement and implementation.

Analysis of Educator Survey and District Director Implementation Inventory Data

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize data collected from the educator survey and the AVID District Director implementation inventory. Specifically, for each survey and inventory item, we report items means, standard deviations, and percentages or counts of individuals who provided each item response option (e.g., not at all, a little bit, quite a bit, a lot). Descriptive summaries of the educator survey and District Director implementation inventory can be found in the AVID Excel – Educator Survey Summary and AVID Excel District Director Implementation Inventory Summary, respectively (RMC Research, 2025a; RMC Research, 2025b).

Survey and implementation inventory data were also used to assess the implementation fidelity of the participating Excel schools. Because of the limited number of educator survey responses received, descriptive analysis of the survey data was used to assign implementation fidelity ratings. Educators were first scored as meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting implementation expectations based on their survey responses. Thresholds for meeting implementation expectations were established in consultation with AVID Center leadership and Excel subject matter experts. In some cases, indicators of meeting or not meeting expectations were based on an analysis of the distribution of survey responses. School-level fidelity ratings were then calculated by aggregating the fidelity ratings across all educators' fidelity ratings

[13] Miles, B. M., Huberman, A. M., Saldaña, J., (2019). *Qualitative Data Analysis (4th edition)*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.
[14] Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

within a school (all educators within a school had to meet implementation expectations for a school to be rated as meeting expectations for a given indicator). Additional detail on the process for assigning school-level implementation fidelity ratings is provided in the analysis section below.

Student Impact Analyses

To examine the impact of Excel on students' academic outcomes, a series of linear and logistic regression analyses were conducted comparing the outcomes of Excel students to a comparison group of EL students. Imputed datasets were used for all impact analyses, with models being run on each imputed dataset and estimates across the datasets pooled to determine program impacts. Analyses examined the impact of Excel on students' grade 7 through grade 10 outcomes, with the study's primary impact analyses on students' grade 8 outcomes. The sample included students who participated in Excel during both grades 7 and 8, and EL students in non-Excel schools with data for grades 7 and 8. Inverse probability of treatment (IPT) weighting was used in all impact analyses. Sensitivity analyses included students who participated in the Excel class during grade 7 and the AVID elective class in grade 8. Participating in Excel in grade 6 was included in the weighting and in regression models as a covariate. Secondary analyses examining outcomes at the end of students' grade 7, 9, and 10 years drew from the same sample and used their associated IPT weights, with the addition of removing the requirement of grade 8 participation in some models.

All analyses included data aggregated across the relevant student cohorts. To determine the final student characteristics included as covariates in the analytic models, preliminary analyses were conducted in which the ELP and ELA scores were regressed against all of the student characteristic variables. Gender and free-reduced meal status were not statistically associated with the primary outcomes and were trimmed from the analytic models. Significant school-level effects (i.e., a series of dummy variables representing each school) were observed in less than 30% of schools and were excluded from the analytic models. Additionally, analyses on the 20 imputed datasets failed to converge when school dummy variables were included. Another check on school effects was conducted by calculating the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) to examine whether clustering students within school was necessary. The ICC was calculated for one imputed dataset and found an ICC of 0.06, indicating relatively low group similarity within schools, supporting the exclusion of school dummy variables from each model. When reporting results of the impact analyses, the regression coefficient of the treatment variable, effect size, change in R^2 (for continuous outcomes), and odds ratios (for binary outcomes) are presented.

The general linear regression equation used to assess the impact of Excel on student outcomes is as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Baseline\ ELP_i + \beta_2 Baseline\ ELA + \beta_3 Ethnicity_i + \beta_4 SPED_i + \beta_5 Cohort_i + \beta_6 Excel\ 6^{th} + \beta_7 Treatment_i + e_i$$

where Y_i is the student outcome variable; β_0 is the intercept, *Baseline ELP* is standardized baseline ELP scores, *Baseline ELA* is standardized state ELA assessment scores[15], *Ethnicity* is an indicator if a student was Hispanic, *SPED* is an indicator of student special education status, *Cohort* is a set of dummy variables indicating student cohort, *Excel 6th* is an indicator of participation in grade 6 Excel, *Treatment* is the binary treatment variable, and e_i is the error term. All main analyses were weighted using IPTW to examine the ATT. Sensitivity analyses on the primary grade 8 outcomes (i.e., grade 8 ELP scores, grade 8 state ELA scores, and grade 9 reclassification) used ATE weights to examine potential impacts on the overall population.

Analysis of Excel Participation on Student Outcomes

To assess the influence of different amounts of Excel participation on student outcomes, a series of linear and logistic regression analyses were conducted comparing the grade 7 and 8 outcomes of Excel students with different levels of participation. Specifically, the analyses examined how student performance on the primary outcome variables differs for students who participated in Excel during both grade 7 and grade 8, those who participated only in grade 7, and those who participated only in grade 8. Analyses were also conducted to examine how grade 7 outcomes vary for students who participated in Excel during both grade 6 and grade 7, to those who participated only in grade 6, and those who participated only in grade 7.

The dosage analyses used average imputed baseline data across the 20 imputed datasets, rather than pooling an estimated model. As the sample only included Excel students, IPT weights were not applied. The general equation used to assess dosage effects is as follows and includes two dummy variables indicating if a student only participated in Excel in grade 7 or 8, with students who participated in both grades 7 and 8 as the reference group. The same equation was used when assessing the impact of participating in both grades 6 and 7.

$$Y_j = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Baseline\ ELP_i + \beta_2 Baseline\ ELA + \beta_3 Ethnicity_i + \beta_4 SPED_i + \beta_5 Cohort_i + \beta_6 Grade7_i + \beta_7 Grade8_i + e_i$$

$$Y_j = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Baseline\ ELP_i + \beta_2 Baseline\ ELA + \beta_3 Ethnicity_i + \beta_4 SPED_i + \beta_5 Cohort_i + \beta_6 Grade6_i + \beta_7 Grade7_i + e_i$$

Analysis of the Influence of Excel Implementation Fidelity on Student Outcomes

A series of linear and logistic regression analyses were conducted to examine the influence of different levels of Excel implementation on student outcomes. As the analyses only included Excel students, IPT weights were not applied. Because different Excel implementation domains were calculated from different data sources (i.e., educator survey and District Director implementation inventory) that had different sample sizes, a singular indicator of implementation fidelity was not included. Separate regression analyses were conducted for

[15] Baseline formative math scores will be included as a covariate when examining math outcomes.

each calculated implementation variable and for Excel schools' CCI certification ratings. Because of small sample sizes, cohort and grade 6 Excel participation variables were excluded from the fidelity analyses. The equation used to assess the influence of each implementation fidelity variable on student outcomes is as follows:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Baseline\ ELP_i + \beta_2 Baseline\ ELA + \beta_3 Ethnicity_i + \beta_4 SPED_i + \beta_5 FidelityDomain_i + e_i$$

APPENDIX B: DETAILED ANALYSIS RESULTS

This appendix provides additional details on the study findings.

Excel Educator Survey and District Director Implementation Inventory Results

Descriptive statistics for the Excel educator survey and District Director implementation inventory can be found in the AVID Excel – Educator Survey Summary and AVID Excel – District Director Implementation Inventory Summary documents (RMC Research, 2025a; RMC Research, 2025b).

Excel Implementation Fidelity results

The number of educators who completed the educator survey and schools (based on the District Director implementation inventory) that did and did not meet Excel implementation expectations are presented in Exhibit B1.

Exhibit B1. Educator and District Director Reported Levels of Fidelity

Implementation Domain	Did Not Meet Expectations	Met Expectations
Participation in Excel Professional Learning Activities		
Excel teachers and site coordinators participate in expected number of Excel trainings[a]	12	12
Core content teachers and school counselors participate in at least one Academic Language and Literacy training	8	3
Excel teachers receive in-class observation or coaching by AVID Center staff at least once	13	5
Use of Excel Curriculum and Resources		
Excel teacher uses curriculum guides at least weekly	4	14
Excel teacher uses digital planning guides at least weekly	8	10
Excel teacher uses more than 80% of class time on Excel curriculum and strategies	10	7
Excel teacher implements scholar groups at least weekly	5	13
Use of Excel Instructional Strategies		
Excel teacher regularly uses all AVID foundations of instruction strategies[b]	6	12
Excel teacher regularly uses all AVID instructional scaffolds[b]	7	11

Implementation Domain	Did Not Meet Expectations	Met Expectations
Excel teacher regularly uses all AVID classroom routines[b]	10	8
School has an Excel tutor recruitment and retention plan[c]	7	23
Excel tutors are trained using the Excel Elective Tutor Training Module[c]	15	13
AVID Site Team Composition and Functioning		
AVID site team is composed of at least 8 members[c]	19	11
AVID site team frequently focuses on Excel-related topics and collaborates with other educators to support Excel	16	21
AVID site team meets at least once a month[c]	9	20
Excel Student Recruitment Activities		
Excel class is primarily composed of L-TEL students[c]	0	30
School implements at least 6 of 9 recommended student recruitment activities[c]	21	9
School Leadership and Culture of Support		
Excel teacher agrees or strongly agrees to all items about having a school culture and leadership supportive of Excel	10	8
CCI Certification Level		
School has an emerging schoolwide, schoolwide, or schoolwide site of distinction CCI designation.	11	17

Note: CCI is the Secondary Coaching and Certification Instrument. Numbers represent the count of educators or District Directors' schools that do and do not meet implementation expectations.
[a]Analysis accounted for how many years an Excel teacher or site coordinator had been in their position.
[b]Regularly is determined by a response of having used each relevant strategy quite a bit or a lot.
[c]Responses come from the AVID District Director implementation inventory.

The process for determining educator- and school-level implementation fidelity ratings, as well as how original implementation domains were combined to form the final domains used to examine the influence of variations in implementation fidelity on student outcomes are presented in Exhibit B2. Core content teacher and school counselor participation in Academic Language and Literacy trainings, Excel teacher receipt of in-class observations or coaching, AVID site team collaboration, and Excel classes being primarily composed of long-term EL students were excluded from the final implementation fidelity analyses due to lack of variation.

Exhibit B2. Scoring Process to Develop School-Level Excel Implementation Fidelity Ratings Score

Original Implementation Domain	Domain Definition	Individual-Level Educator Scoring	School-Level Scoring	Final Implementation Domain
Participation in Excel Professional Learning Activities	Excel teacher and site coordinator participate in **Excel Elective level 1-3 trainings**	**Meets** = participated in expected # of PL **Partial** = participated in fewer # of PL and/or Path training **Not Meet** = did not participate in any trainings	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	**Participation in Excel Trainings** All Excel teachers and site coordinators in a school participate in the expected number of Excel Elective Level 1-3 trainings
Use of Excel Curriculum and Resources	Excel teacher regularly implements **scholar groups**	**Meets** = used weekly/daily **Partial** = used once or twice/month **Not meet** = Never or almost never/monthly	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	**Implementation of Scholar Groups** All Excel teachers in a school implement scholar groups at least weekly
	Excel teachers regularly use **curriculum guides**	**Meets** = used weekly/daily **Partial** = used once or twice/month **Not meet** = Never or almost never/monthly	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	**Use of Excel Curriculum Resources** All Excel teachers in the school use curriculum guides and digital planning guides at least weekly, and more than 80% of class time on Excel curriculum and strategies
	Excel teachers regularly use **digital planning guides**	**Meets** = used weekly/daily **Partial** = used once or twice/month **Not meet** = Never or almost never/monthly	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	
	Percentage of Excel **class time** spent on Excel curriculum and strategies	**Meets** = more than 80% **Not meet** = 80% or less	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	
Use of Excel Instructional Strategies	Excel teacher regularly uses **foundations of instruction** strategies (5 items)	**Meets** = uses quite a bit/a lot on all 5 items **Not meet** = all other responses	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	**Use of Excel Instructional Strategies** All Excel teachers in a school report using all AVID foundations of instruction strategies, instructional scaffolds, and classroom routines quite a bit or a lot
	Excel teacher regularly uses **instructional scaffolds** (6 items)	**Meets** = uses quite a bit/a lot on all 6 items **Not meet** = all other responses	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	
	Excel teacher regularly uses	**Meets** = uses quite a bit/a lot on all 4 items **Not meet** = all other responses	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	

Original Implementation Domain	Domain Definition	Individual-Level Educator Scoring	School-Level Scoring	Final Implementation Domain
	classroom routines (4 items)			
	School has an Excel **tutor recruitment and retention** plan	**Meets** = tutor recruitment and retention plan in place **Not meet** = Tutor recruitment plan not in place or don't know	**Meets** = tutor recruitment and retention plan in place	**Excel Tutor Recruitment and Training** Schools have a tutor recruitment plan and use Excel tutor training module
	All Excel tutors are trained using the Excel Elective **Tutor Training Module**	**Meets** = tutors trained with Excel Elective Tutor Training Module **Not meet** = not trained with module	**Meets** = tutors trained with Excel Elective Tutor Training Module	
AVID Site Team Composition and Functioning	AVID site **team membership**	**Meets** = site team is composed of 8 or more members **Not meet** = site team is composed of 7 or fewer members	**Meets** = site team is composed of 8 or more members	**AVID Site Team Composition and Functioning** AVID site team is composed of at least 8 members and meets at least once a month
	Frequency of AVID **site team meetings**	**Meets** = site team meets at least monthly **Not meet** = site team meets less than once per month	**Meets** = site team meets at least monthly	
Excel Student Recruitment Activities	School implements recommended Excel s**tudent recruitment** procedures	**Meets** = school use 6 or more (of 9) activities **Note meet** = school uses 5 or fewer activities	**Meets** = school use 6 or more (of 9) activities	**Excel Student Recruitment Activities** School implements at least 6 of 9 recommended student recruitment activities
School Leadership and Culture of Support	School and school **leadership support Excel**	**Meets** = agree/strongly agree on all 6 items **Not meet** = all other responses	**Meets** = all educators in a school meet expectations	**School Leadership and Culture of Support** All Excel teachers in a school agree about having a school culture and leadership supportive of Excel
CCI Certification Level	**CCI rating**	**Meets** = school has a CCI rating of emerging schoolwide or higher **Not meet** = school has a CCI rating below emerging schoolwide	**Meets** = school has a CCI rating of emerging schoolwide or higher	**CCI Certification Level** School has an emerging schoolwide, schoolwide, or schoolwide site of distinction CCI designation

Exhibit B3 presents the number of schools that met each Excel implementation expectation, as well as the number and percentage of school that met each implementation expectation that had high versus low CCI certification ratings.

Exhibit B3. School-level fidelity indicators

Implementation Domain	Number of Schools Meeting Implementation Expectations		
	All Excel Schools	Low CCI Schools	High CCI Schools
Participation in Excel Trainings	6 of 16 (37.5)	2 of 5 (40.0)	3 of 10 (30.0)
Use of Excel Curriculum Resources	5 of 15 (33.3)	1 of 5 (20.0)	4 of 9 (44.4)
Implementation of Scholar Groups	10 of 15 (66.7)	3 of 5 (60.0)	6 of 9 (66.7)
Use of Excel Instructional Strategies	5 of 15 (33.3)	2 of 5 (40.0)	2 of 9 (22.2)
Excel Tutor Recruitment and Training	13 of 30 (43.3)	3 of 11 (27.3)	8 of 17 (47.1)
AVID Site Team Composition and Functioning	11 of 30 (36.7)	0 of 11 (0.0)	9 of 17 (52.9)
Excel Student Recruitment Activities	9 of 30 (30.0)	2 of 11 (18.2)	7 of 17 (41.2)
School Support of Excel	7 of 15 (46.7)	3 of 5 (60.0)	3 of 9 (33.3)

Note: CCI is the Secondary Coaching and Certification Instrument. Numbers in parentheses are percentages. Two Excel schools were not included in analyses that involved CCI ratings due to lack of data.

Student Impact Results

Exhibits B4 and B5 present program impacts for students who participated in both grade 7 and grade 8 Excel.

Exhibit B4. Impacts on Continuous Outcomes for Students who Participated in Both Grade 7 and 8 Excel

Outcome	Excel Mean (*n*)	Comparison Mean (*n*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Change in R^2	Hedges' *g*
Grade 8					
Standardized ELP Scores	0.38 (572)	0.28 (1,739)	0.10* (0.04)	0.00	0.11
Standardized ELP Scores[a]	0.34 (673)	0.28 (1,739)	0.06 (0.04)	0.00	0.06
Standardized State ELA Scores	-0.28 (634)	-0.34 (1,893)	0.06 (0.03)	0.00	0.07
Standardized State ELA Scores[a]	-0.31 (773)	-0.34 (1,893)	0.03 (0.03)	0.00	0.03
Standardized Formative Math Scores	-0.46 (369)	-0.42 (947)	-0.04 (0.05)	0.00	-0.04
Standardized State Math Scores[a]	-0.27 (557)	-0.34 (1,282)	0.07 (0.06)	0.00	0.08
Grade 9					
Number of Rigorous Courses	1.16 (332)	1.34 (1,013)	-0.19 (0.13)	0.00	-0.11
Number of Rigorous Courses[a]	1.18 (411)	1.34 (1,013)	-0.17 (0.12)	0.00	-0.10
Grade 10					
Number of Rigorous Courses	1.25 (156)	1.38 (397)	-0.13 (0.19)	0.00	-0.07
Number of Rigorous Courses[a]	1.34 (202)	1.38 (397)	-0.04 (0.18)	0.00	-0.02

Note. Means are estimated. All means and differences are weighted using the average treatment on the treated effect so that outcomes represent the impact of the treatment when compared to similar students.

[a] Sensitivity analyses were conducted in which students who were enrolled in the grade 7 Excel class and enrolled in the grade 8 AVID elective were included in the sample.

*$p < .05$.

Exhibit B5. Impacts on Binary Outcomes for Students who Participated in Both Grade 7 and 8 Excel

Outcome	Excel Percentage (*n*)	Comparison Percentage (*n*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Odds ratio	Cox's Index
Grade 9					
Reclassification	21.8 (353)	12.8 (996)	0.86*** (0.21)	2.36	0.39
Reclassification[a]	20.6 (422)	12.8 (996)	0.79*** (0.20)	2.21	0.35
Enrollment in AVID Elective	44.0 (332)	31.4 (895)	0.68*** (0.15)	1.98	0.33
Enrollment in AVID Elective[a]	43.8 (411)	31.4 (895)	0.68*** (0.14)	1.97	0.32
Enrollment in at least one Course of Rigor	51.2 (332)	64.4 (895)	-0.34* (0.16)	0.71	-0.33
Enrollment in at least one Course of Rigor[a]	52.3 (411)	64.4 (895)	-0.28[+] (0.15)	0.76	-0.30
Grade 10					
Enrollment in AVID Elective	29.5 (156)	26.8 (354)	0.04 (0.24)	1.04	0.08
Enrollment in AVID Elective[a]	32.2 (202)	26.8 (354)	0.24 (0.21)	1.27	0.16
Enrollment in at least one Course of Rigor	59.6 (156)	63.4 (353)	-0.03 (0.23)	0.97	-0.10
Enrollment in at least one Course of Rigor[a]	61.4 (202)	63.4 (353)	0.09 (0.22)	1.09	-0.05

Note. All differences are weighted using the average treatment on the treated effect so that outcomes represent the impact of the treatment when compared to similar students.

[a] Sensitivity analyses were conducted in which students who were enrolled in the grade 7 Excel class and enrolled in the grade 8 AVID elective were included in the sample

[+]p = .056. *p < .05. ***p < .001.

Exhibits B6 and B7 present program impacts for students who participated in grade 7 Excel.

Exhibit B6. Continuous Outcomes for Grade 7 Excel Participants

Outcome	Excel Mean (*N*)	Comparison Mean (*n*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Change in R^2	Hedges' *g*
Grade 7					
Standardized ELP Scores	0.13 (1,409)	0.14 (2,042)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.00	-0.01
Standardized State ELA Scores	-0.34 (1,344)	-0.32 (2,020)	-0.02 (0.02)	0.00	-0.03
Grade 8					
Number of Courses of Rigor	0.74 (1,117)	1.04 (1,772)	-0.30*** (0.05)	0.01	-0.23

Note. The treatment sample included grade 7 Excel students. Means are estimated. All means and differences are weighted using the average treatment on the treated effect so that outcomes represent the impact of the treatment when compared to similar students.

***p < .001.

Exhibit B7. Dichotomous Outcomes for Grade 7 Excel Participants

	14.4 (1,246)	11.9 (1,874)	0.41** (0.13)	1.51	0.13
	13.2 (1,117)	10.3 (1,640)	0.26* (0.13)	1.30	0.17
	49.1 (1,117)	54.7 (1,639)	-0.13 (0.09)	0.87	-0.14

Note. The treatment sample included grade 7 Excel students. All differences are weighted using the average treatment on the treated effect so that outcomes represent the impact of the treatment when compared to similar students.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Exhibit B8 presents the results of sensitivity analyses examining program impacts which include students who participated in grade 7 Excel and enrolled in the grade 8 AVID elective.

Exhibit B8. Impact Sensitivity Analyses

Outcome	Excel Average (*n*)	Comparison Average (*n*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Effect size
Grade 8 [a]				
Standardized ELP Scores (*M*)	0.38 (571)	0.28 (1,739)	0.10* (0.04)	0.11
Standardized State ELA Scores (*M*)	-0.30 (634)	-0.34 (1,893)	0.04 (0.04)	0.04
Grade 9 [b]				
Reclassification (%)	21.4 (740)	12.6 (2,130)	0.87*** (0.15)	0.39

Note. The primary treatment sample included grade 7 Excel students enrolled in Excel in grade 8. Means and percentages are estimated. All differences are weighted using the average treatment effect so that outcomes represent the impact of the treatment on the overall study population.

[a] Effect sizes are represented by Hedges' g.

[b] Effect sizes are represented by Cox's Index.

*p < .05. ***p < .001.

Influence of Number of Years of Excel Participation on Student Outcomes

Analyses were conducted to examine the impact of participating in Excel for one or more years. Separate analyses were conducted to examine the impact of participating in both grade 6 and 7 compared to participating in grade 6 only or grade 7 only; and the impact of participating in both grades 7 and 8 compared to participating in grade 7 only or grade 8 only.

Exhibit B9. Impact of Years of Participation on Grade 6 and 7 Excel Students

Outcome	Excel in Grades 6 and 7	Excel in Grade 6 Only			Excel in Grade 7 Only		
	Mean (N)	**Mean (N)**	**Regression Coefficient (S.E.)**	**Effect Size**	**Mean (N)**	**Regression Coefficient (S.E.)**	**Effect Size**
Grade 7 [a]							
Standardized ELP Scores	0.39 (347)	0.42 (89)	0.03 (0.07)	-0.04	0.40 (502)	0.01 (0.04)	-0.01
Standardized State ELA Scores	-0.14 (388)	-0.02 (154)	0.12* (0.05)	-0.15	-0.14 (518)	0.00 (0.04)	0.00
Grade 8 [b]							
Reclassification (%)	12.8 (358)	25.2 (92)	0.96** (0.31)	-0.36	21.8 (445)	0.65** (0.21)	-0.24
Enrollment in AVID Elective (%)	12.5 (300)	16.4 (143)	1.26*** (0.14)	-0.20	23.9 (402)	1.50*** (0.32)	-0.46

Note. Means and percentages are estimated. Students in Excel in grades 6 and 7 were the referent group. Regression coefficients represent impacts compared to students who participated in Excel in both grades 6 and 7.

[a] Effect sizes are represented by Hedges' *g*.

[b] Effect sizes are represented by Cox's Index.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Exhibit B10. Impact of Years of Participation on Grade 7 and 8 Excel Students

Outcome	Excel in Grades 7 and 8	Excel in Grade 7 Only			Excel in Grade 8 Only		
	Mean (*N*)	Mean (*N*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Effect Size	Mean (*N*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Effect Size
Grade 8 [a]							
Standardized ELP Scores	0.51 (584)	0.31 (324)	-0.20*** (0.05)	0.24	0.39 (428)	-0.12* (0.05)	0.14
Standardized State ELA Scores	-0.20 (658)	-0.39 (419)	-0.08+ (0.04)	0.10	-0.52 (467)	-0.13** (0.04)	0.15
Grade 9 [b]							
Reclassification	19.8 (366)	17.6 (177)	-0.19 (0.28)	0.28	21.2 (262)	0.07 (0.24)	-0.04

Note. Means and percentages are estimated. Students in Excel in grades 7 and 8 were the referent group. Regression coefficients represent impacts compared to students who participated in Excel in both grades 7 and 8.

[a] Effect sizes are represented by Hedges' *g*.

[b] Effect sizes are represented by Cox's Index.

+p = .058. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Exhibit B11. Impact of Years of Participation on Grade 6, 7, and 8 Excel Students

Outcome	Excel in Grades 7 and 8 Only	Excel in Grades 6, 7, and 8		
	Mean (*N*)	Mean (*N*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Effect Size
Grade 8 [a]				
Standardized ELP Scores	0.54 (379)	0.31 (205)	-0.24*** (0.06)	-0.31
Grade 9 [b]				
Reclassification	20.2 (248)	24.6 (118)	0.29 (0.25)	0.15

Note. Means and percentages are estimated. Regression coefficients represent impacts compared to students who participated in Excel in grades 7 and 8.

[a] Effect sizes are represented by Hedges' *g*.

[b] Effect sizes are represented by Cox's Index.

***p < .001.

Relationship between Excel Implementation Fidelity and Student Outcomes

Exhibits B12 and B13 present the relationship of Excel implementation variations to student outcomes.

Exhibit B12. Relationship between Excel Implementation and Continuous Student Outcomes

Outcome	Mean of Low Fidelity Students (*N*)	Mean of High Fidelity Students (*N*)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Change in R^2	Hedges' *g*
Grade 8 ELP					
Participation in Excel Trainings	.624 (237)	.416 (56)	-0.208^{+} (.106)	0.011	-0.29
Use of Excel curriculum resources	.473 (218)	.870 (66)	.398*** (.096)	0.050	0.57
Implementation of scholar groups	.596 (105)	.546 179	-.050 (.084)	0.001	-0.07
Use of Excel instructional strategies	.522 (232)	.759 (52)	.237* (.113)	0.013	0.33
Excel tutor recruitment and training	.510 (333)	.496 (239)	-.013 (.057)	0.00	-0.02
AVID site team composition and functioning	.416 (347)	.640 (225)	.224*** (.057)	0.020	0.29
Excel student recruitment activities	.557 (392)	.389 (180)	-.168** (.061)	0.010	-0.22
School support of Excel	.480 (191)	.739 (93)	.258** (.088)	0.025	0.36
CCI certification rating	.365 (205)	.570 (352)	.205* (.058)	0.016	0.27
Grade 8 State ELA					
Participation in Excel Trainings	-.108 (247)	-.036 (100)	0.072 (.077)	0.002	0.09
Use of Excel curriculum resources	-.177 (238)	.089 (100)	.266*** (.079)	0.020	0.33
Implementation of scholar groups	-.069 (108)	-.111 (230)	-.042 (.075)	0.001	-0.05

Outcome	Fidelity Students (*N*)	Fidelity Students (*N*)	Coefficient (S.E.)	in R^2	Hedges' *g*
Use of Excel instructional strategies	-.050 (258)	-.253 (80)	-.203* (.091)	0.009	-0.27
Excel tutor recruitment and training	-.352 (372)	.004 (274)	.356*** (.047)	0.047	0.49
AVID site team composition and functioning	-.271 (390)	-.094 (256)	.177*** (.048)	0.012	0.23
Excel student recruitment activities	-.342 (423)	.067 (223)	0.41*** (.047)	0.061	0.55
School support of Excel	-.013 (237)	-.297 (101)	-.284***	0.023	-0.36
CCI certification rating	-.417 (206)	-.095 (423)	.322*** (.050)	0.036	0.42

Note: $^{+}$p = .051, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Exhibit B13. Relationship between Excel Implementation and Binary Student Outcomes

Outcome	Mean of Low Fidelity Students (N)	Mean of High Fidelity Students (N)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Odds ratio	Cox's Index
Grade 9 EL Reclassification					
Participation in Excel Trainings	.311 (103)	.243 (45)	-.362 (.426)	0.696	-0.206
Use of Excel curriculum resources	.233 (113)	.525 (26)	1.607** (.593)	4.986	0.778
Implementation of scholar groups	.001 (23)	.345 (116)	2.476** (.895)	11.891	3.777
Use of Excel instructional strategies	.237 (103)	.434 (36)	1.030* (.516)	2.801	0.545
Excel tutor recruitment and training	.181 (249)	.282 (113)	.618* .270	1.856	0.348
AVID site team composition and functioning	.184 (244)	.272 118	.564* (.280)	1.758	0.305
Excel student recruitment activities	.163 (261)	.342 (101)	1.062** (.279)	2.891	0.594
School support of Excel	.283 (110)	.307 (29)	.138 (.533)	1.148	0.070

Outcome	Mean of Low Fidelity Students (N)	Mean of High Fidelity Students (N)	Regression Coefficient (S.E.)	Odds ratio	Cox's Index
CCI certification rating	0.109 (153)	.289 (209	1.338** (.323)	3.811	0.726
Taking any courses of rigor in grade 9					
Participation in Excel Trainings	.508 (85)	.892 (48)	2.136*** (.524)	8.468	1.253
Use of Excel curriculum resources	.642 (99)	.803 (28)	.766 (.573)	2.152	0.495
Implementation of scholar groups	.790 (9)	.669 (118)	-.721 (.930)	0.486	-0.374
Use of Excel instructional strategies	.623 (92)	.820 (35)	1.042 (.557)	2.837	0.611
Excel tutor recruitment and training	.632 (230)	.310 (112)	-1.366*** (.253)	0.255	-0.811
AVID site team composition and functioning	.646 (218)	.316 (124)	-1.401*** (.248)	0.246	-0.831
Excel student recruitment activities	.615 (262)	.237 (80)	-1.626*** (.294)	0.197	-0.99
School support of Excel	.703 (102)	.574 (25)	-.649 (.576)	0.522	-0.339
CCI certification rating	.530 (129)	.524 (213)	-.026 (.232)	0.974	-0.015

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Exhibit B14. Summary of Fidelity Findings

	Grade 8 ELP	Grade 8 State ELA	Grade 9 EL Reclassification	Enrollment in at Least One Course of Rigor in Grade 9
Participation in Excel Trainings	NS (-0.29)	NS (0.09)	NS (-0.206)	Pos (1.253)
Use of Excel curriculum resources	Pos (0.57)	Pos (0.33)	Pos (0.778)	NS (0.495)
Implementation of scholar groups	NS (-0.07)	NS (-0.05)	Pos (3.777)	NS (-0.374)

	Grade 8 ELP	Grade 8 State ELA	Grade 9 EL Reclassification	Enrollment in at Least One Course of Rigor in Grade 9
Use of Excel instructional strategies	Pos (0.33)	Neg (-0.27)	Pos (0.545)	NS (0.611)
Excel tutor recruitment and training	NS (-0.02)	Pos (0.49)	Pos (.348)	Neg (-0.811)
AVID site team composition and functioning	Pos (0.29)	Pos (0.23)	Pos (0.305)	Neg (-0.831)
Excel student recruitment activities	Neg (-0.22)	Pos (0.55)	Pos (0.594)	Neg (-0.99)
School support of Excel	Pos (0.36)	Neg (-0.36)	NS (0.07)	NS (-0.339)
CCI certification rating	Pos (0.27)	Pos (0.42)	Pos (0.726)	NS (-0.015)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are Hedges' *g* effect sizes for grade 8 ELP and grade 8 state ELA, and Cox Index effect sizes for grade 9 EL reclassification and enrollment in at least one course of rigor in grade 9 . NS = not statistically significant. Pos = statistically significant and positive relationship. Neg = statistically significant and negative relationship.

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