



**ADVANCEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION**

**Welcome to Mr McGuffee's AVID Class!**

You have been chosen by AVID, and you have chosen AVID! The AVID elective is designed to equip, support, and inspire you as you pursue your college dream. By joining AVID, you have become a member of a worldwide family with more than 450,000 members. AVID is a college readiness system that started in San Diego more than 30 years ago. ***The mission of AVID is to "close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society."*** This year you are embarking on a journey that will lead you to the steps of a university, through the halls, and across the stage, diploma in hand. It is not enough to simply make it into college....you need to arrive there "college ready." ***Welcome to AVID.***

**Course Description**

**The AVID class has two goals:** the first, to prepare students for college and university entrance requirements, and the second, to ready students for the rigors of college and university work. In other words, we want to help you jump through the hoops necessary for college entrance and help you to become the kind of student who will excel once you get there. Part of the way we accomplish these goals in the 7th grade is by blow-torching certain academic habits throughout the school year. **Habits are the key to all success.**

This course offers a challenging curriculum that exposes students to college-level reading and writing assignments in an attempt to develop students' academic skills. In addition to academic skill development, you will learn about the college/university system, conduct research projects, and interact with college tutors.

It is important to note that good grades, a competitive GPA, and maintaining an organized binder is only part of the AVID commitment; AVID students are also encouraged to get involved in school leadership, athletics, performing arts, clubs, and other extra-curricular activities. Getting involved in the school and local community will shape you into responsible participants and leaders in a democratic society--another goal of the AVID class.



**During this school year you will grow in your...**

- ability to read, comprehend, discuss, and write about challenging texts.
- ability to organize and plan for success.
- use of writing as a tool for learning.
- ability to engage in structured discussions (Socratic Seminar, Philosophical Chairs, etc.) and to make positive contributions to those discussions.
- ability to use the AVID Focused Note-taking system (i.e. Cornell Notes) as a tool for learning
- knowledge of the college/university system and the road you must travel to be "college ready."
- ability to ask questions to clarify points of confusion and collaborate with classmates and tutors to give and receive help using the AVID Tutorial model.
- Work collaboratively on assignments and projects.

| A Typical Week In AVID   |           |  |                         |   |
|--|-----------|--|-------------------------|---|
| Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday                | Friday  |
| Projects, AVID curriculum, academic skill-building, critical reading and writing | Tutorials | Projects, AVID curriculum, academic skill-building, critical reading and writing | Tutorials, Binder Check | Agenda Check, Team-building, Guest Speakers, Structured Discussions, College Research |

There are certain activities you should expect to participate in consistently throughout the year. They are designed to support you in your classes and help you achieve success. They are:

1. **Tutorials** -- Tutorials are a collaborative group activity where you will follow a process to give and receive help for your core content classes. Expect to participate in Tutorials every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the year. College tutors will be available to support your learning throughout the school year.
2. **Binder Checks** -- Every other week your binder will be graded by the college tutors using a rubric that evaluates the Cornell Notes/Learning Logs from your classes, completion of agenda, and overall binder organization. If you don't get your binder graded on the day of binder checks, it is your responsibility to have it graded by the tutors or Mr. McGuffee on the next tutorial day...otherwise you will receive a zero in the grade book.
3. **Socratic Seminar/Structured Discussions** -- Structured discussions such as Socratic Seminar and Philosophical Chairs will be utilized throughout the year to help you learn to interact with texts you are reading and the ideas they bring to the surface. You will learn to dig in to an author's meaning, listen for understanding to your classmates, and express your own ideas with clarity.
4. **Cornell Notes** -- You will learn to take and use Cornell Notes as a tool for recording and interacting with various texts and lecture material. By the end of the school year, you are expected to develop your own "style" while maintaining the Cornell/Focused Note-taking system. Think of it like the Cornell system is the





batter's box in softball -- you have to be in the batter's box to hit the ball, but players develop a stance and holding the bat that is unique to them and helps them accomplish the goal of hitting the ball.

- Critical Reading of Texts** -- You will develop the ability to read, discuss, and write about challenging texts in order to prepare you for the rigors of academic environments. In 7th grade, AVID students will learn to mark texts, account for key terms and claims made by authors in expository texts, and use "Pausing to Connect" and "Writing in the Margins" as tools for unlocking the meaning of challenging texts.



### Planned Course of Study This Year in AVID

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>First Quarter</b><br>AVID Training Camp, Signing Ceremony and Potluck, Goals | <b>Third Quarter</b><br>Book Project, AVID Write-Off Competition, College Project and College Fair |
| <b>Second Quarter</b><br>The Me Project, The Others Project                     | <b>Fourth Quarter</b><br>"Life's Greatest Lessons" Project, Awards Night                           |

*\* Academic Essentials Will Be Worked On Throughout The Year*

## Course Policies and Expectations

### Required Materials

*The following materials are required for the class and should be brought with you every day:*



- Sturdy, 2+ inch 3-ring binder** -- This is not just for AVID....it will be used for all of your classes. Your binder is the key to success and should be brought to school with you everyday and kept neat and organized. Your 3-ring binder should be 2-3 inches and include dividers (5-6 total) to separate your different classes. You will be learning how to organize for all of your classes and your binder will be graded frequently. Do not ask others to carry or hold your binder for you...it is YOUR responsibility.
- Spiral Notebook** -- 120 pgs minimum, college-ruled paper or unlined. Your spiral notebook is where all class notes will be kept and will be graded throughout the school year. You will have your spiral notebook with you every day.
- Student Handbook/Agenda** -- You will receive an agenda on or near the first day of school. At the beginning of each class you will take it out and write down the day's activity and any homework assignments you have for that evening. If there is no homework assigned, write HW: none.
- Zipper Pouch or Box for Supplies** -- This will be kept in your binder or backpack. You should have at least 2 pencils and two pens available at all times so you do not have to ask a classmate or teacher to borrow.



10. **Colored Pencils, Pens, Highlighters (*Recommended, not required*)** -- You will be producing a lot of art in class this year. I have colored pencils and markers in class, but I highly recommend you have your own and bring them with you everyday.

---

### **Participation**

Participation is key to success. An active participant shares his or her ideas with their partner(s), group, and/or class, completes assignments on time, works collaboratively in groups, and contributes to the class as a whole. You should also participate in school activities such as clubs or after school sports. A student who gets involved in his or her school experiences greater success in academic classes, learns valuable life lessons, and typically develops great friendships.

### **Student Handbook/Agenda**

You will receive a student handbook on or near the first day of school. At the beginning of each class you will write down the day's activity (agenda) **AND** any homework assignments you have for that evening. If there is no homework, you should write "**HW: none.**"

### **Organization**

Students who are organized turn in assignments more regularly, forget to do things less often, are more successful, and live with much less stress than disorganized students. Middle School can be very stressful at times....do yourself a favor by being organized.

### **Class work**

You will be expected to class work on time. Work that is not completed in class must be completed at home and brought to the next class meeting. There are penalties for turning in late work, so get in the habit of completing assignments on time.

### **Homework**

You will have homework throughout the week. Typically homework will consist of preparing for Tutorials, organizing your binder, and refining/studying your Cornell Notes. Occasionally, assignments started but not finished in class will be given as homework. As the following day's work will usually depend on/build on your completion of the homework assigned, it is essential that you complete all assigned homework.

### **What Do I Do When I'm Absent?**

It is your responsibility to find what we did in class on days you miss. I recommend having a "buddy" in class that you can call to get any notes or explanation you need. Please come see me before or after class to pick up any handouts you need or to get a copy of the notes you missed. Assignment due-dates are extended as many days as you were absent (ex. miss 2 days, due-date extended two days).

### **What Do I Do If I Don't Understand An Assignment or Activity?**

#### ***Three things:***

1. Please come and ask me to explain it to you again. You can even email me at [john\\_mcguffee@cjud.net](mailto:john_mcguffee@cjud.net) if you get stuck on an assignment at home. I check my email each night and will get right back to you.
2. Get to know at least one person in class that you can talk to about schoolwork. Get their phone number and/or email address so you can contact them when you get stuck.
3. Sign up to get some after school tutoring in my class. I can even tutor you in subjects I don't teach.

### Late Work

Any assignment turned in late will automatically be penalized one letter grade. You have **2 weeks** after the due date to turn in a late assignment. After that, it will not be accepted for credit.

### Revising and Resubmitting Work

I place a high value on students revising and resubmitting assignments until they have demonstrated their best work. You have one week from the time you receive your graded work and tests back to revise and resubmit for a chance to earn a higher score. Most assignments can be revised and resubmitted; if an assignment cannot be revised, I will tell you. Fixing and turning in work again does not guarantee you will earn more points -- you must demonstrate greater mastery of the material to earn more points. The main assignment students find themselves needing to fix are binder checks. If you earn a grade lower than a C on a binder check, you will be required to come after school to fix the issues and get it re-graded.

### AVID E.R. (Emergency Room)

To ensure your success, you may be required to attend after-school tutoring. Throughout the quarter, your teachers and I will provide you with grade reports to keep you updated about your progress in class. If you are earning a D or F, you will be required to attend after-school tutoring until your grade rises to at least a B-. Your parents will be contacted to inform them of your mandatory tutoring.

## Grading Policy

### How Do You Earn Grades in This Class?

I believe grades are earned by students rather than given by a teacher, and that they should be a true reflection of a student's learning and academic skill development. Your grade is based on an average of the points earned on all assignments. I place a high value on students revising and resubmitting assignments until they have demonstrated their best work. You have one week from the time your graded assignment is returned to you to revise and resubmit assignments and tests. After that, the grade stands.



Most of your points in AVID are earned through the weekly Tutorials and bi-weekly Binder Checks. There are also on-going projects and activities that you will be working in throughout the year. If you wish to challenge a grade on an assignment, make arrangements to speak to me about the issue.

*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."*  
--Aristotle

*"Growth is not an automatic process."*  
--John Maxwell

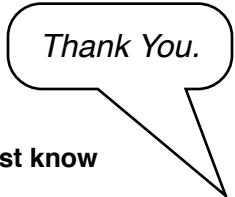
*"It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants. The question is, what are we busy about?"*  
--H.D. Thoreau

| Grading Categories  | General Rubric For Work  |
|---|--|
| <p>No special weighting affects your grade in AVID. Your grade is calculated as a percentages which is found by dividing your total points earned by the total number of points possible. Assignments include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>*Required Readings</b></li> <li><b>*Essays</b></li> <li><b>*Tutorials</b></li> <li><b>*Binder Checks</b></li> <li><b>*Tests &amp; Quizzes</b></li> <li><b>*Projects</b></li> <li><b>*In-Class Activities</b></li> <li><b>*Homework</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>A-Level Work = Advanced:</b> Work is outstanding, displaying obvious time and thought in its creation, mastery of content and/or skill, and is neat and well-organized. Work displays creativity and originality and contains minimal errors in spelling, grammar, and content.</p> <p><b>B-Level Work = Proficient:</b> Work is very good and has much of what is an "A" grade, but is not as neat, contains more errors in content and/or the skill we are working on. Demonstrates creativity and above-average knowledge of the subject matter. Is carefully created.</p> <p><b>C-Level Work = Basic:</b> Work is fine/average/acceptable. It does not display as much time or effort but achieved the minimum requirement for the assignment without doing more or less. Contains errors in grammar, spelling, detail or skill mastery.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Grading Scale</b></p> <p><b>100-90% = A</b></p> <p><b>89-80% = B</b></p> <p><b>79-70% = C</b></p> <p><b>69-60% = D</b></p> <p><b>59-00% = F</b></p>   | <p><b>D-Level Work = Below Basic:</b> Work is poor quality and may be incomplete of requirements, messy, full of errors, and shows little attention to detail or mastery of the skill.</p> <p><b>F-Level Work = Far Below Basic:</b> Work is of very low quality, is halfway completed or less, and shows little or know effort and very little attention to detail.</p> <p><i>Keep in mind that work that is turned in on time can be revised and resubmitted within one week of the day your assignment is returned to you.</i></p>  |

## Class Guidelines and Procedures

**Here is a brief description of what I expect from you in class.** Following rules is like living in a lawful society. We follow laws in society in order to maintain an orderly world, one that is safe and secure. We may not always agree with the rules or laws, but we must do our best to uphold them whenever possible. The same is true for this class. The are rules for this class that we all must follow. You do not have to agree with the rules, but you must adhere to them. In this class you are expected to follow all school-wide rules (i.e. no gum, no cell-phone use, no personal music devices, and dress code regulations, to name a few). There are also some guidelines that are specific to this class.

1. During discussions, respect other student's comments, opinions, and ideas. **Listen to what others say and don't interrupt.**
2. **Do not hold your hand in the air** while another student is speaking/responding. If you are not called on, put your hand down, look at and listen to the person who is speaking, then put your hand in the air when they have finished.
3. Always say **"thank you"** when I give you something. If you do not say it within 3 seconds after receiving the item, I will take it back. There is no excuse for not showing appreciation.
4. When we read together in class, you must follow along. **If I call on you to read, you must know exactly where we are and begin reading immediately.**
5. At times throughout the year I will give you rewards for good behavior, academic performance, and other acts worthy of praise. **If you ever ask me for a reward, however, it will not be given.** It is rude to ask if you



are getting something for good behavior. You should be good and try your best because you are trying to better yourself, not because you are anticipating a reward. If you ask, no one will be given anything.

6. **Make eye contact.** When someone is speaking, keep your eyes on them. If someone makes a comment, turn and face them.
7. Homework will be turned in "each day" by every student. **Late work is penalized** one letter grade and will no longer be accepted beyond two weeks of the due date.
8. You will make every effort to be **as organized as possible**.
9. When you are with a **substitute teacher** you will obey the same rules that you follow when I am with you. If I find out anyone was unruly, **the consequences are going to be severe** when I return.
10. Speak at **appropriate times** in an **appropriate way**.
11. You may bring a bottle of **water** or **drink** with a **sealable lid** into class. Do not ask me to get a drink while I am teaching a lesson. Be sure to throw away empty bottles in the appropriate bin in class.
12. Do not, under any circumstances, ever, never, ever bring or eat **Doritos** into my classroom.
13. Quickly **learn the names of your classmates** and other teachers/school personnel on campus.
14. **Be respectful** to all living and non-living things in the room. Never write on the tables and always take care of the class supplies.
15. **Be prepared.** Come to class each day with your binder, student handbook, and all other required materials. Do not allow another student to "hold your stuff for you." They are not your *burro*.
16. **Be creative** by thinking of new ways to solve problems and demonstrate learning.
17. **Accept that you are going to make mistakes.** Learn from them and move on.
18. If you need to sharpen your pencil, simply **hold your pencil in the air** and wait for me to make eye contact with you. I will nod at you and then you can get up to sharpen it.
19. If you need to use the **restroom**, raise your hand and ask permission. You will sign out, take the bathroom pass, and quickly use the restroom. You will not be allowed to use the restroom the first or last 15 minutes of class. Please reserve restroom privileges for emergencies only.
20. Work will be turned in to the appropriate hanging file on the wall in the back of the classroom. Be sure to write your name on all work that is turned in. **Write your name, date, and class period on all assignments.**
21. When you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. Please arrange to talk to me to pick up any missing work.
22. Grade reports will be given every 2-3 weeks. If the grade report shows that you are missing an assignment you have already turned in and received back, all you have to do is bring me the graded assignment and I will make it right. It is very important to keep all returned work until the end of each grading period.
23. The first thing you will do when you enter class is **copy the day's agenda** in your student handbook. Write everything you see on the board and indicate whether or not you have homework. Then complete your Do Now warmup activity in the appropriate place. **I should not have to ask you to write your agenda or complete your Do Now....it will become automatic.**
24. Get used to working with lots of different people. The seating chart changes a lot in this class and there are many different ways I group students to work on assignments. If you are having a problem with another student in class, please talk to me in private as soon as possible.
25. When working in a group on an assignment, structured discussion, or project, **you must contribute to the work.** It is unacceptable to stand by and watch others do all the work. There are no "free rides" when it comes to a collaborative assignment. If you are not contributing in a meaningful way, you will do the assignment on your own.
26. **Do not begin packing up until I instruct you to do.** In this class we work "bell to bell." You will be given a chance to organize your materials in your binder at the end of class.
27. If you do not understand an assignment or the work we are doing in class you should **a)** come to me so I can explain it again or in another way, **b)** email me to ask a question, **c)** get to know at least one person in class that call talk to or call if you get stuck, **d)** sign up to get some after-school tutoring in my class.
28. **Take pride in the work you do!** The work you do is a direct reflection of who you are. It shows me what you know and know how to do. All work must be complete and legible. Assignments that are crumbled or destroyed in any way will not receive credit.
29. **Cheating will not be tolerated.** If you copy someone's work or ideas you will receive a zero for that assignment, a detention, and I will call your parents/guardians. The same applies if





you knowingly allow someone to copy from your work.  
 30. If you find yourself stumbling, overwhelmed, or generally stressed out, that's a signal to make an appointment to talk with me or your counselor. We will offer support and help you get through it.



| <b>Class Rules<br/>(Cliff's Notes Version)</b>   | <b>Consequences Include</b>  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be on-time and prepared.</li> <li>2. Be respectful to all living and non-living things.</li> <li>3. Be willing to take responsible risks.</li> <li>4. Be mindful.</li> <li>5. Be organized.</li> <li>6. Engage fully in all class activities.</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Verbal Warning</li> <li>*Detention and/or Parent Contact</li> <li>*Period Isolation (and parent contact)</li> <li>*Referral to Office</li> </ul> | <p><i>We expect excellence from our AVID students. It is a privilege to be in AVID at Colton Middle School, not a right. We are working with you to help you achieve your college dream, investing a lot of time, money, and energy into helping you be successful now and well-prepared for the future. As your AVID teacher, I am concerned with your achievement in ALL your classes. If you are failing or are a behavior problem, I will organize a parent conference to discuss ways of getting you back on track. I may also require you to attend after school tutoring until your grades improve.</i></p> <p><b>Consistently poor behavior and/or academic performance will result in a parent meeting and possible removal from AVID.</b></p> |

*A Little Info About Your Teacher...*

This is my 15th year teaching at Colton Middle School and I've had a blast educating the young people in this community. I attended California Baptist University in Riverside, where I earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a minor in History. I also earned my teaching credential from the same university. I met my beautiful wife at CMS and we have been married for 9 years. We have two little girls, Sophia and Gianna. I love to teach, read, watch movies, drink coffee, ride my beach cruiser with my darling, play soccer and basketball, travel, discuss ideas, and play with my two girls.

**Contact Me:** My prep-time this year is during **Period 5** this year. Feel free to call me during my prep or before and after school. Please leave a message if I am unable to answer your call and I will do my best to contact you within 24 hours.

**Room #23      909.580.3647**  
**john\_mcguffee@cjusd.net**







## Acknowledgment of Receipt of Syllabus, Parent Contact Information, and Permission to Watch Videos

### Permission to Watch Movies

Occasionally, while teaching a unit, I will show a movie or portion of a movie that is based on the theme or main idea we are examining. Clips are rarely longer than 5 minutes and are used to increase visual literacy for the topic being studied. Many of our students are visual learners and I have found that using movies and clips can be a powerful tool for helping students understand and interact with the curriculum. It is District policy to obtain parent/guardian approval before showing any movie that does not have a G rating. The following are **examples** of movies/clips I will typically show during the course of the school year to help illustrate or develop an idea/theme:

- 1) Remember the Titans (PG): I show the training camp scene early in the year to introduce the AVID Training Camp unit and we watch the entire movie in the 4th quarter in preparation for an essay about relational change.
- 2) Goal! The Dream Begins (PG13): This is a motivational movie about a young man who overcomes tremendous odds while he pursues his dream of becoming a professional soccer player.
- 3) Various clips depicting life on a college campus during college project.

I rarely show a complete movie in class; mostly just clips to illustrate a point. I do my best to exercise good judgement when selecting movies/clips and believe these go a long way towards helping students understand themes we are studying. I also make it a point to edit out objectionable material while we are watching. Please indicate your choice by writing your initials on the appropriate line. If you indicate "no," your student will be excused from the class during the videos/movie clips and given an alternate assignment. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding movies or clips shown in class.

**YES**, my student may watch movies/clips from movies with a rating higher than G.

**NO**, my student may not watch movies/clips from movies whose rating is higher than G.

### Parent/Guardian Contact Information

*Please complete all applicable sections.*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

| I Will...   | You (The Student) Will...   | Your Parent(s) Will...  |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Equip you with the skills you need to be successful in class.</li> <li>* Ensure this class is academically rigorous.</li> <li>* Support your academic needs and curiosities.</li> <li>* Communicate with both you and your parents concerning your progress.</li> <li>* Provide meaningful learning experiences.</li> <li>* Build your character.</li> <li>* Encourage you and hold you accountable for progress and behavior.</li> <li>* Create an atmosphere in class that promotes learning and the development of "family."</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Actively participate in class and complete assignments thoroughly and promptly.</li> <li>* Attend class daily, arriving on time.</li> <li>* Maintain at least a "C" grade in this class</li> <li>* Keep a well-organized 3-ring binder with a separate section for each class and bring your binder and other supplies daily.</li> <li>* Maintain satisfactory citizenship in all classes.</li> <li>* Take advantage of opportunities to redo work for mastery of content and skills.</li> <li>* Attend after-school tutoring when necessary.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* checking and signing your student handbook/agenda weekly.</li> <li>* signing and returning all progress reports.</li> <li>* Attending parent meetings and conferences.</li> <li>* Encouraging and supporting your academic progress.</li> <li>* Providing a quiet place for you to do homework.</li> </ul> |
| <p>_____<br/>Teacher Signature</p>  | <p>_____<br/>Student Signature</p>  | <p>_____<br/>Parent/Guardian Signature</p>  |