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AVID film to feature McNary

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

McNary won't get its shot to become an AVID demonstration school until 2020.

But educators and students from all over the country will see AVID techniques at work at the Keizer high school much sooner.

Jennifer Nagle, staff developer and writer of AVID's new curriculum on focused note-taking, was at McNary with two cameramen on Dec. 12-15 to interview students and teachers and film their work in the classroom.

"They spoke to why it matters and they spoke to one of the things they've learned by the time they're a junior or senior is that you have to learn how to make note-taking your own," Nagle said. "Learn what works for you and you have to think about how am I going to use these notes before you start taking them."

One student said focused note-taking made him feel like he had superpowers and when he took really good notes in his hard AP or math classes, he felt like he could do anything.

Making note-taking your own is one of the subjects of a new AVID book Nagle has been working on for two and half years. Through interviews, Nagle discovered that students wanted more flexibility in their note-taking.

"At the time AVID was very much focused on Cornell Notes and that being the only real way that we were teaching students to take notes," she said. "Cornell Notes are a wonderful way to take notes but there's other ways. You can take notes in two column or three column or if you're a super visual person, sketch notes or different diagrams or mind maps. There's lot of ways to take notes."

Nagle came to McNary in October for a professional learning session around the revised note-taking and found teachers wanted to dig deeper and become early adopters of the new process.

"This work lined up with what they were already working towards and their own initiative of taking AVID school-wide and having note-taking really being a focus already on the campus," Nagle said. "It's not like I was asking them to throw out something they were doing and try something different. They were just ready to run."

Heidi Tavares, AVID coordinator at McNary, said teachers welcomed the flexibility.

"We had some staff with Cornell Notes (saying) that it was hard for them to do that and they kept arguing, rightfully so, that there's other formats that we can use but AVID was so Cornell Notes so that's what we did," Tavares said.

"It was almost this huge sigh of relief from the staff when Jenn came up and said



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
ABOVE: Jennifer Nagle, of AVID, interviews McNary student Erik Ambos Wittner. BELOW: AVID cameramen film Mandy Elder's elective class on Thursday, Dec. 14.



here are all the options and the flexibility."

For the film, Nagle interviewed nine AVID students, Keith Cardoza, Arik Dela, Deja Jamie, Irik Ambos Wittner, Gina Munguia-Martinez, Amner Arellano, Ramon Garcia, Jena Burrus and Boston Smith, over two days at McNary.

"I wanted students talking about note-taking and explaining the process to students as opposed to it being educators talking to students," Nagle said. "They're getting to talk about the different phases of note-taking, their tips and tricks, and

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then we'll put that all together into a video montage with the footage of what it looks like in



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley
McNary students Jon Chavarria and Brittney Morriss get instruction from teacher Mandy Elder while being filmed for an AVID video to be released this spring.

classrooms as they're talking."

Nagle filmed in four classrooms: Jordan Keeker's Algebra II, Dylan Bartholomew's Physical Science, Mandy Elder's AVID elective and David Holcomb's AP Human Geography.

Instead of the normal class time, each period lasted two hours to allow for filming. While all of the questions and answers came from the teachers and students, some had to be repeated to allow for the cameramen to move. Some students had a case of the giggles.

"There was a question in a science class, we had him ask it four times," Tavares said.

Wanting the video to stay fresh, the students also had to think about what they were wearing. Dec. 12-15 just happened to be spirit week at the school. Dec. 13 was flannel shirt day.

"There was just enough to make it feel very Pacific Northwest," Nagle said.

Although Dec. 14 was ugly sweater day, there weren't any in Elder's class as most of the students changed into their McNary blue "bold enough" AVID t-shirts.

Nagle is going to an AVID middle school in San Diego in February to finish the filming. Her book is scheduled to

be released in the spring. The video will be rolled out in the summer and be used in professional development training for 50,000 teachers in every AVID school in the country.

"We were so excited when Jenn came and we were able to share the chapter on focused notes with the entire staff," Tavares said. "We're the first ones to see this. We're the first school to get to pilot this."

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