

Tutoring for College Readiness: SAT Prep for AVID Students

Online Tutoring at Silverado High School, California

FEV Tutor has a multi-year partnership with Victor Valley Union High School District (VVUHS), a rural district located in the High Desert of California between Los Angeles and Las Vegas. FEV has partnered with multiple schools in the district to develop and implement customized virtual tutoring programs aligned to each school's unique needs and academic initiatives. In this case study, we are profiling our partnership with Silverado High School (SHS) where we tutored multiple student cohorts to support SHS's goal of growing a college going culture for all students, no matter their socioeconomic background.

The Program

Silverado High School has a high population of students that are potential first-generation college students in their families and who may not have a high school graduate at home. One of the challenges SHS Principal, Heather Conkle, identified to FEV Tutor when first introduced to the concept of live, 1-to-1 virtual tutoring was that the school needed to focus not only on increasing their High School graduation rate and decreasing the dropout rate, but the school was also looking to increase their college-going culture. With this initiative in mind, introducing FEV's targeted tutoring services for SAT Prep to students enrolled in the AVID program seemed like a natural fit.

As part of the AVID program, all students must take the SAT and ACT Exam. To prepare students for these high stakes exams, SHS curriculum focuses on standardized test prep in the Junior year. In the 2015-2016 academic year FEV's online tutoring was introduced to enhance the school's SAT prep program. The school concentrated on the SAT because a strong SAT score increases a student's chances of college entrance.

The nine-week online tutoring program launched in the Spring Semester with participating students taking a full-length 3-hour computer-based practice exam. The results from this practice exam were shared directly with AVID teachers and SHS administrators. FEV instructional specialists designed Personalized Tutoring Plans for each student based on isolating standards and skills prioritized on the SAT. Personalized Tutoring Plans identified students' strengths and weaknesses and recommended the number of Math and/or English sessions students should take each week to maximize growth on the SAT.

Students met with their tutors twice a week during their AVID classes to work on standard-based lessons identified on their Personalized Tutoring Plans. Each tutoring session was differentiated to meet individual student's needs and followed an "I Do, We Do, You Do" Gradual Release of Responsibility model to guide students to concept mastery. Lessons covered standards using SAT style questions and tutors taught test-specific strategies for solving and working through the SAT test.



Silverado High School

Victor Valley Union High School District
Victorville, CA

Demographics

Title I Urban School

2,400 Students

85% Free & Reduced Lunch

81% Graduation Rate

56% Hispanic

27% African American

10% Caucasian



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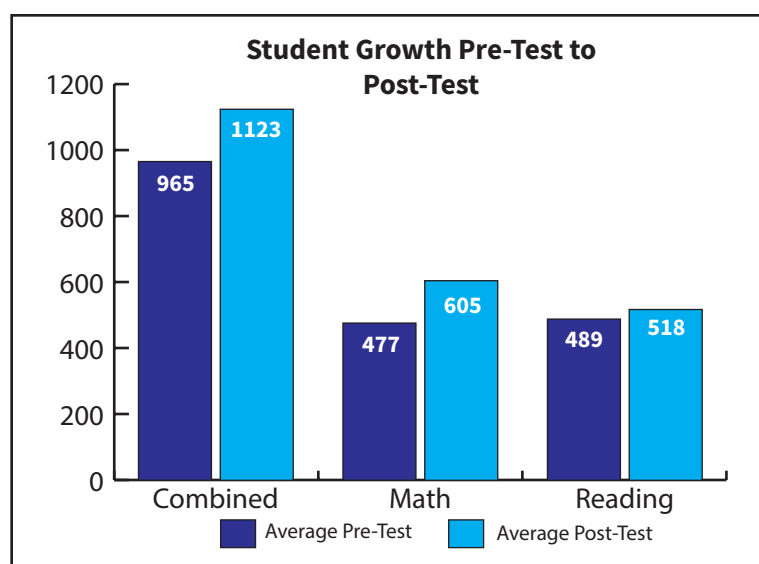
Tutoring sessions concluded with an Exit Ticket to provide a real-time measure of students' understanding of concepts. Exit Ticket data, along with student feedback, tutor commentary, and participation points earned were shared with SHS teachers and administrators on a weekly basis to keep everyone informed of student progress leading up to the SAT Exam.

The program concluded with another full-length practice exam a few weeks prior to the students' Spring SAT Test date. This post-test served as a way to measure student growth directly related to tutoring support and to identify areas still in need of improvement leading up to the exam.

Results

Silverado High School students and teachers enjoyed the one-on-one support that students received from FEV Tutor. Many students reflected on the fact that they felt more confident heading into their SAT Exam as they had already seen these types of questions on both practice exams and worked through similar problems with their tutors during their tutoring sessions. SHS teachers and administrators were also pleased at the individualization and differentiation that the one-to-one online tutoring program offered. Teachers were able to facilitate the program while each student got the exact support they needed. Students could build foundational skills while asking as many questions as they needed to master each concept, which can be difficult to accomplish in the traditional classroom.

Overall, students saw a 158 Point Gain from their combined SAT pre-test to post-test. Student gains were especially marked in Math, with an average **128 Point Gain**. Most students worked primarily on Math with their 1-on-1 tutors based on lower scores on the Math pre-test. Due to the success of the program in the 2015-2016 Academic Year, upcoming juniors requested that SHS continue offering FEV Tutor's Virtual Tutoring in Academic Year 2016-2017.



"You can't beat 1-to-1 [tutoring]. Even if I had a specific SAT tutoring program set up for my students, it would be me and 31 kids and there is no way I could give each of them the attention that they need...On Mondays and Fridays all I have to do is facilitate, my students are working."

– Susan Williams, SHS AVID Coordinator



"Before FEV Tutor I was very scared and nervous to take that SAT, but after those sessions I felt confident going in that Saturday Morning."

– Mateo Lopez, SHS AVID Student



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