



Advancement Via Individual Determination

NEWS RELEASE

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AVID Center

CONTACT: Liz Morse, AVID Center
Steven Baratte, AVID Center
(858) 380-4800
lmorse@avid.org

Former Florida Education Commissioner Dr. Eric J. Smith Joins AVID Center Board of Directors

SAN DIEGO – Dr. Eric J. Smith, former Florida Education Commissioner and currently serving as an adviser to the George W. Bush Institute’s [Advancing Accountability](#) program, was recently elected to the [AVID Center Board of Directors](#).

“We are honored to have Eric Smith join our Board and look forward to drawing upon his wealth of experience,” said AVID CEO Sandy Husk. “As AVID continues to impact thousands of educators and students, Eric’s knowledge and expertise will be a great addition to our organization.”

Dr. Smith is a graduate of Colorado State University, received a master’s degree from the University of Central Florida in Orlando, and obtained his doctorate from the University of Florida in Gainesville. He began his career in Florida as a classroom teacher, advancing to several administrative positions in Florida school districts and eventually serving 16 years as a superintendent in Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. Dr. Smith also served as Senior Vice President for College Readiness at the College Board and is a member emeritus of Chiefs for Change.

Dr. Smith, a reform-minded education leader, made significant changes as Florida’s Commissioner of Education, passing legislation that focused on retaining high-quality teachers, high school grading formulas to better prepare students for college and careers, and new graduation requirements. His commitment to high standards for all students aligns directly with AVID’s mission to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society.

“AVID provides students an opportunity to build skills that will open doors for them and increase their potential success,” Smith stated. “It is an honor to be able to support the AVID educators and help expand the program to more students through service on the AVID Board.”

Dr. Smith joins 11 other Board members who provide their expertise and direction for the growth of AVID. AVID Center Board members include: Board Chairman **Melendy Lovett**, Senior Vice

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President, Texas Instruments; **Clarence Fields**, AVID board member; **Dave Gordon**, Superintendent of Schools, Sacramento County Office of Education; **Todd Gutschow**, Fair Isaac and Company, Retired; **Sandy Husk**, AVID Center CEO; **Gene I. Maeroff**, Senior Fellow, Hechinger Institute at Teachers College, Columbia University; **Lionel “Skip” Meno**, Professor of Educational Leadership and Special Assistant to the President for P–12 Education, San Diego State University; **Dr. Monte Moses**, Educational Consultant; **Mary Catherine Swanson**, AVID Founder; **Aracelia Vila**, Retired Executive, Schering-Plough; and **Dr. Stephen Weber**, President Emeritus, San Diego State University. **Dr. Carol E. Malloy**, Professor Emerita, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, recently retired from the AVID Board. Dr. Smith’s initial Board term is three years. After that, he will be eligible to be reelected for two-year terms.

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ABOUT AVID

AVID is a non-profit, proven college readiness system that closes the achievement gap. Today, AVID is implemented in approximately 4,900 schools in 45 states, the District of Columbia, and 16 countries/territories and impacts more than 700,000 students in grades K–12 and in 41 postsecondary institutions. The AVID College Readiness System transforms a school’s academic culture to increase the number of students who enroll in four-year colleges and succeed in higher education and training.

For more information, visit www.avid.org.