

EDITORIAL

Heaton makes the grade

PUEBLO'S HEATON Middle School is on track to become one of only 177 AVID National Demonstration Schools. The acronym stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, based on strategies for student performance in writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading. The goal is to prepare students for success in high school, college and beyond.

Heaton has been a certified AVID school for the past three years and now is up for national demonstration school recognition once members of the AVID Center and AVID Western Division visit and survey the middle school in March.

Not only that, Heaton joined Carlile and South Park elementary schools in moving up to the state's highest rating of "Performance," a step up from "Improvement." The school board also recognized the following for maintaining "Performance" status: Belmont, Goodnight, Heritage, Morton and Sunset elementary schools, Pueblo School for Arts and Sci-

ences and Corwin and Fountain International magnet schools.

"Last year we went into 'Performance' for the first time ever in Heaton's history, and I believe that AVID was the reason behind that," Heaton Principal Jayme Cardinal-Stangier said.

"The AVID program has helped me realize that I am destined to be the first person in my family to graduate from college," said student Asia Thompson. "AVID is not just a program to me. It's the road to my successful career. I don't know where I would be without it."

AVID motivated eighth-grader Tanis Chavez to rise from a grade point average of 2.5 in sixth grade to 3.7 in seventh grade and now 4.0, at the top of the scale. She has a lofty goal of going to Stanford University and becoming an OB-GYN doctor.

Heaton and the other high-ranking schools have shown the ability to lift student performance — enviable examples in the Pueblo City Schools.