DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 357 410 EA 024 285

AUTHOR O'Reilly, Joseph M.
TITLE Did the Kids Win or Lose? The Impact of "No Pass/No Play" Rule on Student Achievement.
INSTITUTION Mesa Public Schools, AZ. Dept. of Research and Evaluation.
PUB DATE Jan 92
NOTE 60p.; Most pages have faint type on the right side.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Academic Standards; Dropout Rate; *Extracurricular Activities; *Grades (Scholastic); Grading; Minority Groups; Public Schools; Secondary Education; Secondary School Students; State Action; *State Standards; Student Participation
IDENTIFIERS *Mesa Public Schools AZ; *No Pass No Play Rules

ABSTRACT

A study examined the outcomes of the No Pass/No Play Arizona Board of Education rule that requires pupils to pass all of their classes in order to participate in extracurricular activities. Student records of all 7th through 12th grade extracurricular activity participants in the Mesa Unified School District (Arizona) were reviewed. The data indicated that GPAs (grade point averages) increased somewhat; the percent ineligible fell the first year after implementation but increased slightly the second year; teachers did not appear to give easier grades; students did not take easier classes or fewer classes; the dropout rate was low, but within the ranges experienced in prior years. In addition there appeared to be no clear disparate effect on one or all minority groups and there were differences in ineligibility rates by ethnic groups with the rates of African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans being much higher than other groups. The data suggests that the rule was at best a very modest short term success; however, this success was at the cost of having a disproportional impact on minorities, possibly having negative long term consequences, and costing school personnel a great deal of time and effort to monitor and report. These initial results indicate that the costs of this rule may not outweigh the benefits. (CW)

DID THE KIDS WIN OR LOSE?

THE IMPACT OF "NO PASS/NO PLAY" RULE ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & EVALUATION

DID THE KIDS WIN OR LOSE?

THE IMPACT OF "NO PASS/NO PLAY" RULE ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

BY
DR. JOSEPH M. O'REILLY

DR. JAMES K. ZAHARIS
SUPERINTENDENT

MR. DAVE EAGLEBURGER
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

DR. JAMES S. DEGRACIE
DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
JANUARY 1992

TR 53

Did the kids win or lose? The impact of "no pass/no play" rule on student achievement

In January 1989 the Arizona Board of Education approved a rule effective in the Fall of 1989 requiring pupils to pass all of their classes and maintain sufficient progress toward graduation (i.e., take five classes) in order to participate in extracurricular activities. This rule, often called the "No Pass/No Play Rule," also required prior notification of doing failing work and the provision of tutoring or support services for students who fail or are at-risk of failing.

When the rule was passed it was applauded by some and attacked by others. Proponents praised the message it sent to students that academics are most important and they liked the "slight but fitting nod toward excellence in education" (*Phoenix Gazette*, 1/25/89). Opponents decried the rule as an attack on athletics, a way to increase dropouts, and as an attack on minorities.

The research needed to address these claims is mixed and somewhat limited (See Appendix A for a fuller review of research). In Austin (TX) Schools the negative impact of no pass/no play was not evidenced in course enrollments or overall dropout rates and students in general appeared to be staying in school longer and failing fewer courses (Lygon, 1989). However, students who might have stayed in school to participate in varsity sports appear to be dropping out at a higher rate. In Los Angeles the regulation was credited with increasing student motivation in academics, but there were concerns about student's loss of access to activities, the difficulty in providing support services to ineligible students, the large proportion (25%) of the students desiring to participate in

activities that can be affected by such a policy, and the amount of clerical work required by the policy (Slater, 1987).

In contrast to Austin, Oak Park (MI) Schools found that ineligibility did not improve academic achievement but it did lead to the school dropping sports and other problems for the athletic teams (Peterson, 1986).

These conflicting findings may be due to the many different standards used to define eligibility to participate. For example, although California has a state law defining the standard for participation as a 2.0 GPA, 69% of school districts have added 1 or more additional requirements such as no Fs, limited absences, and citizenship requirements (Slater, 1987). Also, districts vary in the stringency with which they enforce these regulations resulting in a wide range of ineligibility rates.

Since the available research is limited and shows mixed results the likely impacts of such a rule in Arizona generally or Mesa specifically cannot be predicted with any certainty. However, our best estimate, based on the experience of Austin, Los Angeles, and San Juan School Districts which had rules similar to the proposed Arizona regulation, is that MPS may experience:

- A lower rate of F's among all students.
- An unknown change in GPA's, although the limited available evidence suggests there will be no increase.
- No change in the number of "hard" (i.e., honors) courses taken by students.
- A slight increase in the number of extracurricular participants dropping out of school.

- A marginally positive impact overall.
- Some students will be negatively impacted.

These expected outcomes and the claims made by the rule's proponents and opponents were translated into predictions and then empirically tested to determine the actual impact of the rule in Arizona.

METHODOLOGY

All seventh through twelfth graders in the Mesa Unified School District were included in this study. Participants were identified by activity sponsors and included all sports, bands, theater groups, forensics, singing groups, chess and ROTC groups. If a students was participating during any of the quarters then they were considered participants throughout the year for analysis purposes. Most students were participants for two or more quarters. Activities that were not covered by AIA rules (e.g., history club) and generally were non-competitive were not included in participants because the state reporting requirements did not include them and because of the paperwork burden it would put on sponsors. Ineligible students were defined as those in grades 7-12 having one or more failing grade and/or those non-seniors taking fewer than five courses.

Other data were taken from existing district databases. Data elements included ethnicity, gender, GPA, course enrollment, and course grades.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The No Pass/No Play rule generated many claims and counter claims about it's impact. These claims can be translated into the following testable predictions:

Prediction 1: Student GPAs will increase due to the rule.
Prediction 2: The rule will result in fewer students becoming ineligible (i.e., failing classes and/or making unsatisfactory academic progress).
Prediction 3: Teachers will change their grading patterns to minimize the effects of the NPNP rule.
Prediction 4: Students will take less challenging courses to avoid the possibility of getting a failing grade.
Prediction 5: The NPNP rule will increase dropout rates, especially for participants.
Prediction 6: Students will be less likely to take six or more classes and risk failing in them.
Prediction 7: The NPNP rule will have a disparate effect on different racial groups.

This section is organized by prediction and the data are examined to see if they support or refute each prediction.

"The intent of the proposal is to emphasize that academics come before athletics."

--Karin Kirksey Zander, Chair
Arizona Board of Education
Arizona Republic, 11/29/88

Prediction 1: Student GPAs will increase due to the rule.

Looking at overall averages, GPAs did increase over the prior year (Figure 1). This is a continuation of a steady trend, but the increase was slightly more pronounced in the first year of the rule, than in prior years and it was more pronounced for boys than girls.

Prediction 1: Student GPAs will increase due to the rule.

FIGURE 1

GPA BY QUARTER MALE VERSUS FEMALE 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91

It appears, therefore, that the increase in GPAs may have been due partly to the rule, but was also at least partly due to something like creeping grade inflation or consistently better student performance, because this trend began long before the No Pass/No Play rule. It is not possible to determine if the GPAs went up slightly more than in 1989 and 1990 because of the rule or some other factor.

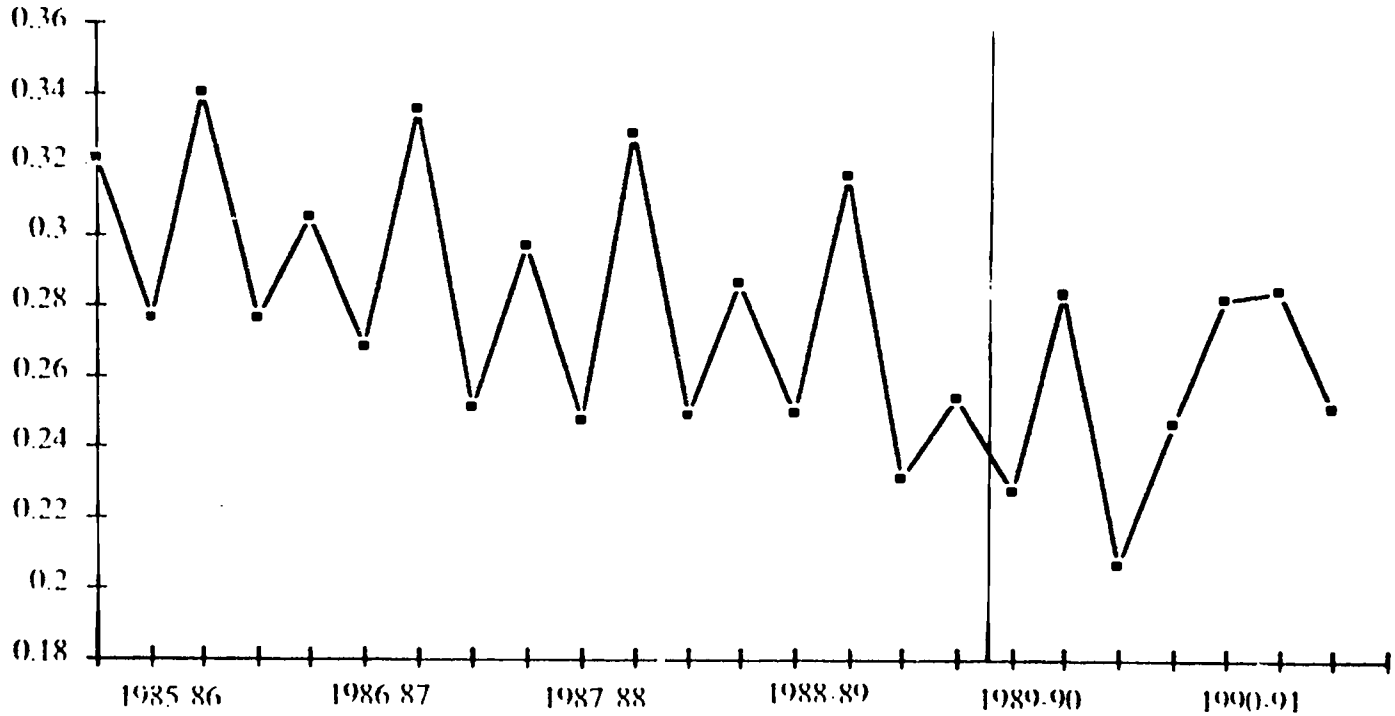
Prediction 2: The rule will result in fewer students becoming ineligible (i.e., failing classes and/or making unsatisfactory academic progress).

Once again, the data support this prediction but it also suggests that other factors may be contributing to the decline. The consistent yearly pattern for the percent ineligible is a high first quarter, a decline second quarter, a peak in third quarter and a decline again fourth quarter (Figure 2). Over the past five years the trend has been towards smaller percentages of students being ineligible, with a sharper drop during 1989-90, the first year of the NPNP rule. For example, 3rd quarter percentages fell from 34 percent in 1986, to 33.6 (-.4) percent in 1987, to 32.9 percent in 1988 (-.7), to 31.7 percent in 1989 (-1.2), to 28.4 percent in 1990 (-3.3). However, in 1990-91 the percent ineligible increased slightly, reaching 28.7% in the third quarter. These data suggest that the ineligibility rate did fall after the rule was implemented. However, the rule was not solely responsible for the overall trend. The trend of prior years toward lower numbers of ineligible students. Also, after five years of steadily declining rates, the rates stayed stable or increased in 1990-91. This trend bears watching because if the increases continue, it may indicate an implementation effect rather than an impact by the rule per se.

Prediction 2: The rule will result in fewer students becoming ineligible (i.e., failing classes and/or making unsatisfactory academic progress)

FIGURE 2

PERCENT INELIGIBLE 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



"Some slick districts might use their remaining autonomy over grades to "dumb down" their standards."

Phoenix Gazette Editorial, 1/25/89

Prediction 3: Teachers will change their grading patterns to minimize the effects of the NPNP rule.

Fewer failing grades could be the result of improved student performance or an effort by teachers to give fewer failing grades so that students can participate. In fact, it was predicted by some that the rule would result in "pressure on teachers to doctor grades." As noted earlier, there has been a slight increase in GPAs and fewer F's (i.e., fewer students ineligible) Is this due to grade inflation or better performance?

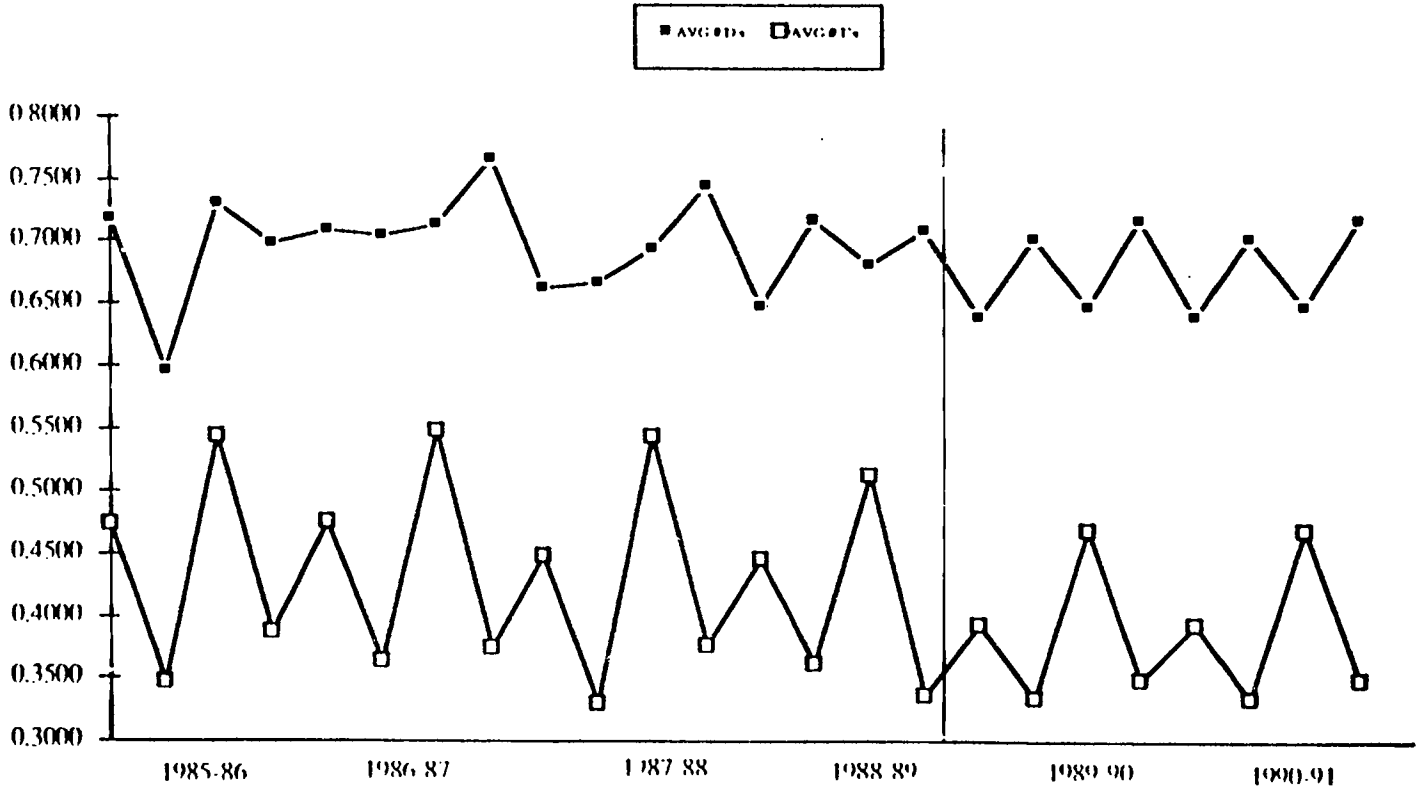
One indication of grade inflation due to the rule would be if the average number of F's fell and the number of D's increased. That is, if this prediction is true, teachers would give more D's and fewer F's for poor performance so that fewer students would be ineligible. If there is grade inflation due to the rule, this is where it is most likely to be seen because the rule mandates no failures, not a minimum GPA. There appeared to be no gnificant change in the number of D's and the average number of F's has actually declined since the rule was implemented (Figure 3). This is the opposite of this "grade inflation" prediction.

It should be noted, however, that among ineligible students the number of D's, and to a lesser extent the number of F's, have increased. As mentioned earlier, the number of ineligible students has declined. It is possible that the remaining ineligible students are the poorest performing students and thus one would expect more D's and F's.

Prediction 3: Teachers will change their grading practices to minimize the effects of the rule.

FIGURE 3

AVERAGE NUMBER D'S & F'S FROM 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



"I can see where it would force kids to quit taking any tough classes. They'll take all rum-dumb classes in order to get through and compete."

--Jess Parker, Coach
Mountain View High School
Phoenix Gazette, 2/3/89

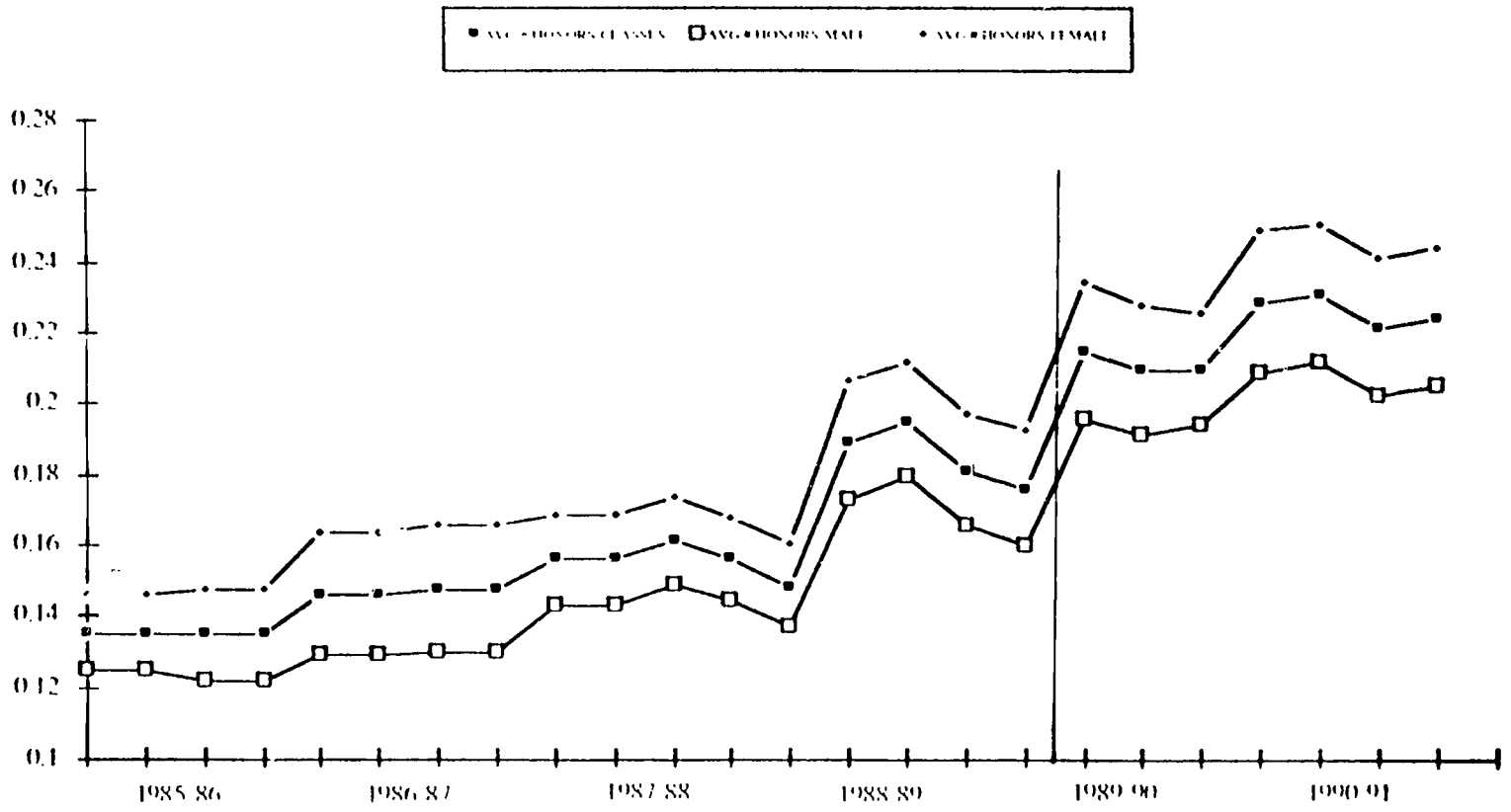
Prediction 4: Students will take less challenging courses to avoid the possibility of getting a failing grade.

Honors courses are typically the most challenging, and so enrollment in these classes was used to test this prediction. In 1989-90 the average number of honors classes taken per student was at the highest rate in five years. The rates in 1990-91 were even higher (Figure 4). Even students declared ineligible were taking more honors classes than they had in prior years and participants were not scared away from these rigorous classes as the percentage of participants taking honors classes was almost twice the rate of the student body.

It is possible that no effect was seen in the honors classes because the brightest students are not in danger of failing. That is, they are more likely to be affected by a "No A/No Play" rule than a "No Pass/No Play rule. Perhaps this trend only will be seen in the classes taken by average and below average students.

To examine this possibility, trends in high school math class enrollments were analyzed. Enrollments in basic math classes actually fell during the first two semesters of the NPNP rule (Figure 5). However a new intermediate level class (pre-algebra) opened at the same time as the rule was instituted and enrollments in the intermediate classes (math quad & pre-algebra) increased. If we combine the basic and intermediate classes we see a high enrollment, only slightly below the levels seen in the prior semesters.

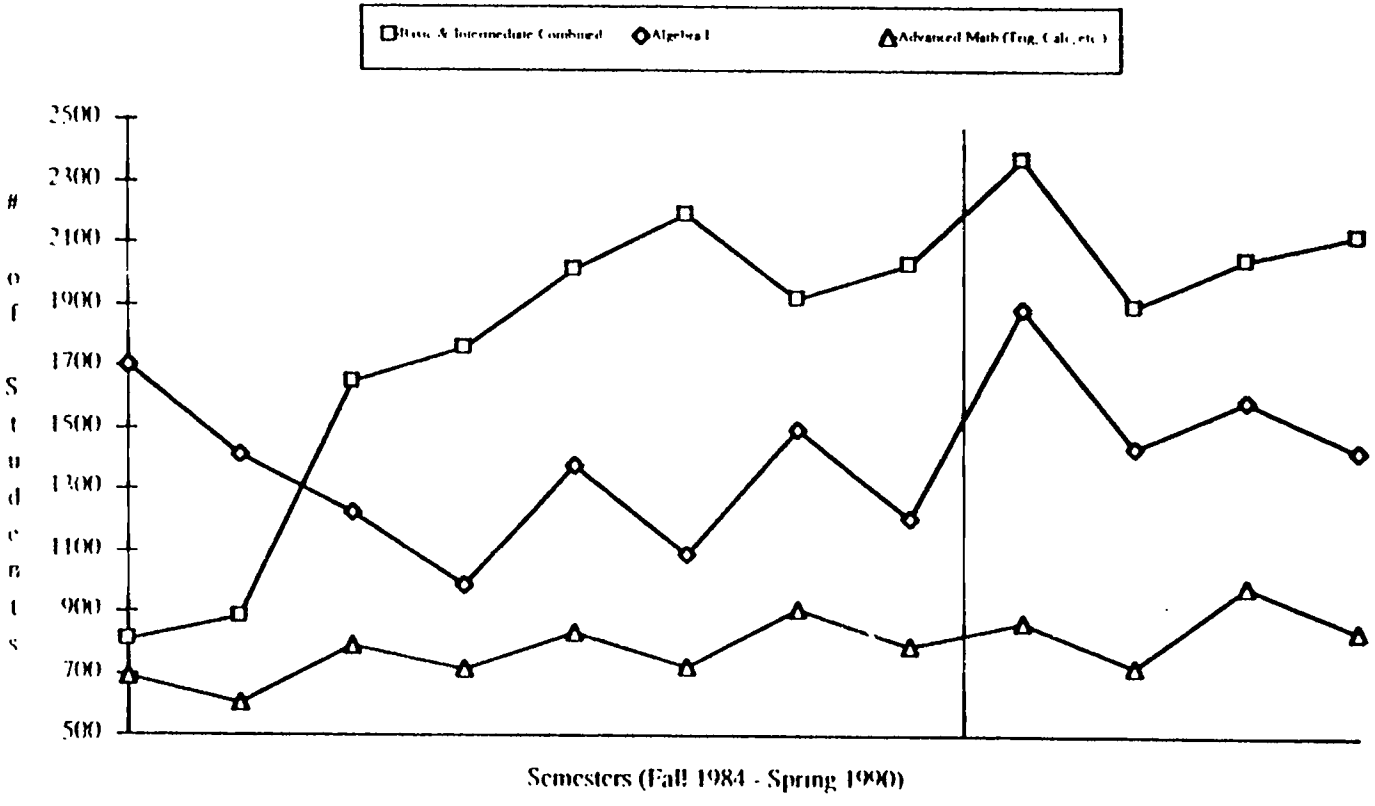
FIGURE 4
NUMBER HONORS CLASSES BY QUARTER FOR 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



Prediction 5: Students will be less likely to take more than 5 classes.

FIGURE 5

DISTRICT MATH ENROLLMENT TRENDS



Looking at more challenging math courses, Algebra I classes were at very high enrollments. They were down somewhat from the year prior to the rules implementation, but fall 1988 was an anomaly with about 10 percent more of the total student body taking Math classes than normal. Advanced Math classes were up somewhat to a record high, continuing a trend over the past six years.

It should be noted that the percentage of the student body enrolled in Math classes in 1989-90 was slightly higher than the comparable semester in the prior two years prior to the rule except for Fall, 1988 which was abnormally high. Thus, the increases in enrollment are not due simply to growth in the district population because similar or higher percentages of students were taking math classes in 1989/90 as in similar years.

In summary, after the No Pass/No Play rule advanced Math class enrollments increased, basic Math class enrollment fell and combined basic and intermediate enrollments declined very slightly. This is contrary to what we would expect if students were trying to take easier courses. Thus, the NPNP rule did not appear to have a significant impact on the "dumping down" of course enrollment trends, at least in math.

"Participation keeps the kids involved in going to school so they can play. For some, if you take that away they'll be out of school and on the streets.""

Jerry Loper, Coach
Westwood High School
Phoenix Gazette, 2/3/89

Prediction 5: The NPNP rule will increase dropout rates, especially for participants.

Overall, the dropout rate increased somewhat, from 6.7 percent to 6.9 percent in 1989-90 and 7.2 percent in 1990-91, but it was still equal or below the rates of 6 out of 7 of the years prior to the rules implementation (Figure 6). Looking at just comprehensive junior and senior highs, we see a similar trend.

The only major increase in dropout rates appears to be from special schools for behavior problem students, special education students, pregnant teens, etc. The rates rose 3.1% over the prior 1988-89 to 32.2%. This is the highest rate in 7 years. Since the special schools do not have activities that are subject to the NPNP rule, it is not likely that this rule had a significant impact on students' dropout decisions.

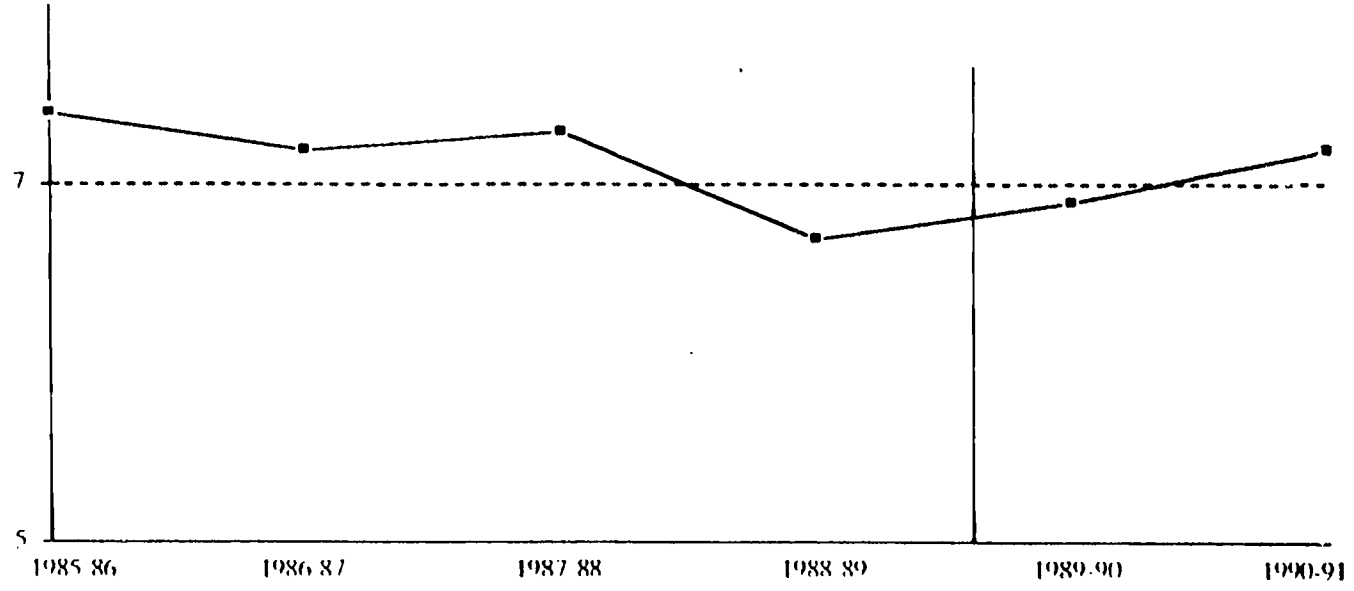
Although we only have 1989-90 data on participants, their dropout rate was very low -- only 0.8 percent or 49 out of 6409 participants dropped out. The dropout rates of minority participants were also fairly low -- 1.7 percent for Hispanics, 1.7 percent for African-Americans, 0.9 percent for Asians, 2.7 percent for Native Americans, and 0.7 percent for Whites (Figure 7).

It appears then, that the No Pass rule did not appear to increase dropout rates overall, contrary to the predictions of many such as Coach Parker, who said, "If you want kids to drop out of school, this is a good way to do it." (*Phoenix Gazette*, 2/3/89). The only schools that experienced a

Prediction 6: Dropout rates will increase, especially for participants

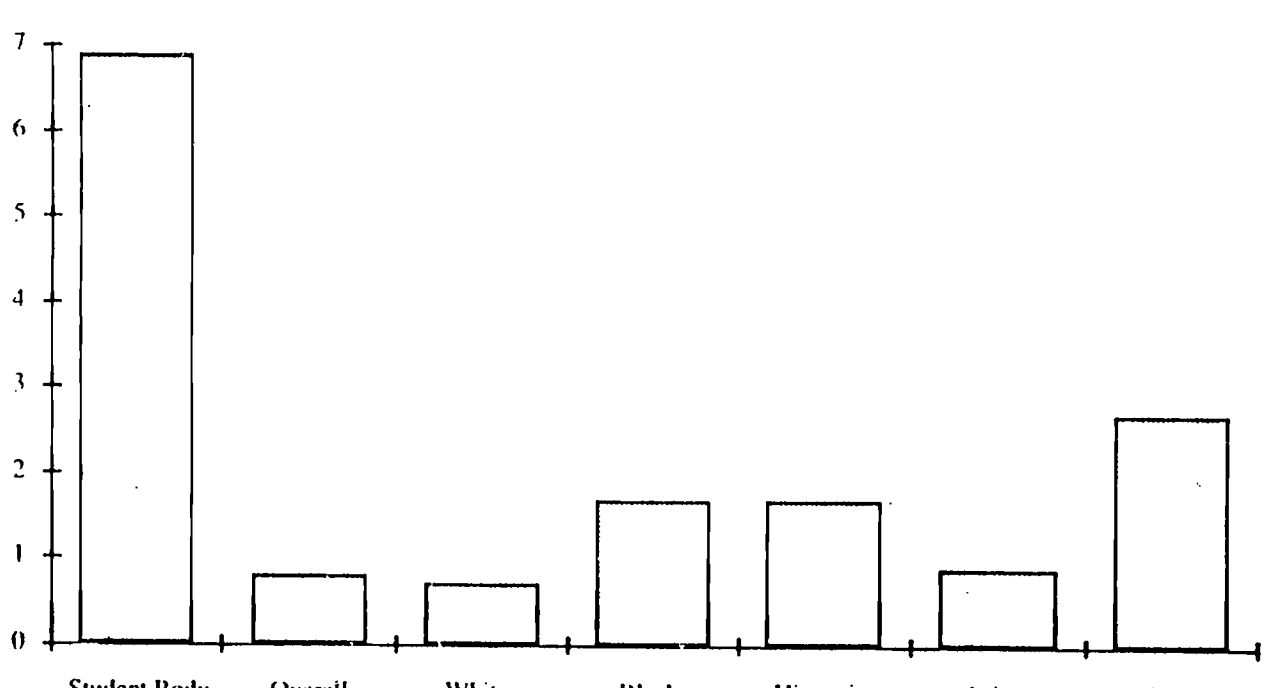
FIGURE 6

DROPOUT RATE 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



Prediction 6: Dropout rates will increase, especially for participants

FIGURE 7
DROPOUT RATE FOR PARTICIPANTS 1989-90



significant increase in the percent of dropouts were the special schools, and they do not offer the activities covered by the rule.

It should be noted, however, that this does not mean that no students dropped out because of the rule. It may be that some students who otherwise would have stayed in school did not because of this rule. Although numerically insignificant, the impact on the individual could be very significant and some would say that this outcome is unacceptable. The aggregate data do not address these few individual cases, but they should be kept in mind when assessing the impact of this rule.

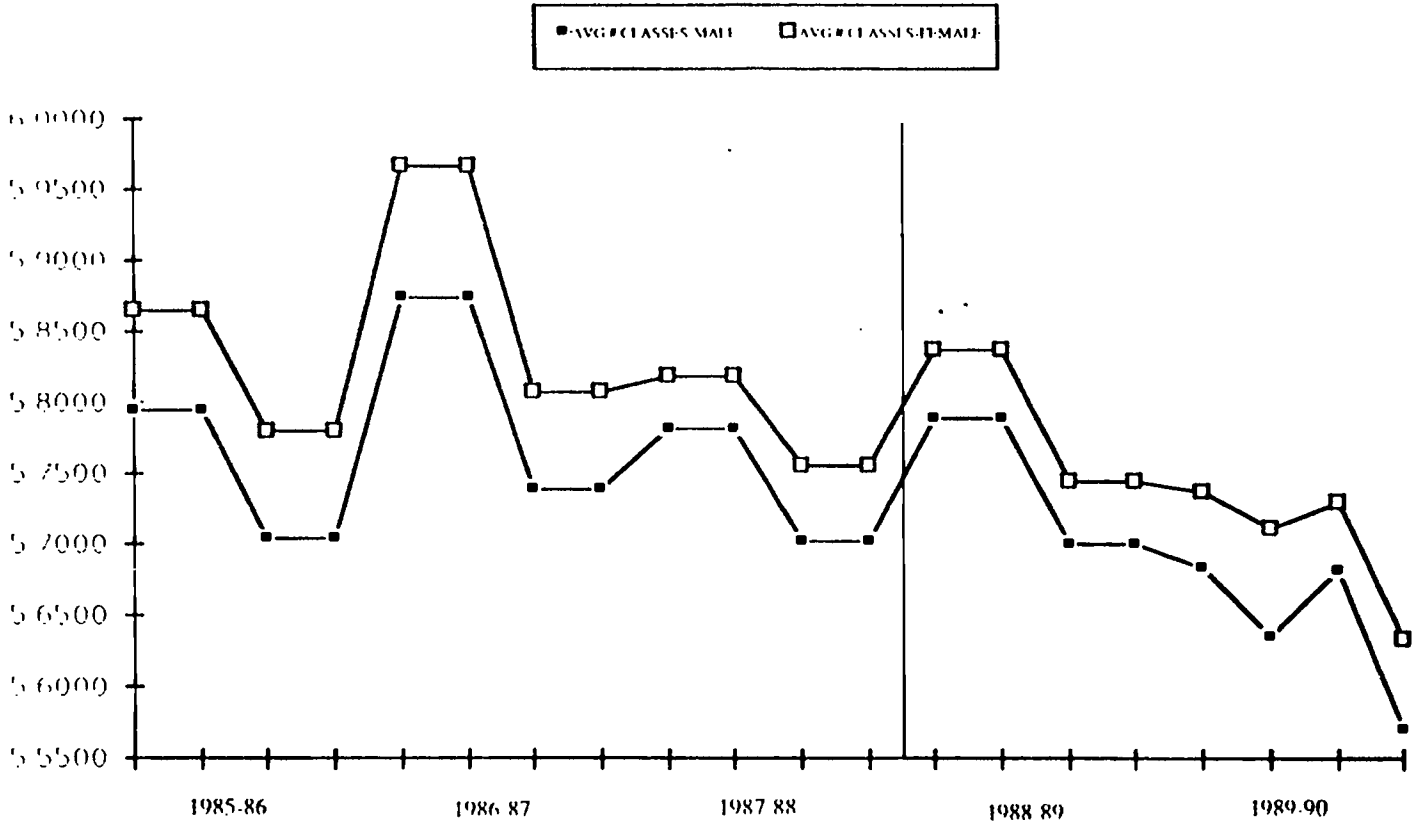
Prediction 6: Students will be less likely to take six or more classes and risk failing in them.

The typical quarterly enrollment pattern over the past six years is a high enrollment in the first and second quarters surpassing the prior two quarters and declining enrollments in the last two quarters. In 1989-90 the pattern changed. The average number of classes per student dropped. The first two quarters were not higher than the third quarter, nor were they higher than the prior two quarters. The drop continued in 1990-91. (Figure 8)

It should be noted, however, that the average at its lowest is still more than one-half of a class above the minimum load set by the No Pass/No Play rule of five classes. In 1989-90, more than three out of four students took five or more classes which is not much different than in prior years. For example, in the four years prior to the rule an average of 79.99 percent of students took more than five classes in the first quarter. During the first quarter of 1990, when the rule was first in place, 78.30 percent of students took more than five classes -- a difference of only 1.69

Prediction 5: Students will be less likely to take more than 5 classes.

FIGURE 8
MALE/FEMALE AVERAGE NUMBER CLASSES BY QUARTER



23

percent from the four year average.

However, there did seem to be an effect on those taking more than six classes (Figure 9). During the first quarter of 1990 the percentage of students taking seven or more classes dropped from 10.7 percent in 1989 to 4.7 percent in 1990, and the percentage taking eight or more dropped from 2.02 percent to only 0.27 percent in 1990. Also, for the first time in five years, the number of students taking more than five classes dropped in mid-semester. This suggests that students may be dropping classes they are in danger of failing rather than attempting to complete them. These are clearly negative outcomes not intended by the NPNP rule.

"This bill has one intent:
to eliminate Black male dominance in sports."

-- Gene Parrish, NAACP Member
Phoenix Gazette, 12/15/88

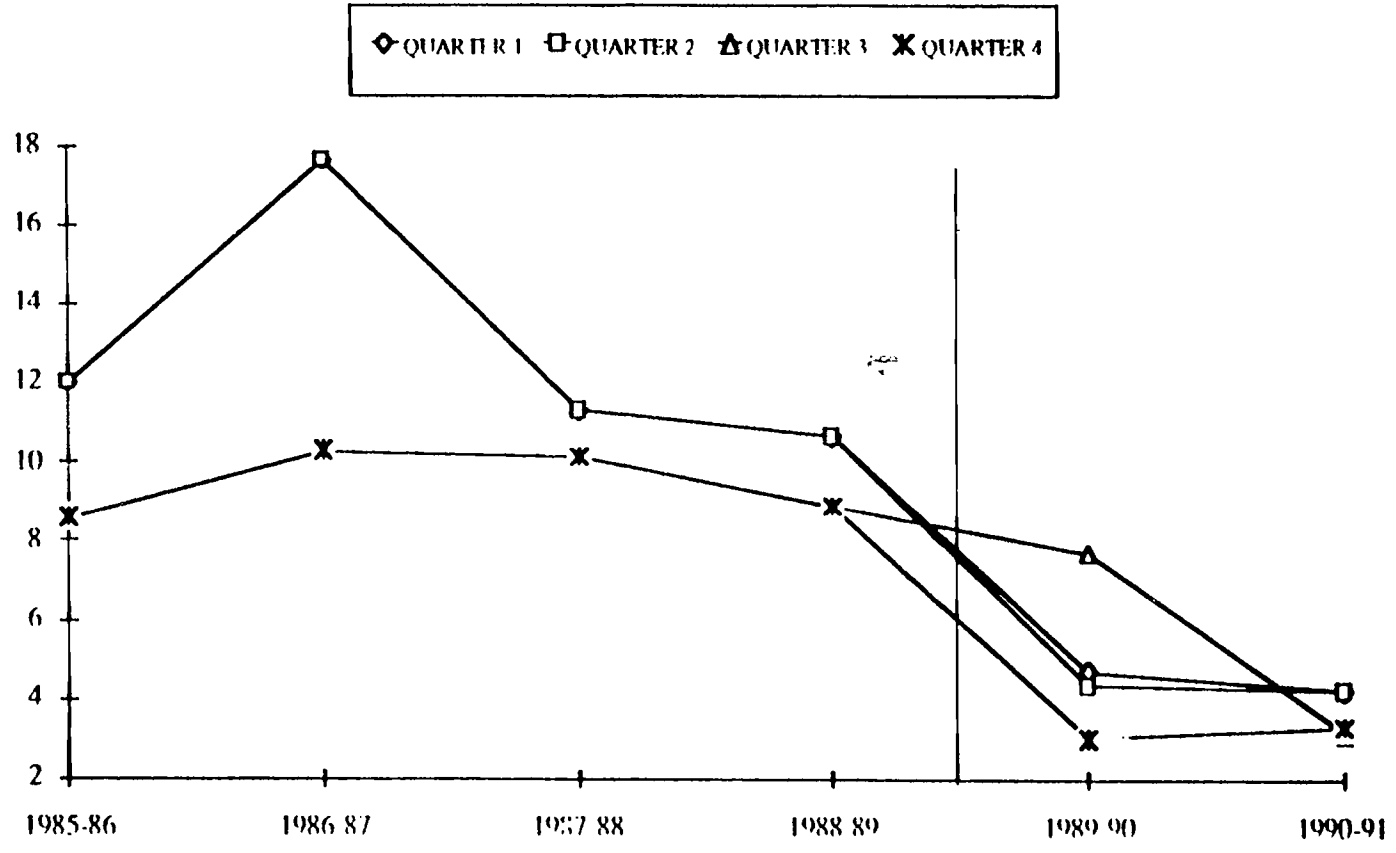
Prediction 7: The NPNP rule will have a disparate effect on different racial groups.

If the No Pass/No Play rule had a disparate effect on one or more ethnic groups, it could be evidenced in several measures. Global measures of academic performance such as GPAs, dropout rates and the number and type of classes taken should change differently for different groups if the rule had a disparate positive or negative effect on students of differing ethnicity. In addition to affecting these measures, the rule would have a disparate effect if a larger percentage of minority students were ineligible

Prediction 7: The rule will have a disparate effect on different ethnic groups.

FIGURE 9

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING SEVEN OR MORE CLASSES



First, let's look at the global academic measures. In GPAs, there appeared to be no major change for any group, except possibly the Native American average GPA which was up .1 to .2 grade points from the prior four years (Figure 10.) It should be noted, however, that for several years there has been a distinct difference between average GPAs for different ethnic groups. The GPAs of Asians (in the 2.9 to 3.1 range over the last five years) and Whites (2.6 to 2.7 range) have been the highest and have been slowly increasing. Hispanic (2.2 to 2.3 range) GPAs have fluctuated somewhat, but overall have remained fairly stable. Native American GPAs have increased, but are still lower than all other groups, in the 1.6 to 1.9 range.

In the average number of classes taken, all groups experienced a decline in 1990 and 1991 (Figure 11). The sharpest decrease, however, was for African-Americans. African-Americans and Asians had the highest average number of classes until 1989-90, when the average number of classes for African-Americans fell precipitously and stayed low in both 1989-90 and 1990-91.

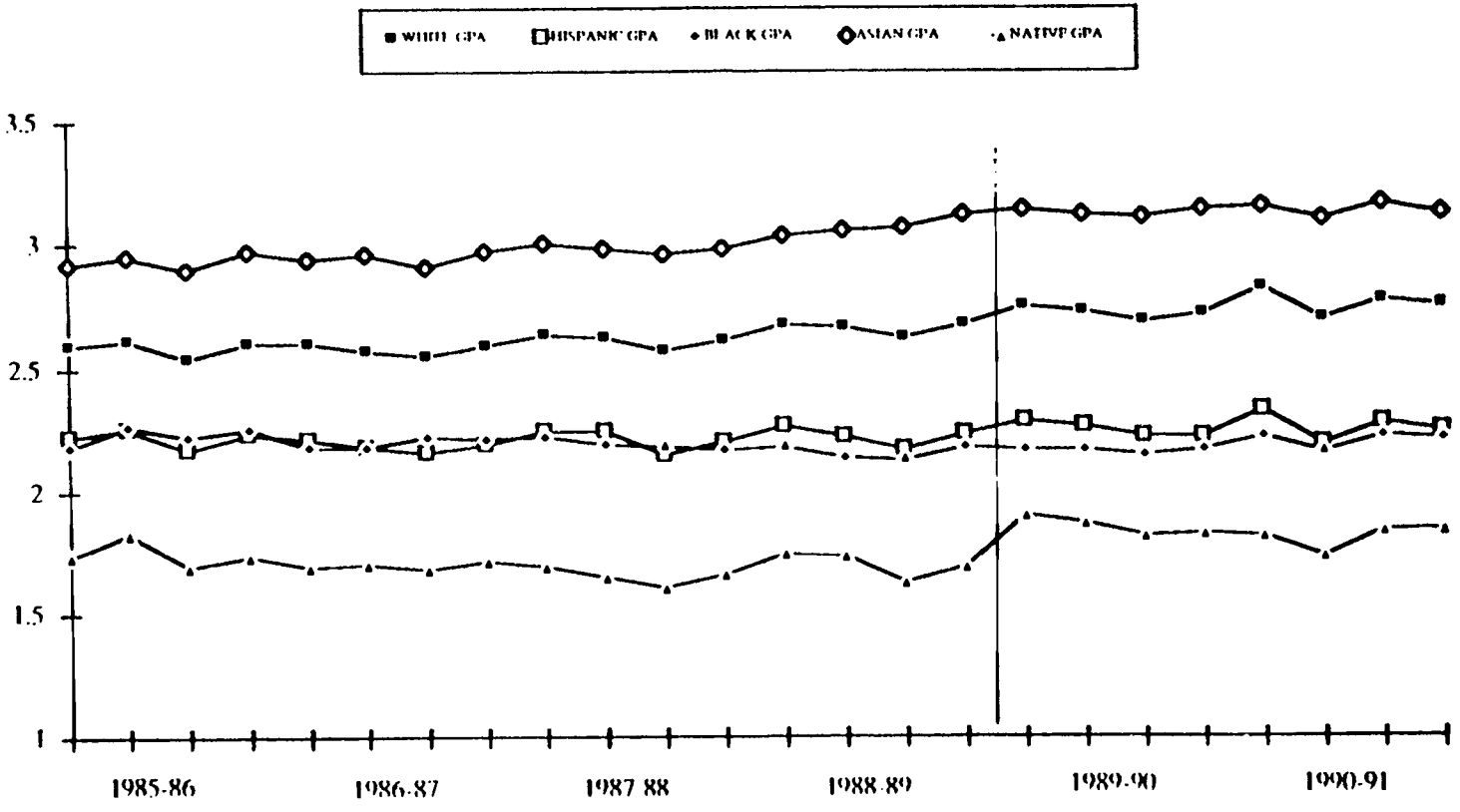
The average number of honor classes, however, were up for all groups (Figure 12). It was up the most for Asian students. For example, comparing the fourth quarter of 1990 to the fourth quarter of 1989, the average number of honors classes per Asian student was up .15 of a class, as compared to increases of .03 for Native Americans, .006 for African-Americans, .01 for Hispanics, and .03 for Whites. The rates stayed stable or increased slightly for each group during 1990-91.

The dropout rate also differed by ethnic group (Figure 13). The percentage of whites who dropout remained fairly stable at about 6%. The percentage of Asian dropouts increased from 3 to 5% in 1989 and back to

Prediction 7: The rule will have a disparate effect on different ethnic groups.

FIGURE 10

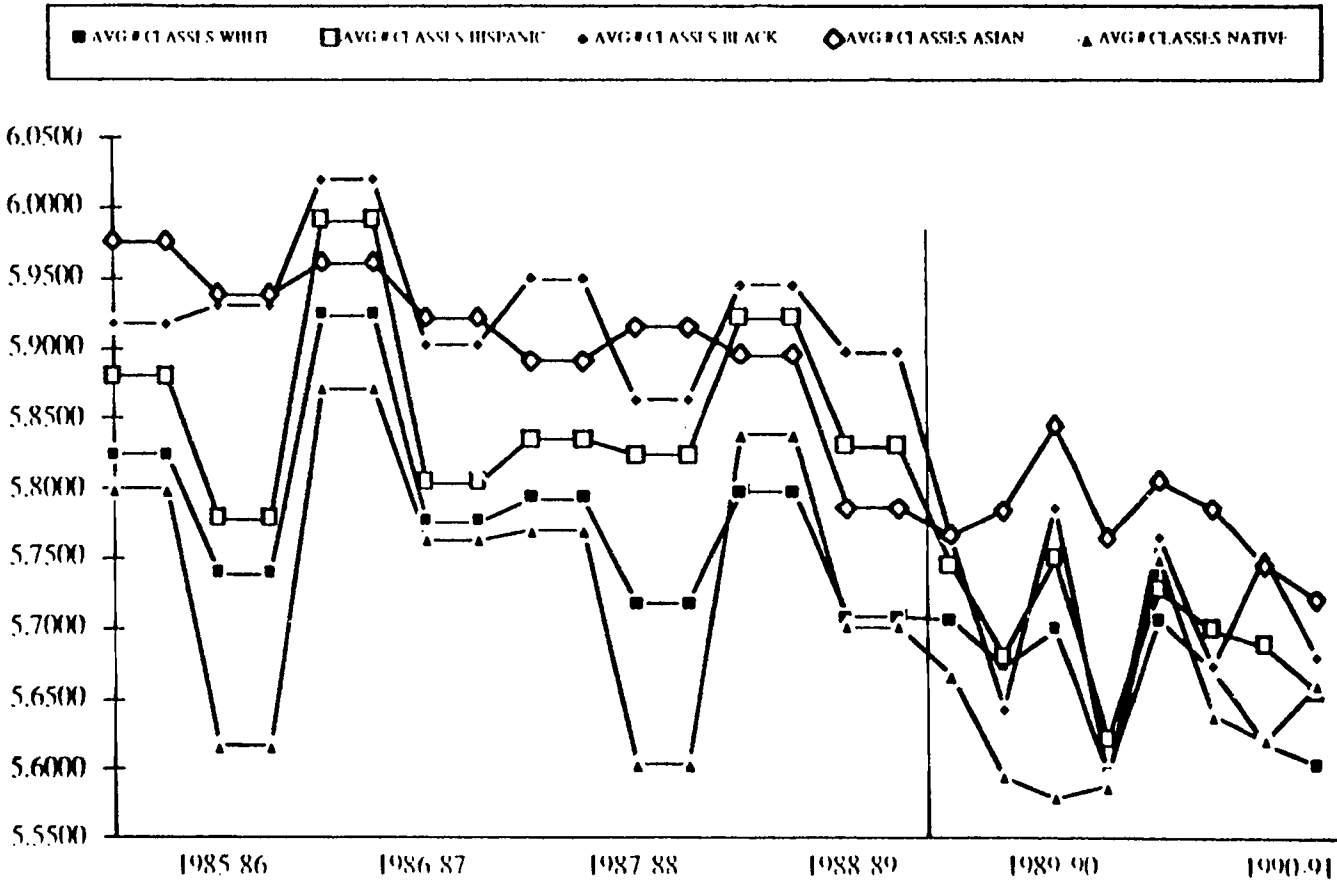
GPA BY ETHNIC GROUP BY QUARTER FOR 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



Prediction 7: The rule will have a disparate effect on different ethnic groups.

FIGURE 11

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CLASSES BY QUARTER FROM 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



3% in 1991. This variation is probably due to the vary small number of Asian dropouts. The percentage of Black dropouts increased from 8% to 9% in 1989 and 10% in 1991, the highest rates in 8 years. Native American rates remained steady at 15% in 1989, the lowest rates in 8 years, but increased to 19% in 1991, the high rate in 8 years. The percentage of dropouts who were Hispanic increased 2 percent to 11% in 1989-90 and 12% in 1990-91, the highest rate in 8 years but close to the 9-11% range of prior years.

Comparing the percentage of dropouts from each ethnic group to the percentage of students in each group, whites (75%, 71% dropouts vs. 85% population) and Asians (1% and 1% of dropouts vs. 2% population) are underrepresented among dropouts while Hispanics (15%, 18% vs. 10%), African-Americans (3%, 3% vs. 2%), and Native Americans (5%, 7% vs. 2%) are over represented. It should be noted that prior to 1988-89 African-Americans were equally or under-represented in the dropout rates.

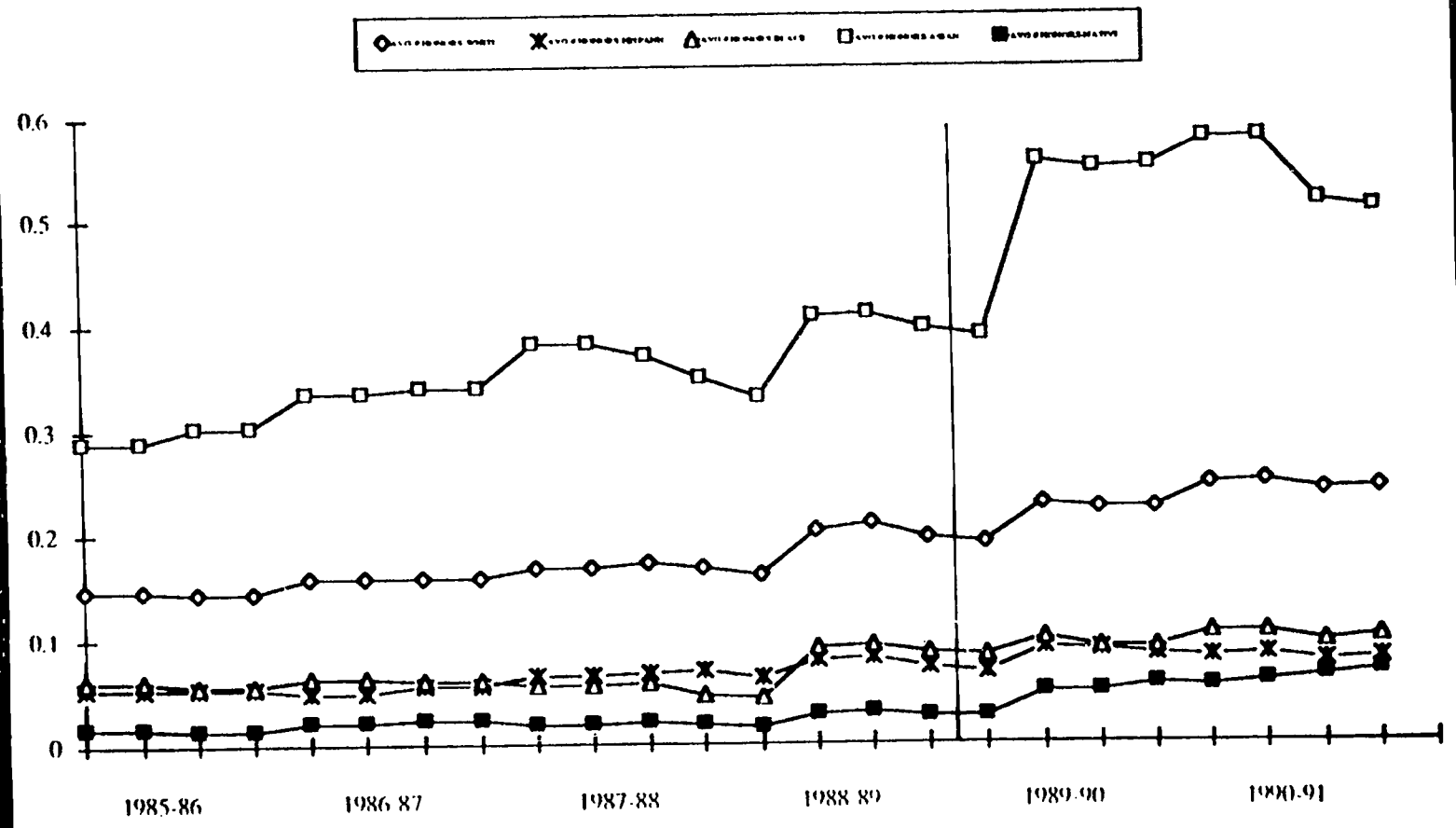
In summary, on academic measures there was no apparent significant change in GPAs, except possibly for Native Americans who experienced an increase; all groups, especially African-Americans, took fewer classes; all groups, particularly Asians increased their average number of honor classes; and the dropout rates varied by groups with White and Native American rates staying stable and Hispanics, African-Americans and Asian rates increasing. These trends do not show a clear disparate effect on any one group.

Looking at ineligibility rates, there does seem to be a disparate effect. The percentage (number intelligible in group "X" divided by the number in group "X") of White (18.5-26.1 percent per quarter) and Asian (11.7-20.5 percent) students ineligible is lower than the percentage of

Prediction 7: The rule will have a disparate effect on different ethnic groups.

FIGURE 12

AVERAGE NUMBER HONORS CLASSES BY ETHNIC GROUP 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91



Prediction 7: The rule will have a disparate effect on different ethnic groups.

FIGURE 13
DROPOUT BY ETHNICITY 1985-86 THROUGH 1990-91

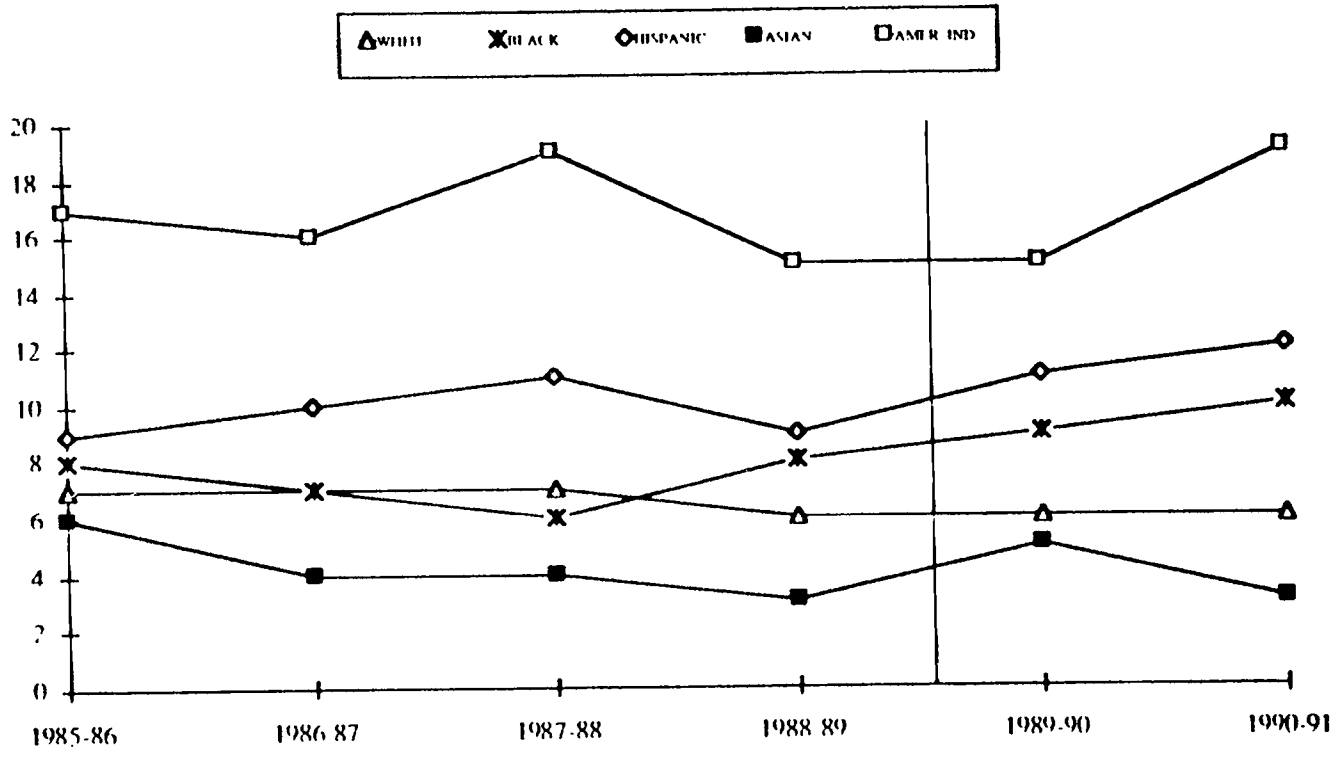


FIGURE 14
RANGE OF INELIGIBLE ETHNIC GROUP STUDENTS

(High and low number in ethnic group "x" divided by total number in ethnic group "x")

Hispanic (33.2-40.6 percent), Black (16.5-32.8 percent) and Native American (48.1 -56.1 percent) students ineligible. Although the ineligibility rates of participants are much lower than the rates of the general student body, the same pattern holds. The percent of participants ineligible for Whites (10.7-15.0) and Asians (2.0-12.3) are lower than the participant ineligibility rates for Hispanics (21.2-27.8 percent), African-Americans (16.5-32.8 percent), and Native Americans (29.2-41.1 percent).

Participation rates by ethnic group also varied in 1989-90. Whites were over represented in activities (87 percent in first quarter activities versus 84.5 percent of the population) as were African-Americans (2.5 percent versus 1.9 percent) and Asians (2.0 versus 1.7 percent). Hispanics (7.3 percent versus 10 percent) and Native Americans (1.0 versus 2.0 percent) were underrepresented. As the year progressed the percentage of Whites (to 88.5 percent) and Native Americans (to 1.2 percent) in sports increased while the percentage of Hispanics (to 6.7 percent), African-Americans (to 1.9 percent) and Asians (to 1.7 percent) decreased. It is not known if the decrease was due to the activities offered each quarter, or due to the NPNP rule, or due to some other reason.

It appears, therefore, that although there was no clear impact on many of the academic outcome measures, the rule did result in more students becoming ineligible in some groups than others.

CONCLUSION

The data indicate that the No Pass/No Play was neither the solution to educational problems some suggested nor the problem others feared. When there was an effect it appeared to be minor, and it usually simply

strengthened a trend that had been ongoing prior to the impact of the rule. Specifically, the data indicate:

- GPAs increased somewhat.
- the percent ineligible fell the first year after implementation, but increased slightly the second year.
- teachers did not appear to give easier grades.
- students did not take easier classes.
- students did not take fewer classes.
- the dropout rate was low, but within the range experienced in prior years.
- There appeared to be no clear disparate effect on one or all minority groups based on academic measures such as GPA, number of classes taken, number of honors classes, etc..
- There were differences in ineligibility rates by ethnic group, with the rates of African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans being much higher than other groups and higher than their percentage of the population.

Overall, it appears that the rule may have had some minor positive impacts, with the only clear negative impact being that minority students were being disproportionately affected. These results can be used to support either side of the No Pass/No Play debate. Proponents can cite the increasing GPAs, historically low ineligibility rates, and fairly stable enrollment trends, grading patterns, and dropout rates. Opponents can suggest that the impact on GPAs and ineligibility rates was minimal and simply enhanced long-term trends, and there was a clear disparate effect on racial groups' overall ineligibility rates.

However, before concluding that the rule had a beneficial, harmful, or no impact on students two issues must be considered. First, these are preliminary data based on two years of experience under the rule. It is possible that the initial implementation of the rule (i.e., the publicity, the focus put on the change by coaches, etc.) had an impact that is independent of the "routine" impact of the rule. In fact, data from the second year of implementation indicates that some of the slightly positive impacts that might be attributable to the rule such as a lower dropout rate or declining numbers of students declared ineligible, did not continue beyond the first year.

Second, to be a true benefit the minimal positive benefits of the rule must not be outweighed by long term negative consequences. The research on the long term effects of participation in extra-curricular activities is just correlational, but, the results raise important concerns about the possible long term impacts of this rule. Douglas Heath (1989) has done considerable research on the relationship between activities such as work, hobbies & extracurricular activities and experiences in later life. He has found that the individual "who is more deeply involved in such activities turned out to be consistently more productive and fulfilled at every period" in her/his life.

This is consistent with previous studies which he summarized as "sparse [but] consistent. Non-academic experience contributes quite a bit to later success" (Heath, 1989, p.214). For example, in one study the College Board tracked 3767 students and found that "while class rank and test scores best predicted academic success, students who put sustained effort into 1 or 2 extracurricular activities while in high school were more likely to succeed in areas such as campus leadership and independent

accomplishment ..[Such extracurricular involvement] can help predict overall college success." Similarly, in another study, extracurricular activities were a better predictor than grades or ACT scores of success as defined by self-satisfaction and participation in a variety of community activities 2 years after college (Jennings & Nathan, 1977).

It is possible that the students in these studies were academically superior (they all were taking the ACT or SAT). Thus one could argue that they would probably not be affected by the no pass/no play rule and therefore these findings may not be generalizable to those who would be excluded under such a rule. However, a longitudinal study of 392 underprivileged inner city boys at ages 14 and 47 came to a similar conclusion. As compared to those who participated least, those who participated the most at age 14 were at age 47 more mentally healthy, had closer personal relationships, higher incomes, and were least frequently unemployed (cited in Heath, 1988). Once again, activities were a better predictor of these successful outcomes than intelligence or socio-economic status.

It appears then that the no pass/no play rule could possibly have detrimental long term negative impacts. It should be kept in mind that the research only suggests a relationship between activities and success -- not cause and effect, and it is not known if those students who would be excluded by the no pass/no play rule are similar to those in these studies. However, these findings raise important and troubling questions that have not been addressed by this non-longitudinal research done just after such a rule is put into effect.

In conclusion, the data suggests that the no pass/no play rule was at best a very modest short term success. However, this success was at the

cost of having a disproportional impact on minorities, possibly having negative long term consequences, and costing school personnel a great deal of time and effort to monitor and report No Pass/No Play eligibility. Further monitoring of the impact of this rule needs to be conducted, but the initial results indicate that the costs of this rule may not outweigh the benefits.

Appendix A

The research Summarizing the effects of no pass/no play legislation is difficult because of the many different definitions used. For example, although California has a state law (2.0 GPA), 69% of school districts have added 1 or more additional requirements such as no Fs, limited absences, and citizenship requirements. Also, districts vary in the stringency with which they enforce these regulations resulting in ineligibility rates ranging from 0 to 40%. In short, no pass/no play means something different in almost every state.

Some sample definitions that are actually used include:

Arizona:	A passing grade must be earned in every class. (No F's.)
Tolleson, AZ:	A passing grade must be earned in every class. (No F's.)
California:	A 2.0 or "C" average must be maintained. Individual district requirements varied.
Oak Park, MI:	A 2.0 or "C" average and no "F"s.
Austin, TX:	A 70 in every course (no F's).
Jackson, MS:	An overall C or 75 average and pass 3 major classes.

How Many Students will be Affected by the No Pass No Play Rule? The number of students affected depends on the rigor of enforcement and whether one is discussing just those who participate who would be ineligible or all students regardless of their interest in activities who would be ineligible to participate.

There is some evidence that many current participants in extracurricular activities will not be affected. Reports from state high school activity leagues indicate that extracurricular activity participants have better attendance (North Dakota: 4.9 vs. 10.8 absences; Minnesota: 6.9 vs. 8.8 absences) and get better GPA's (North Dakota: 3.3 vs. 2.5; Iowa: 2.8 vs. 2.4; Minnesota: 3.0 vs. 2.7). An examination of national survey data indicated that 7 out of 8 extracurricular participants met or exceeded a 2.0 GPA. It was also found that students who ranked high on course credits, hours of homework, test scores, and GPA tended to be more involved in extracurricular activities.

Data from studies on the effects of the rule suggest, however, that a sizable number of the total student body that could or do participate will be affected. In 71 California districts with varying regulations, it was estimated that 8% of the students who wanted to participate in the fall of 1986 could not because of these rules. The number ineligible ranged from 0 to 40%, with almost half of the high school districts estimating that 10-25% of their students were ineligible. Los Angeles USD (one F=ineligible) had an average ineligibility rate between 1983 and 1986 for all activities of 13.3% in the fall and 11.2% in the spring. In the San Juan district (one F=ineligible) between 1984 and 1986, 11% of the students were excluded from participation in athletics. In Oak Park, MI (2.0 plus no F's) 37% of athletes became ineligible the first semester and 19% were ineligible during the second semester the rule was implemented. Tolleson (AZ) found 15% of participants were made ineligible and Jackson (MS) averaged 24% of all students being ineligible.

Does The Rule Result in Students Not Taking Tough Courses? Austin (TX) Public Schools examined honor course enrollments to see if fewer students took "hard" courses such as honors courses. Although there was a great deal of variability between courses in enrollment trends, overall enrollment in hard courses grew from 13.6% to 13.9%. In a survey of 121 California districts, 64% of which had some form of no pass/no play rules, it was found that most felt that statewide no pass/no play legislation would not encourage pupils to take easier courses.

Does a No Pass/No Play Rule Decrease the Number of Students with Failing Grades? Several Texas school districts found this to be true. In Austin, failure rates in 1982/83 and 1986/87 were compared. Non-extracurricular enrollees failed fewer courses (10% decrease) and extracurricular participants failed at an even lower rate (20% decrease). However, other educational reforms also were instituted so it is not clear how much of this decrease is due to the rule.

In Dallas, the percentage of all students in grades 7-12 who failed one or more classes fell from 55.6% in 1985 to 46.4% in 1986. In Houston, the percentage of students in grades 9-12 who failed at least 1 class declined from 53.4% in 1985 to 41.1% in 1986. It is not known how much of this is due to improved student schoolwork and how much is due to a change in grading by teachers reacting to this rule.

However, Oak Park (MI) found that after the rule went into effect overall student GPA's dropped (2.22 to 2.18) and the number of students with GPA's less than 2.0 increased (42% to 44%).

Does a No Pass/No Play rule increase grades of those ruled ineligible? The athletes in Oak Park (MI) who became ineligible increased their grades, but less than a control group of students who also had GPAs less than 2.0. In fact, rather than motivating students to do better in school, there is some evidence that it motivates participants to leave school. However, these results are from only 2 school districts so no firm conclusions can be made.

Does the Rule Cause the Dropout Rate to Increase? California administrators did not feel that the rule increased overall dropout rates significantly. Austin, Texas, USD found that the dropout rate of participants increased +0.2% (7.6 to 7.8%) while the overall dropout rate fell -1.1% (25.1 to 24%). Since participation in varsity sports had been previously found to correlate with staying in school and since the trend for athletes was an increased dropout rate while the overall rate declined, the authors suggested renaming the rule "no play/no stay." This suggests that the rule may have a differential effect, impacting the drop out rate of those who actually participate more than those that might participate.

Does Excluding Students from Participation Have Negative Long Term Consequences? The research in this area is just correlational so no cause and effect relationship has been established. However, the results are consistent and raise important concerns. Dr. Douglas Heath has done considerable research on the relationship between activities such as work, hobbies & extracurricular activities and experiences in later life. He has found that the individual "who is more deeply involved in such activities

turned out to be consistently more productive and fulfilled at every period" in her/his life.

This is consistent with previous studies which he summarized as "sparse [but] consistent. Non-academic experience contributes quite a bit to later success" (Heath, 1988). For example, in one study the College Board tracked 3767 students and found that "while class rank and test scores best predicted academic success, students who put sustained effort into 1 or 2 extracurricular activities while in high school were more likely to succeed in areas such as campus leadership and independent accomplishment ..[Such extracurricular involvement] can help predict overall college success." Similarly, in another study, extracurricular activities were a better predictor than grades or ACT scores of success as defined by self-satisfaction and participation in a variety of community activities 2 years after college.

It is possible that the students in these studies were academically superior (they all were taking the ACT or SAT). Thus one could argue that they would probably not be affected by the no pass/no play rule and therefore these findings may not be generalizable to those who would be excluded under such a rule. However, a longitudinal study of 392 underprivileged inner city boys at ages 14 and 47 came to a similar conclusion. As compared to those who participated least, those who participated the most at age 14 were at age 47 more mentally healthy, had closer personal relationships, higher incomes, and were least frequently unemployed. Once again, activities were a better predictor of these successful outcomes than intelligence or socio-economic status.

It appears then that the no pass/no play rule could possibly have detrimental long term negative impacts. It should be kept in mind that the research only suggests a relationship between activities and success -- not cause and effect, and it is not known if those students who would be excluded by the no pass/no play rule are similar to those in these studies. However, these findings raise important and troubling questions that have not been addressed by the non-longitudinal research done just after such a rule is put into effect.

Does the Rule Have a Differential Effect on Students? Not enough research is available to address this question. The Austin study found that contrary to the predicted effects of the rule, Black and Hispanic athletes were not more negatively affected as reflected in drop out rates. In fact, the increase in dropouts that was observed was due to an increased number of Anglo students dropping out. This suggests that minorities who participate in athletics may not be differentially affected. However, the whole student body and not just athletes may be affected by such a rule. That is, students who participate in non-athletic activities and all those who might want to participate but currently do not may be affected. An examination of national survey data by the U. S. Department of Education indicates that Black and Hispanic males would be hardest hit by a 2.0 participation requirement (the failure rate was not addressed but presumably they would be harder hit by that requirement also given the lower GPA). This suggests that more minority students in the student body will be made ineligible. These different findings and this limited data makes coming to

conclusions on the differential impact on racial groups impossible at this time.

Students are grouped by more than just racial characteristics, however. California school districts rated "students (especially academically marginal groups such as Special Ed pupils) lost privilege of access to important activities" as the most negatively perceived outcome of the no pass/no play legislation. There are many students in Special Education and regular education who have disabilities or who are not that academically capable that probably will be made ineligible by this rule. This raises the question 'does this rule unfairly penalize the student who is working at her/his level of ability but who does not do well in school and thus be hurt, not motivated, by the rule?'

It is particularly important that this question be answered because it is at the heart of perhaps the most compelling argument against the rule -- that activities provide an avenue for success for students who do not perform well in the classroom, although they may be performing at or above potential. In other words, there is a group of students who are not as bright as others and who experience failure in school even thought they are applying themselves. Excluding these marginal students from activities may not be wise or fair because it takes away their one success area and a major motivation to stay in school.

How Do Students and Others React to the Rule? Austin Texas students were asked if the rule encouraged them to get better grades. They originally gave the rule mixed reviews, with opinions divided among

agreement (36%), disagreement (33%), and neutrality (31%). Since that time, however, opinions have become more positive with 52% feeling that the rule encourages getting better grades and only 21% disagreeing in 1987. A poll of Arizona residents by the Arizona Republic found that 74% favor a no pass/no play law and 66% favor a stricter regulation requiring a "C" average in addition to no "F's."

Is the Rule Legal? In 1985 the Texas Supreme Court ruled that a "student's (right) to participate in extracurricular activities does not rise to the same level as the right to free speech and free exercise of religion" and thus can be regulated. The court also ruled that such a regulation is consistent with the state's legitimate interest in providing a quality education. Most other state and federal district counts that have addressed this issue have viewed extracurricular activities as a privilege and thus governable by state or district regulation.

Does the Rule Cause Problems for School Districts? A survey of California districts found that one of the most negative impacts of the no pass/no play legislation was the "difficulty in providing support services to ineligible students." In fact, 43% of high school districts and 26% of unified districts did not provide such support services despite legislative encouragement to do so. One district commented that it is "nice to have rules and regulations, but when you do not have the money for staff to support the regulations, what good are the rules? We can easily identify the problem, but we can only bandage the wound." Schools that provided services most frequently had tutoring in conjunction with special study classes and counseling. Coaches, counselors, parents, and sometimes peer

tutors were involved in providing these services. Tolleson (AZ) provides tutoring and late afternoon bus service and Sunnyside (AZ) provides voluntary tutoring.

Other problems noted were the excessive clerical work created by the policy, difficulty in monitoring ineligible students, and difficulty in implementing the rule.

What Did People Conclude About the Regulation? This varied by district. To briefly summarize:

Austin (TX): The negative impact of no pass/no play was not evidenced in course enrollments or overall dropout rates. However, students who might have stayed in school to participate in varsity sports appear to be dropping out at a higher rate. Students in general appear to be staying in school longer and failing fewer courses. On balance, no pass/no play appears to have been a **positive** change.

Los Angeles, California: The regulation effectively established academic excellence as a priority, increased student motivation in academics, and had the support of staff and parents. There were, however, concerns about student's loss of access to activities, the difficulty in providing support services to ineligible students, and the amount of clerical work required by the policy. Also, a notable proportion (25%) of the students desiring to participate in activities can be affected by such a policy. Although it is too early to determine the full impact, the preliminary evidence suggests a mostly **positive** impact.

Oak Park (MI): Ineligibility did not improve academic achievement but it did lead to the school dropping sports and other problems for the athletic teams. Overall, the rule had a **negative** impact because it diminished athletics without resulting in any improvement.

Tolleson (AZ): Overall the program has been described as a "very painful success." Fewer students are failing classes and the dropout rate has not increased. However, the implementation has been slow and hard and some students have been hurt by the policy.