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ABSTRACT

The Promoting Achievement in School through Sport (PASS) program is a year-long high school course that uses sports to enhance academic achievement. PASS features an integrated curriculum that addresses the student physically, mentally, and behaviorally, and an interdisciplinary approach combining language arts, philosophy, social studies, psychology, and physical education. The grade point average (GPA) is the primary measurement for evaluating the program using demonstrable student results. This report presents data collected in PASS programs at several California high schools over a 4-year period. PASS students at all schools were matched with students in a control group based on gender, grade level, and ethnicity. Analysis of the study data revealed that for each year, PASS students outperformed those in the control group on all of the applicable measures, including GPA and academic eligibility for extracurricular activities: 47 percent more PASS students than control group students increased their grades, with twice as many PASS students increasing their GPA by a full point; 43 percent more control students had their grades go down. PASS students were 85 percent more likely to regain their eligibility during the school year, and control group students were 24 percent more likely to lose eligibility. Study findings confirm that by participating in the PASS program, high school students improve their academic performance as measured by overall GPA. Study data are summarized in tables. (ND)

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P R O M O T I N G A C H I E V E M E N T I N S C H O O L T H R O U G H S P O R T

Four-Year Impact Study and Summary Report
covering data from 1991-92, 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 School Years

January 1996

Study Rationale

Providing meaning and significance for students in the day-to-day high school curriculum along with a challenging core of academic subjects is a difficult task for educators. Many have found that you can make students come to school, but you can't make them learn. Kids have to *want* to learn. They have to have a reason for being at school. They have to have a reason for *wanting* to work hard.

Traditionally, sport in our schools has been viewed, at best, as a discipline that takes a back seat to academics, and, at worst, as an impediment to academic achievement. The attitude, "You're here for an education first--sports second," is pervasive.

The American Sports Institute (ASI), a nonprofit educational organization, holds a different position: The positive aspects of sport culture can provide the basis for a challenging academic program, one that offers physically-oriented students a sense of meaning and significance in their lives, and creates a learning environment where students want to be at school, want to learn, and, in fact, do so.

This vision has led ASI to develop the **Promoting Achievement in School through Sport (PASS)** program, a daily, year-long, high school course that uses the positive aspects of sport culture to enhance academic achievement. The prominent features of PASS are that:

- PASS is an integrated curriculum that addresses the student physically, mentally, and behaviorally.
- PASS is interdisciplinary, combining language arts, philosophy, social studies, psychology, and physical education.
- PASS is student-centered and project-oriented.
- PASS focuses on student self-esteem, responsibility, and leadership.
- PASS transcends cultural differences.
- PASS brings together the home, school, and community.

In order to validate that the PASS program is effective in generating student success, it was necessary to devise a method for evaluating the program using demonstrable student results. After examining available data, grade point average was chosen as the primary measurement.

While there are several ways to assess student success, and while grades alone do not fully describe the impact of the PASS program, using grades as a measurement tool is effective because of their relative specificity, objectivity, common usage, measurability, ease of collection, and ability to reflect other student-related factors, such as discipline, motivation, attendance, and behavior. In addition, it is easy to compare the results of a group of PASS students with those from a control group of non-PASS students.

The assumption of this study is that if overall grade point average improves due to participation in the PASS class, then that in itself is an important indication of the success of the program.

Background Information

This report presents data collected over the past four years, beginning with the 1991-92 school year when Dr. Joel Kirsch, ASI President and PASS Program Director, pilot-tested the program at two high schools, McAteer in San Francisco and Tamalpais in Mill Valley, California, with a total of 21 students. Results from the previous year (1990-91), the first year of pilot-testing the PASS curriculum, while extremely positive, are not included in this report because they are based on a single class of only nine McAteer High School students.

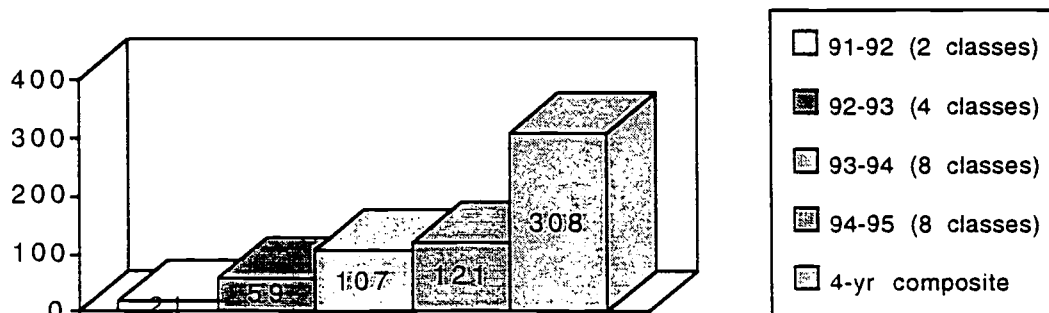
In 1992-93, PASS was again taught at McAteer and Tamalpais, as well as Wilson High School in San Francisco and Novato High School in Marin County, California. Three ASI-trained PASS instructors, in addition to Dr. Kirsch, presented the PASS curriculum. Eight PASS classes at seven schools are included in the study for the 1993-94 school year: Tamalpais and Novato (Marin), Balboa (San Francisco), De Anza (two classes, Richmond, CA), Oakland Tech (Oakland, CA), and Providence-St. Mel and Manley (Chicago). That year, seven first-time instructors and one veteran teacher taught the PASS class.

In 1994-95 11 teachers at 10 schools taught PASS. The classes included in the study for the 1994-95 school year are from the following high schools: Tamalpais, De Anza, Encinal and Oakland Tech (SF Bay Area); Madison (two classes, San Diego); and Manley and Gage Park (Chicago). Of PASS classes not included in the study, one is a middle school, one had a small number of students that fluctuated throughout the year, and the third was cancelled mid-year.

Growth in Number of PASS Students

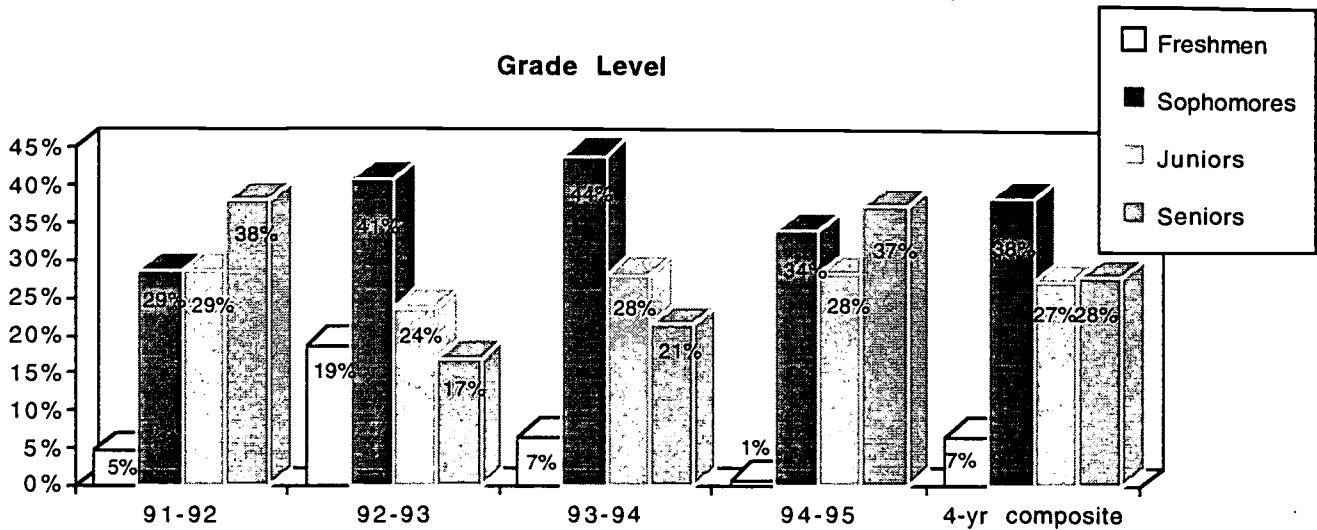
As more teachers were trained as PASS instructors, there was a corresponding increase in the number of students participating in the PASS program. The chart below displays the increase.

Growth in the Number of PASS Students

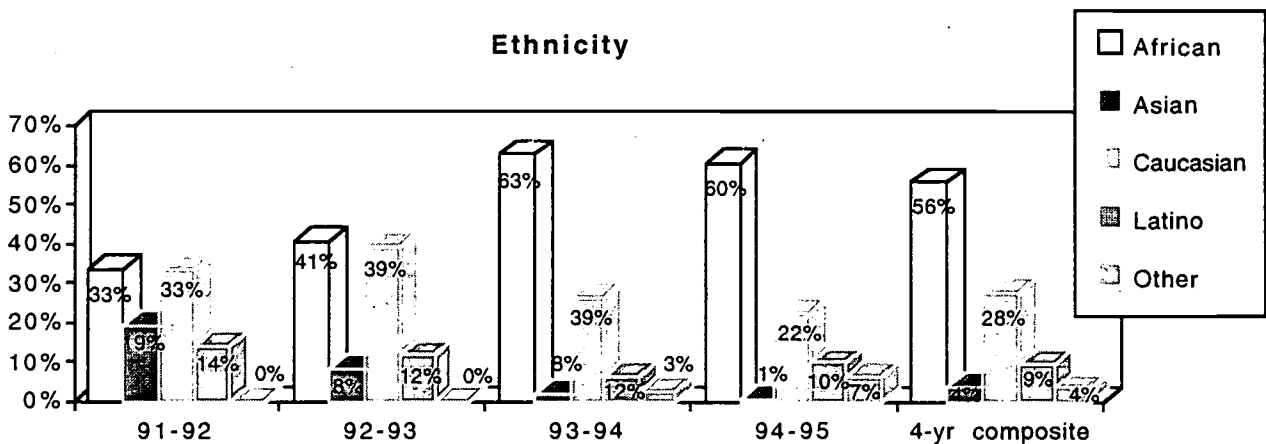


Demographics of PASS Students

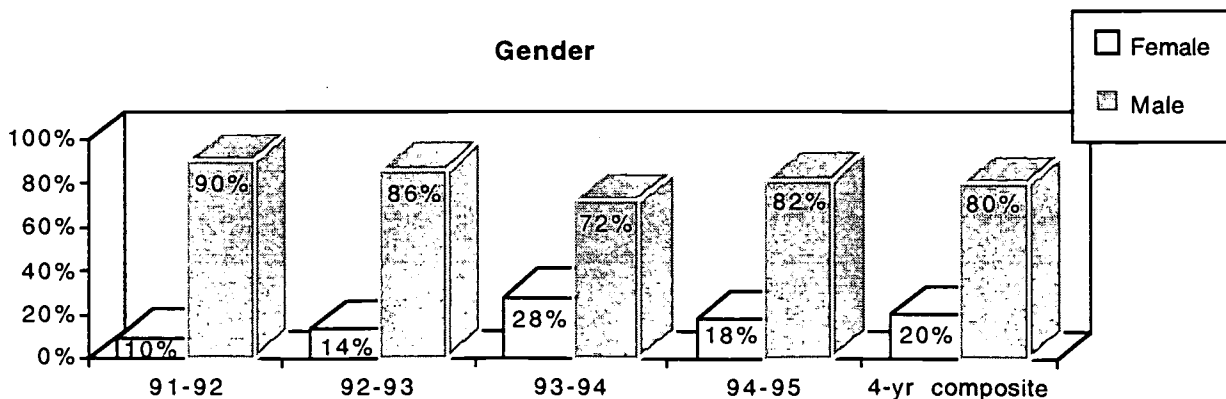
The PASS class is open to freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. The chart below identifies the class makeup by grade level over the past four years.



The ethnic composition of students in the PASS program over the past four years is identified in the chart below.



The PASS class is open to both boys and girls. The chart below identifies the gender makeup over the past four years.



The Study

For each of the past four years, PASS students at all schools have been matched with students in a control group based on gender, grade level, and ethnicity. Grade point averages (GPAs) for the spring semester prior to participation in the PASS class were collected for the PASS students and the control group. At the end of the school year during which students participated in the PASS class, GPAs for spring semester for both groups were collected again.

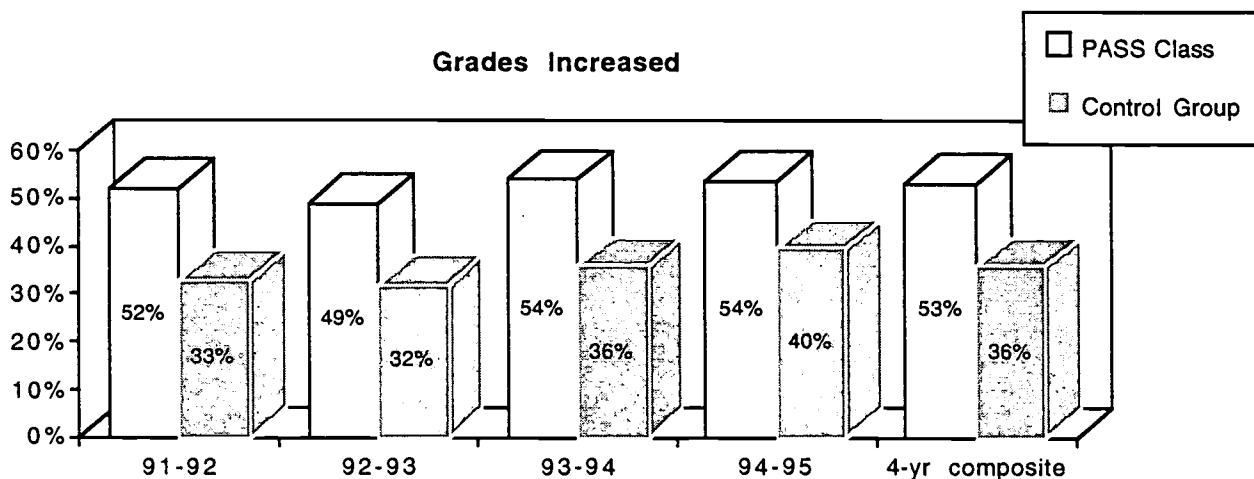
To summarize the impact of PASS on students' grades, the last four years of results for PASS students have been compared with those of control group students based on the following measurements:

- Percentage of students who increased their GPA
- Percentage of students who increased their GPA by a full grade point or more
- Percentage of students with no significant (>.1 in either direction) change in GPA
- Percentage of students whose GPA decreased
- Percentage of students who decreased their GPA by a full grade point or more
- The average GPA increase or decrease per student
- Percentage of students regaining academic eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities
- Percentage of students losing academic eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities

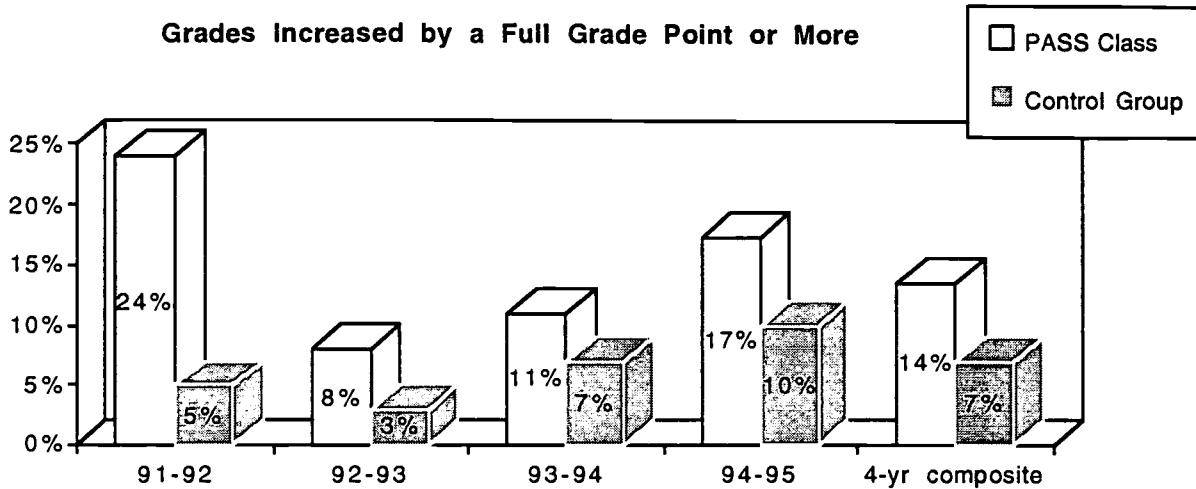
The Findings

As the following information demonstrates, each year, PASS students have outperformed those in the control group on all of the applicable measures listed above.

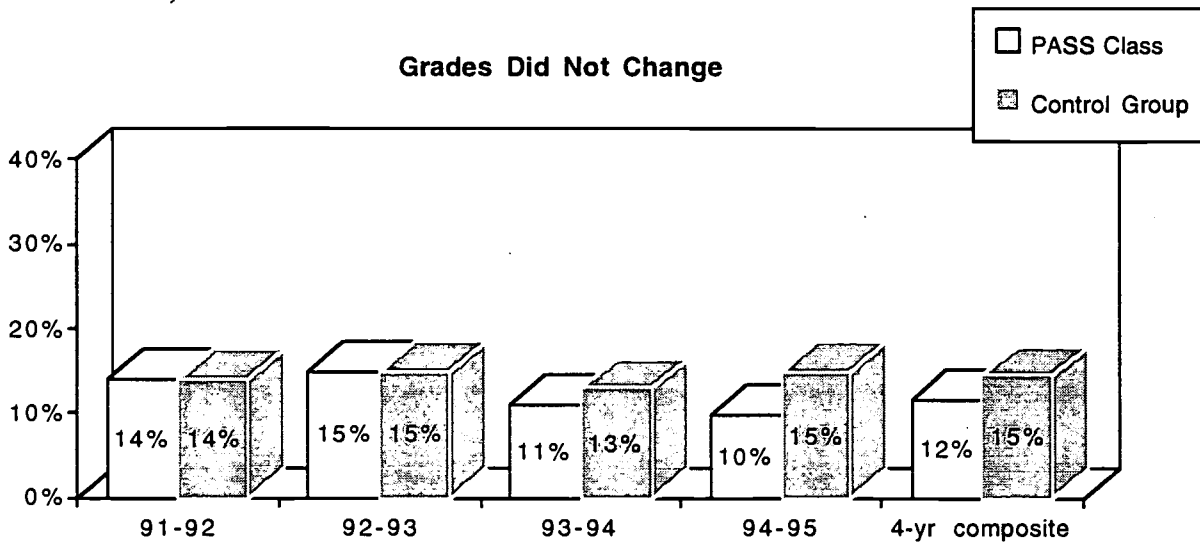
Increased GPA: The chart below compares the percentage of PASS and control group students who increased their GPA. The column to the far right shows the four-year average. During the period, forty-seven percent (47%) more PASS students than control group students increased their grades.



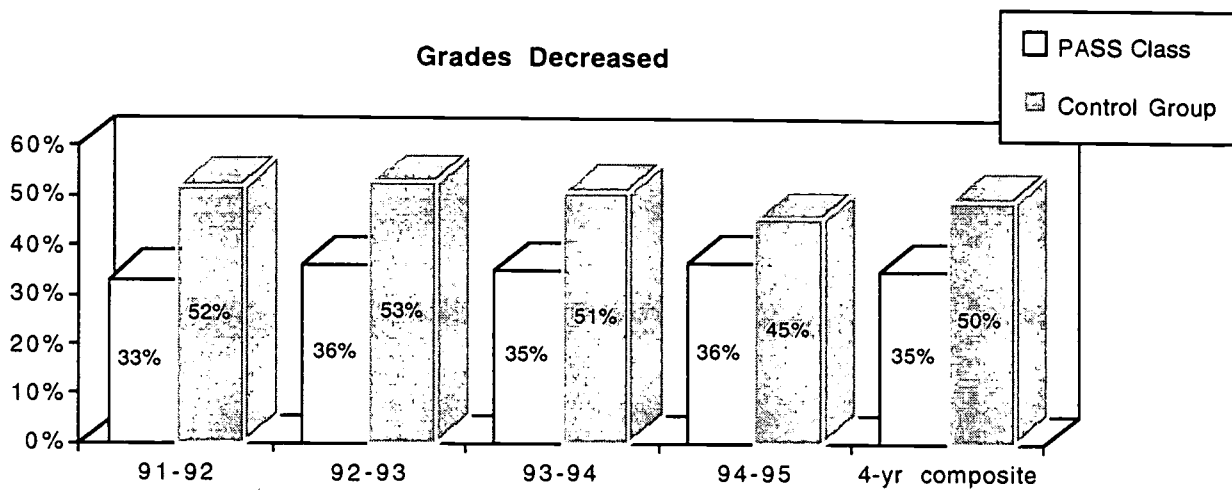
Increased GPA by a Full Grade Point or More: The percentage of PASS students who increased their grades by a full grade point or more is compared below to that of control group students who showed a similar increase. On average, twice as many PASS students as control group students have increased their grades by a full grade point or more.



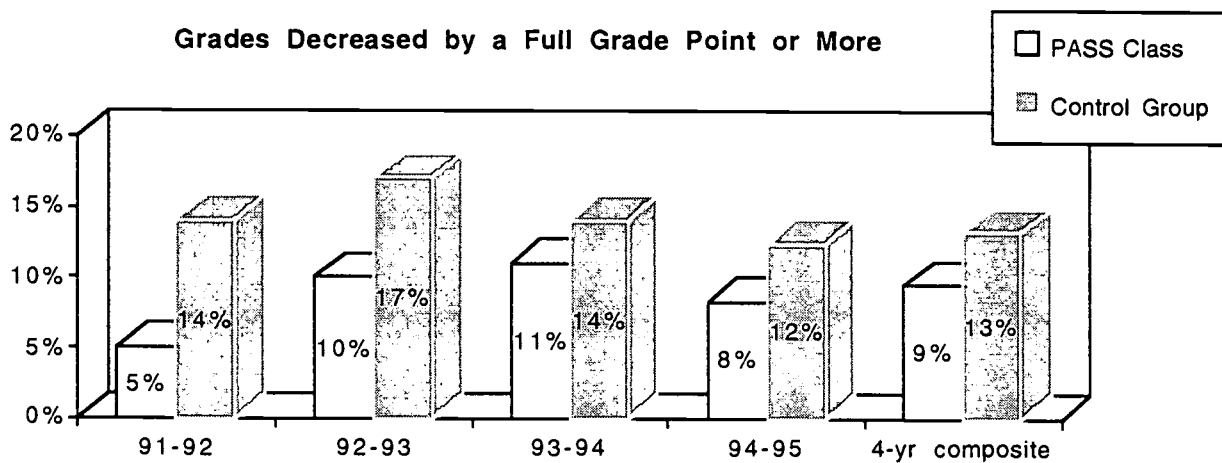
Grades Did Not Change: Each year some students, both in the PASS program and the control group, had grades that did not change by at least .10 of a grade point in either direction. The chart below shows the percentage of students in this category.



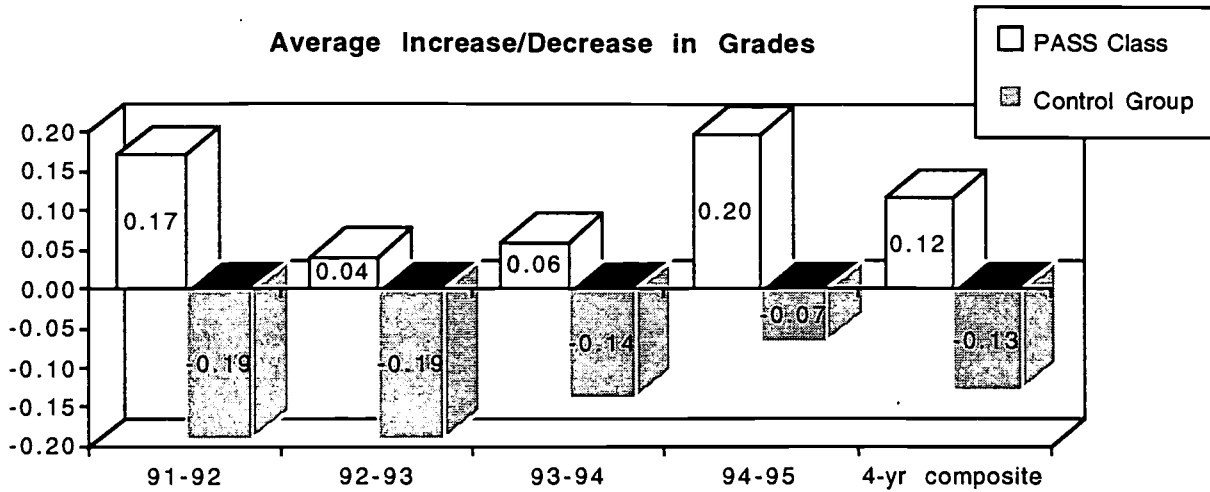
Decreased GPA: The chart below compares the percentage of PASS and control group students whose GPA decreased. Overall, during this period, forty-three percent (43%) more control group students than PASS students had their grades go down.



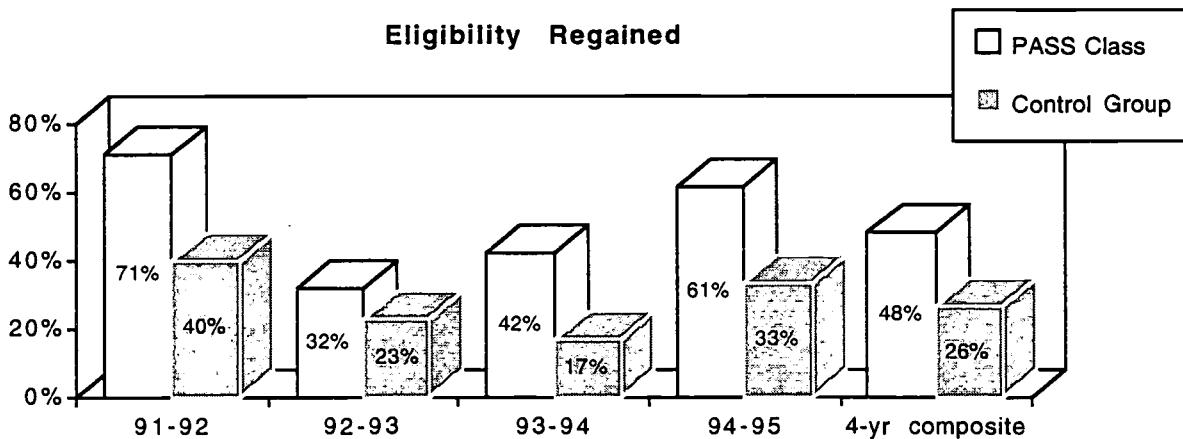
Decreased GPA by a Full Grade Point or More: The following chart compares the percentage of PASS and control group students whose GPA decreased by a full grade point or more. On average, control group students were forty-four percent (44%) more likely to have their grades drop by at least a full grade point than were students in the PASS class.



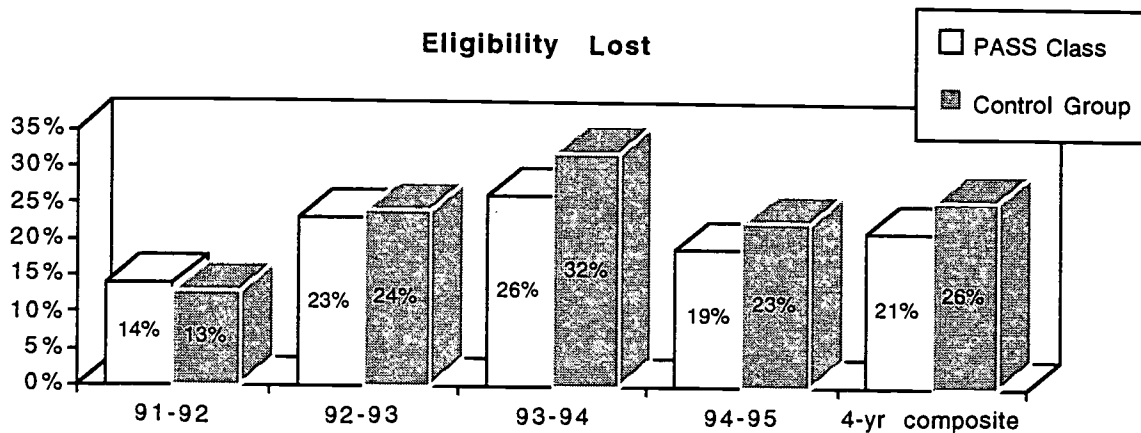
Average Increase/Decrease in GPA Per Student: The chart below shows the average increase or decrease in grade point per PASS student compared to the same average per control group student. Overall, PASS students outperformed their counterparts in the control group by a quarter of a grade point.



Percentage of Students Who Regained Academic Eligibility: Students, parents, teachers, coaches, athletic directors, and administrators are all concerned about students' maintaining academic eligibility. For example, in several states, students must maintain a C average (2.0) in order to participate in extracurricular activities. The following chart shows the percentage of PASS and control group students over the last four years who began the year with less than a 2.0 and then regained eligibility by the end of the year. Over this period, PASS students have been eighty-five percent (85%) more likely than control group students to regain eligibility.



Percentage of Students Who Lost Academic Eligibility: The chart below shows percentages of PASS and control group students who began the year with at least a 2.0 and lost eligibility during the year. Control group students over the four-year period have been twenty-four percent (24%) more likely than PASS students to lose eligibility during the year.



Findings Summary

During the four-year period covered by this study:

- Forty-seven percent (47%) more PASS students than control group students increased their grades during the year that the PASS students participated in the PASS class.
- Twice as many PASS students as control group students increased their grades by a full grade point or more during the school year.
- Forty-three percent (43%) more control group students than PASS students had their grades go down during the year.
- Forty-four percent (44%) more control group students than PASS students had their grades go down by a full grade point or more during the school year.
- On average, PASS students outperformed their counterparts in the control group by a quarter of a grade point per student.
- PASS students were eighty-five percent (85%) more likely than control group students to regain their eligibility during the school year.
- Control group students over the three-year period were twenty-four percent (24%) more likely than PASS students to lose eligibility during the course of the year.

Conclusion

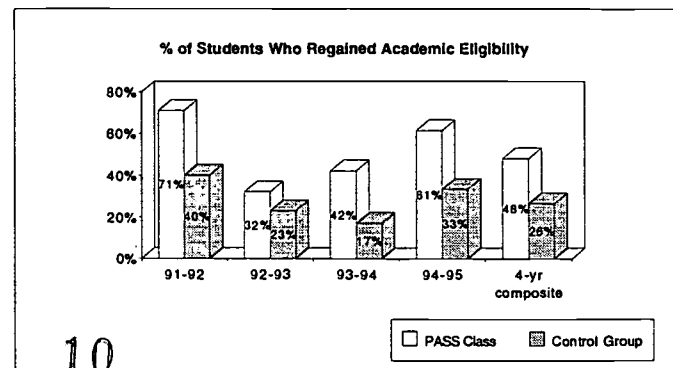
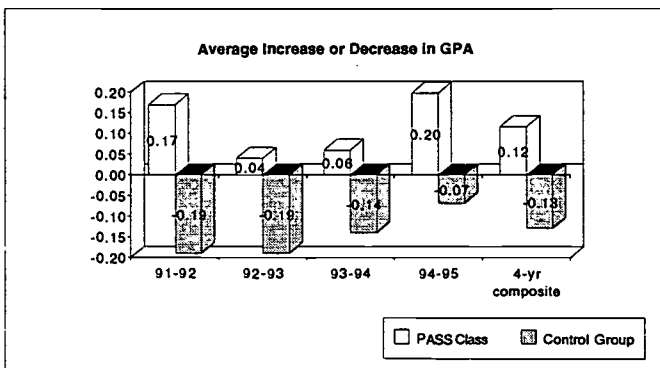
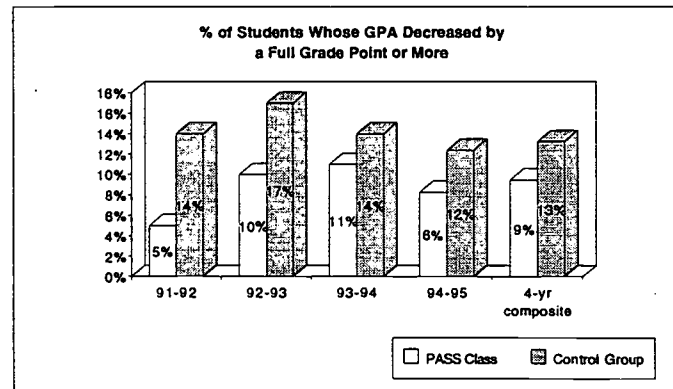
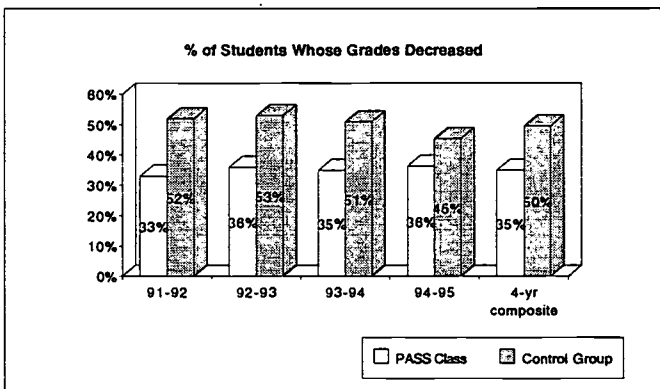
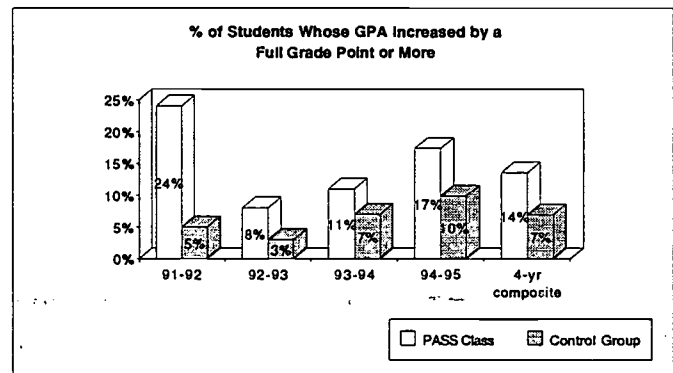
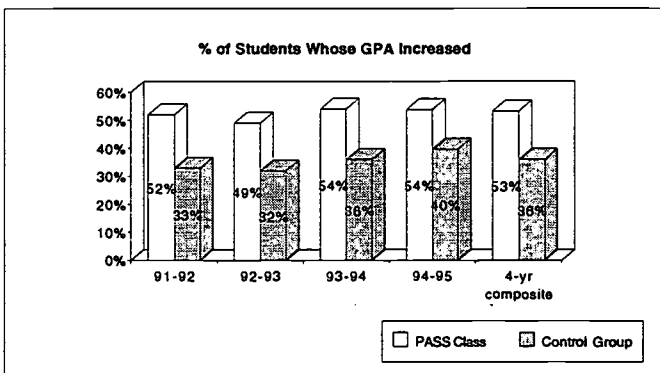
The Four-Year Impact Study and Summary Report confirms that by participating in the PASS program, high school students improve their academic performance as measured by overall GPA. Further, the report supports the view held by the American Sports Institute that in order to improve the academic performance of physically-oriented students, there needs to be an *increased*--not a *decreased*--emphasis on the appropriate study and practice of sport.



AMERICAN SPORTS INSTITUTE

Four-Year Impact Study 1991/92 - 1994/95

The report below summarizes the impact of the Promoting Achievement in School through Sport program (PASS) on student academic achievement during the 1991-92, 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95 school years as well as during the four-year period as a whole. To determine PASS's impact, each year students in the PASS classes were matched against non-PASS students in a control group based on gender, grade level, and ethnicity. Both for the PASS students and the control group, semester grades for all subjects for the previous spring were collected at the beginning of each school year; spring semester grades were collected again at the end of the year for both groups after the PASS students had participated in the one-year course. The charts below summarize PASS's impact on the academic achievement of the 308 students who participated in PASS classes during those four years. A more detailed report is available upon request.





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