

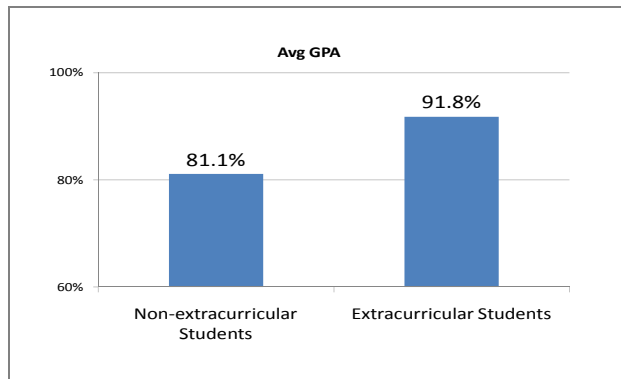
A Case for Extracurricular Facilities

Through the years Texas school districts have struggled to justify facilities for extracurricular activities. Some argue extracurricular activities detract from the classroom. Others argue that extracurricular activities enhance academics.

In the fall of 2004, Hunter Corral Associates conducted a survey to determine the correlation between involvement in extracurricular activities and student achievement/attendance. The intent was not to suggest that extracurricular activities are more important than academics. This research measured the actual relationship in terms of GPA's and attendance rates. The survey was not a subjective opinion poll.

Districts were asked to provide the average GPA and attendance rates for three groups of students . . . those involved in athletics, those involved in fine arts, and those not involved in either. The study included 19,593 in 10 districts. High school enrollment of responding districts varied from 103 to 4,277. The findings were:

- The average GPA of students involved in extracurricular activities was 13% higher than students not involved in extracurricular activities.
- The average attendance rate of those involved in extracurricular activities was 4% higher than students not involved in extracurricular activities. **This is equal to 7 days of school over the school year.**
- In every district, the average extracurricular student GPA and attendance rate was higher.
- The larger the school district, the higher the GPA spread between those involved in extracurricular activities and those that were not.



Similar Research Findings

Other similar research projects (Silliker & Quirk-1977, William Camp-1990, Herbert Marsh-1992, R. McNeal-1995, Susan Gerber-1996, Mahoney & Cairns-1997, Modi, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges-1998) across the nation also indicated that students involved in extracurricular activities make better grades and have better attendance rates than those not involved in extracurricular activities.

There are many theories for the correlation of extracurricular activities and classroom performance. Some believe those involved in extracurricular activities are more motivated to make their grades to stay eligible. Some believe the more motivated students gravitate to extracurricular activities. Some believe such activities keep the student more stimulated. Some believe that extracurricular students do better because they have their "niche" in school. Some believe such activities foster a sense of belonging to the school.

Regardless of the theory, the association of those involved in extracurricular activities with improved grades and attendance is undeniable.

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