

Assessing and Evaluating the National Archery in the Schools Program



The National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) is a venture of state departments of education, state fish and wildlife agencies, and archery organizations and equipment manufacturers with the mission of promoting student education and lifelong interest and participation in the sport of archery.



"Every student can succeed, [whether they are] athletic or not. Following directions, listening, concentrating, patterning, joyful physical activity are all essential school skills that are taught directly as a part of the NASP." —Michigan Instructor

The program, which is administered by the non-profit NASP Inc., provides international-style target archery training through a standardized education package that can be directly incorporated into a school's physical education or other curriculum. Since its inception in March 2002, more than 4 million students at 4,900 schools located in 46 states and 5 countries have participated in the NASP.

In 2008–2009, Responsive Management, in consultation with Hilarie Davis, Ed.D., of Technology for Learning Consortium, conducted a two-phase evaluation for the NASP to examine four hypotheses: (1) learning archery is engaging to students; (2) through archery, students improve learning skills and attitudes; (3) archery positively affects student interest in archery and other sports, and student participation in the archery program positively affects family interest in archery; and (4) archery positively affects student attendance and performance in school.

This was a multi-phase evaluation that entailed a questionnaire administered to a representative sample of physical education (PE) instructors from 10 of the 46

states involved in the NASP, a questionnaire administered to a representative sample of students who participated in the NASP from the same 10 states, and a quantitative evaluation of the impact that the NASP has on student attendance and grades. The final phase of the study was designed to incorporate student records into the analyses. For complete quantitative analyses of the impact of the NASP on



*"The NASP program has given students that have not been that successful in other sports or even in school in general a chance to be successful, and be on the school team that attended the state tournament. This was a big boost in self-esteem."
—Ohio Instructor*

student attendance and performance, student records are necessary. The researchers are in the process of obtaining those records. Preliminary results of the first two phases of the study include the following:

- **Students Are Satisfied With the NASP.** Most students (80%) like the archery program in their schools, and a large majority (85%) report that their instructors did a good job teaching archery.
- **Students Are Engaged by the NASP.** A majority of students (74%) think the archery program is exciting, and just over three quarters (76%) rated their archery skills as either good or very good after taking the course.
- **Archery Improves Student Self-Confidence.** Eighty-four percent (84%) of instructors agree that archery has improved their students' self-confidence, reporting that archery gives students more confidence in their relationships with their teachers (51%), in other sports or physical activities (50%), and in friendships with other students (43%).
- **Archery Improves Student Motivation.** Seventy-eight percent (78%) of instructors agree that archery has improved student motivation, saying that the NASP gives students more motivation to stay out of trouble and be respectful of adults and friends (48%), to attend school (41%), to participate in other sports and activities (29%), and to get better grades (26%).
- **Archery Improves Student Behavior.** Most instructors (74%) agree that archery has improved student behavior; more than half (53%) report that student behavior as a whole has improved because of the program.
- **Archery Improves Student Concentration and Focus.** When asked specifically about student attention in archery, 76% of instructors believe that students pay more attention to what they are doing in NASP courses than in other classes.
- **The NASP Increases Student Interest and Involvement in Archery.** Seventy-nine percent (79%) of instructors say that the NASP has increased student interest in archery. Just over half (51%) of NASP students indicate that they have participated in archery since taking it in school.
- **The NASP Increases Student Interest in Hunting and Shooting Sports.** A significant percentage of NASP students (30%) indicate that they are more interested in other shooting sports since taking the archery program in school.
- **The NASP Improves Student Academic Performance.** When asked specifically if the NASP has affected student performance in their PE classes, 43% of instructors who had more experience teaching archery or who taught classes with more intense archery programs report that archery has improved student performance.
- **The NASP Increases Attendance in PE Classes.** When asked if they agree with a series of statements, nearly half (49%) of instructors say that the NASP has increased student attendance in their PE classes.



*"We have a ton of kids who are never going to be baseball or football or track stars. You don't have to be strong, you don't have to be tall, you don't have to be fast—anyone can be an archer. And it's a life sport, it's something you can do until you're seventy or eighty. And I think that's huge for kids."
—Minnesota Instructor*