



Morrison Institute for Public Policy

At-Risk Pilot "Program"
Strategies, Results and Funding

Extracted from:

**FY 1989/90 Arizona At-Risk
Pilot Project Report**

Prepared by

Morrison Institute for Public Policy

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**TABLE 1
ARIZONA AT-RISK PILOT PROGRAMS**

URBAN/SUBURBAN

RURAL

RESERVATION*

Phase I (Began FY 1988/89)

K-3 "Districts"

Creighton Elem.
Laveen Elem.
Littleton Elem.
Murphy Elem.
Osborn Elem.
Phoenix Elem.
Roosevelt Elem.
Wilson Elem.

Ash Fork Unified
Coolidge Elem.
Mary C. O'Brien Elem.
Morristown Elem.
Nogales Unified
Picacho Elem.
Somerton Elem.

Chinle Unified
Ganado Unified
Kayenta Unified
Page Unified
San Carlos Unified
Sanders Unified
Whiteriver Unified

7-12 "Districts"

Creighton Elem. (7-8)
Dysart Unified
Sunnyside Unified
Tucson Unified

Nogales Unified
Pinal Co. Consortium
• Apache Junction Unified
• Casa Grande Elem.
• Casa Grande Union
• Coolidge Unified
• Mammoth-San Manuel Unified
• Maricopa Unified
• Pinal Co. Alt. Ed.
• Santa Cruz Valley Union
• Superior Unified
Somerton Elem.

Ganado Unified
Kayenta Unified (9-12)
San Carlos Unified (7-8)
Sanders Unified

Phase II (Began FY 1989/90)

K-3 "Districts"

Avondale Elem.
Isaac Elem.

Aguila Elem.
Buckeye Elem.
Douglas Elem.
Eloy Elem.
Gadsden Elem.
Hyder Elem.
Salome Consolidated Elem.
Stanfield Elem.

Ft. Thomas Unified
Holbrook Unified
Red Mesa Unified

K-3 "Schools"

Balsz Elem. Dist.
• Balsz School
Dysart Unified Dist.
• El Mirage School
Sunnyside Unified Dist.
• Los Ranchitos School
Tempe Elem. Dist.
• Scales School

Peach Springs Elem. Dist.
• Peach Springs School
Tuba City Unified Dist.
• Cameron School
• Gap School

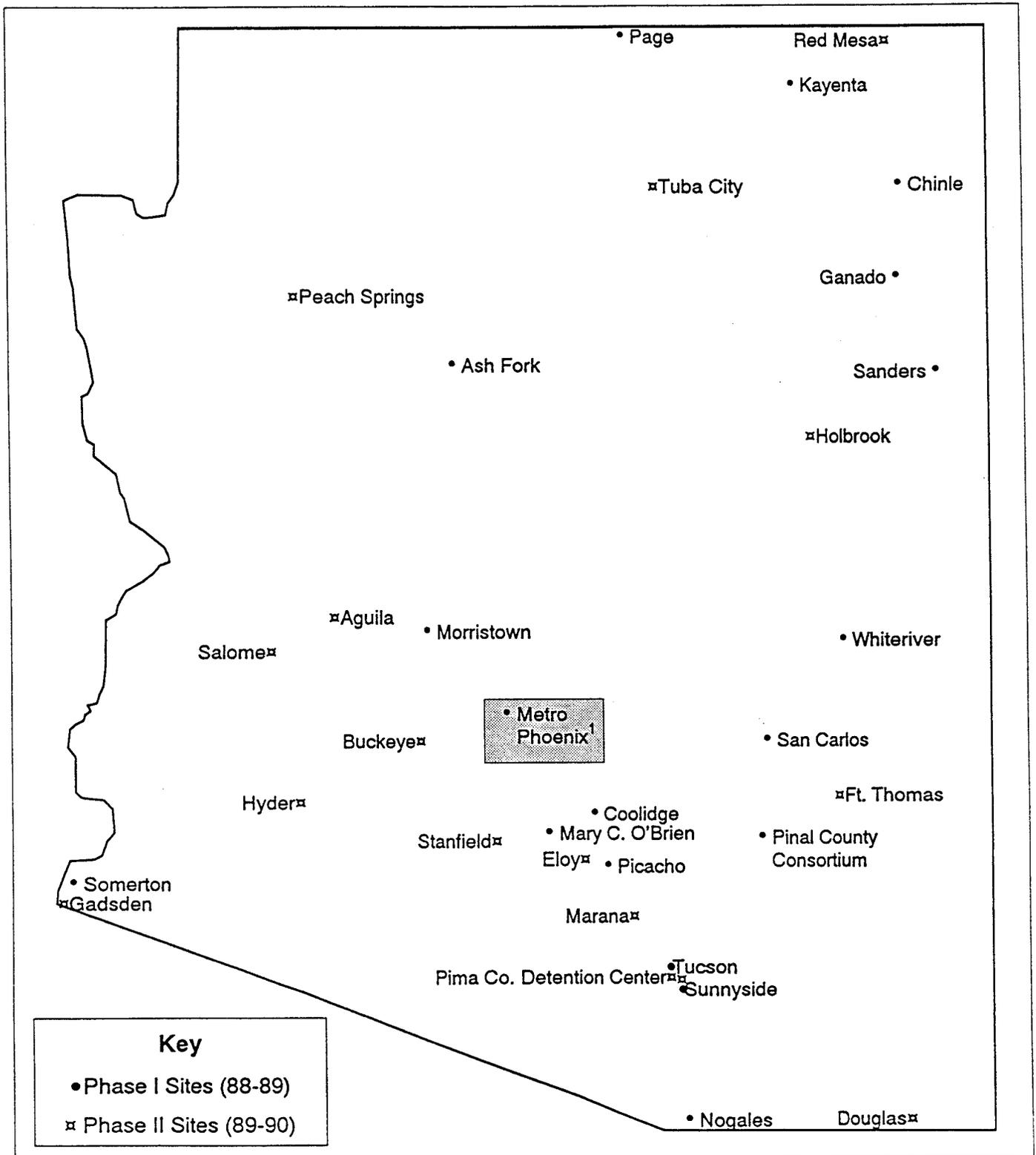
7-12 "Districts"

Pima Co. Detention Center

Marana Unified

* Note: These districts are located on reservations or are in locations with Native American student populations of at least 25%.

TABLE 2
ARIZONA AT-RISK PILOT SITES



¹Metro Phoenix area sites:

Phase I: Creighton, Dysart, Laveen, Littleton, Murphy, Osborn, Phoenix, Roosevelt, and Wilson
Phase II: Avondale, Balsz, Dysart, Isaac, and Tempe

TABLE 3
1989-90 STUDENT SERVICES/STRATEGIES

K-3 Districts (Phase I):	1) Implement Alternative Delivery Systems				2) Reduce Staff/Student Ratios		3) Alter Classroom Instruction		4) Supplement Individualized Instruction			5) Provide "Special" Activities		6) Extend Services During Summer		7) Add/Expand Facilities		8) Enhance On-Going Assessment		(9) Add/Expand Counseling/Soc. Services	Special Personnel
	Full-day Kindergarten	Multi-year	Multi-grade	Other	Teachers	Aides	DAP	CAI	Before	During	After	Support	Enrichment	School	Program	Direct Service	Indirect Service	Tests	Teams		
Ash Fork							•							•	•		•				
Chinle					•	•	•	•		•	•		•		•		•			•	•
Coolidge	•	•					•							•							
Creighton					•	•	•							•						•	•
Ganado						•		•		•	•			•		•	•				
Kayenta		•	•	•			•					•	•	•			•				
Laveen	•						•													•	•
Littleton	•				•		•		•		•									•	•
Mary C. O'Brien												•	•		•		•				
Morristown																•					
Murphy	•						•														•
Nogales						•								•							
Osborn										•	•			•					•		
Page										•			•			•		•	•	•	•
Phoenix Elem.	•				•	•	•					•		•							
Picacho						•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•							
Roosevelt	•			•	•	•	•					•	•				•				•
San Carlos					•	•	•							•			•				
Sanders		•	•			•	•	•	•					•							•
Somerton							•		•		•	•		•							
Whiteriver				•		•	•			•		•				•	•	•	•	•	•
Wilson	•					•	•					•		•		•	•				

TABLE 3 (continued)
1989-90 STUDENT SERVICES/STRATEGIES

	1) Implement Alternative Delivery Systems				2) Reduce Staff/Student Ratios		3) Alter Classroom Instruction		4) Supplement Individualized Instruction			5) Provide "Special" Activities		6) Extend Services During Summer		7) Add/Expand Facilities		8) Enhance On-Going Assessment		(9)	
	Full-day Kindergarten	Multi-year	Multi-grade	Other	Teachers	Aides	DAP	CAI	Before	During	After	Support	Enrichment	School	Program	Direct Service	Indirect Service	Tests	Teams	Add/Expand Counseling/Soc. Services	Special Personnel
K-3 Districts (Phase II):																					
Aguila							•									•					
Avondale				•	•	•				•							•	•			
Buckeye											•		•		•					•	
Douglas						•	•				•		•	•	•	•					
Eloy							•						•	•		•					•
Ft. Thomas	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91																				
Gadsden														•							
Holbrook										•	•										
Hyder							•					•		•							
Isaac				•	•	•	•			•				•							
Red Mesa	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91																				
Salome					•		•					•									
Stanfield					•		•					•	•								
K-3 Schools (Phase II):																					
Balsz							•					•		•							
Dysart	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91																				
Peach Springs	NO DATA AVAILABLE																				
Sunnyside	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91																				
Tempe	•				•	•	•					•				•					
Tuba City-Gap							•	•						•							
Tuba City-Cameron							•	•						•							

TABLE 4
1989-90 PARENT SERVICES/STRATEGIES

K-3 Districts (Phase I):	Formal Communication		Home Visits			2) Increase/Expand Opportunities for School-Based Involvement			3) Upgrade Parent Skills			4) Enhance Social Counseling/ Special Personnel
	Written	Contacts	Take-home activities w/follow-up	w/training? w/follow-up	Formal parent volunteer program	Advisory roles for at-risk	Events	Workshops		Structured classes		
								Topical	Make 'n Take			
Ash Fork												
Chinle												
Coolidge												
Creighton												
Canado												
Kayenta												
Laven												
Littleton												
Mary C. O'Brien												
Morristown												
Murphy												
Nogales												
Osborn												
Page												
Phoenix Elem.												
Pieacho												
Roosevelt				Yes								
San Carlos												
Sanders												
Somerton												
Whitever												
Wilson												

**TABLE 4 (continued)
1989-90 PARENT SERVICES/STRATEGIES**

K-3 Districts (Phase II):	1) Increase Home/Community Outreach Efforts				2) Increase/Expand Opportunities for School-Based Involvement			3) Upgrade Parent Skills			4) Enhance Counseling/ Social Services	Special Personnel
	Formal Communication		Home Visits w/training?	Take-home activities w/follow-up	Formal parent volunteer program	Advisory roles for at-risk	Events	Workshops		Structured classes		
	Written	Contacts						Topical	Make 'n Take			
Aguila	•	•					•					
Avondale					•			•	•			
Buckeye		•	•				•			•	•	
Douglas	•	•						•				
Eloy		•			•							
Ft. Thomas	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91											
Gadsden								•				
Holbrook	•							•				
Hyder			•	Yes	•							
Isaac	•	•					•	•				
Red Mesa	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91											
Salome					•							
Stanfield	•		•		•		•	•	•			
K-3 Schools (Phase II):												
Balsz	•	•	•					•				
Dysart	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91											
Peach Springs	NO DATA AVAILABLE											
Sunnyside	IMPLEMENTED 1990-91											
Tempe								•				
Tuba City-Gap		•	•			•		•				
Tuba City-Cameron								•				

TABLE 5
1989/90 7-12 STUDENT SERVICES
Primary Delivery Systems¹

7-12 Districts (Phase I):	1) Alternative Schools/Programs		2) Special Classes/Labs	3) Formal Tutorial Programs		4) Summer School
	On-site	Off-site		During School	After School	
Creighton			•			
Dysart	X X	• X	•	• X		•
Ganado			•	X		• X
Kayenta			X X	X	X	
Nogales	•	X	X	X		•
Pinal Co. Consortium						
Apache Junction	• X					
Casa Grande Elem.	•					
Casa Grande UHS	X					
Coolidge Unified	X					
Mammoth/San Manuel		X				
Maricopa Unified	• X					
Pinal Co. Alt. Ed.		• X				
Superior Unified	X					
Santa Cruz Valley UHS	X					
San Carlos				•		•
Sanders	• X					• X
Somerton					• X	• X
Sunnyside					• X	
Tucson		X	X			X
7-12 Districts (Phase II):						
Marana		• X				
Pima Co. Detention Center		• X				

Target Population

• - Grades 7-8

X - Grades 9-12

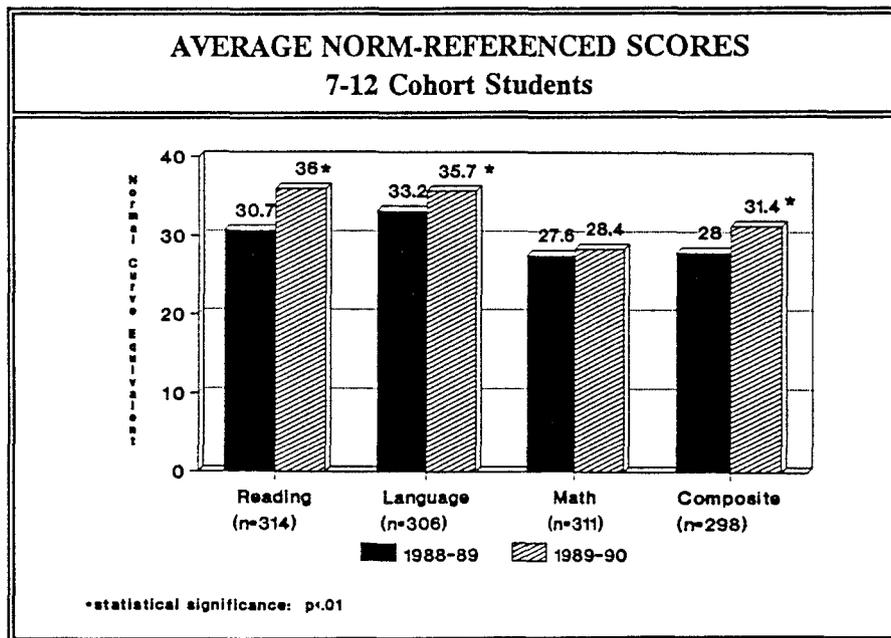
¹Two symbols in one cell = More than one program

PROGRAM IMPACT

Overall, significant gains have been made at both the K-3 level (absentee rates and retention rates) and at the 7-12 level (norm-referenced test scores, dropout rates, and high school credit acquisition). These results are highlighted in this section.

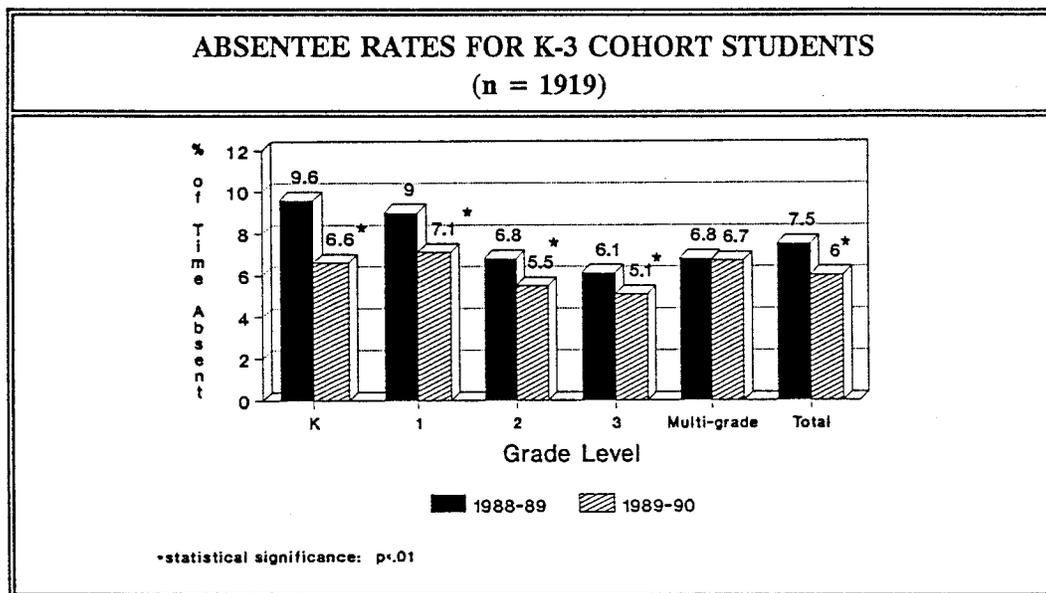
Academic Achievement: Data revealed that the aggregate norm-referenced Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) test scores at the K-3 level decreased slightly, with some gains occurring for specific grade levels and subtests. Although this appears to be a negative program impact, as detailed in the full report, the poor match between the ITBS and the types of skills being addressed by the at-risk programs minimizes this concern. K-3 programs are focusing on self-esteem, oral language development, and critical thinking skills -- skills not measured by the ITBS norm-referenced test.

At the 7-12 level, the average test scores improved in each of four areas, with statistical significance for three. Since many of the 7-12 programs are focusing on basic skills needed for high school graduation, the norm-referenced test is a better measure of the efforts of the 7-12 programs than it is of the K-3 programs. *The table below illustrates that, in every case, the average test scores for approximately 300 at-risk 7-12 students increased when compared to their pre-program scores.* The largest growth was experienced by 314 students who increased their average reading score by 5.3 NCEs (out of 100). A gain of this magnitude in one year is significant. Other data also revealed that large numbers of high school credits were accumulated by the 7-12 students, with many earning well above the average number earned by most students.



School Attendance: The table on the following page illustrates that the K-3 level absentee rates declined by an average of 1.5%. During FY 1989/90, this decreased absentee rate resulted in more than 13,100 additional instructional days among the nearly 4000 K-3 students (over 3 days per student). Because each school day costs an estimated \$10 million for 600,000 Arizona students, the

cost of providing three extra days for 4000 students would be nearly \$200,000. Whereas the state provided more funding than this for the at-risk programs, other benefits beyond additional instructional days were also realized. *These estimates are offered to illustrate that targeted funding of certain programs may result in additional instructional days, a cost benefit not often discussed.* On the other hand, data revealed that the absentee rate for the 7-12 students increased an average of 3.6%. It is interesting to note that the student achievement scores and credit accumulation increased for these students while their attendance decreased. Several explanations are offered in the full report, but in light of the benefits of additional instructional days, this result warrants further analysis by the evaluators and program personnel.

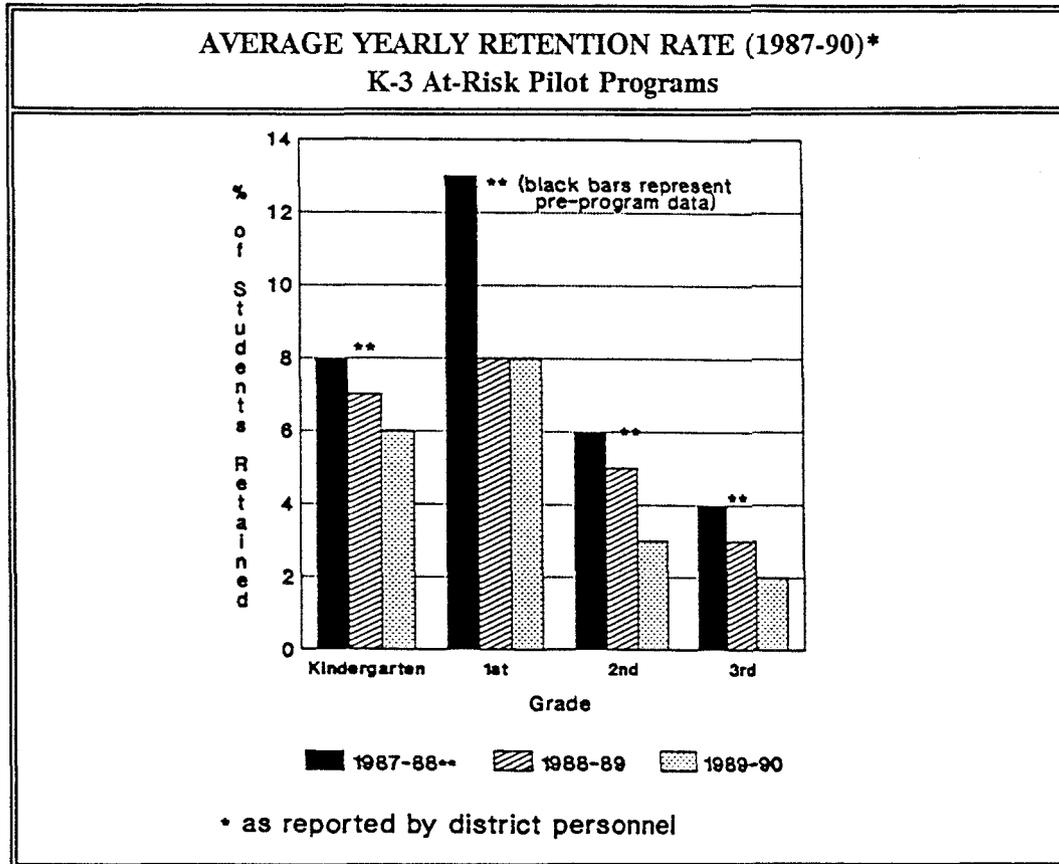


Retention/Dropout Rates: This study revealed a significant trend of decreased retention rates relative to pre-program rates. Recently, much attention has been focused on the potential negative impact of retaining, or "flunking" students. Research illustrates that students who have been retained twice have nearly a 100% chance of dropping out of school. In addition, looking at the cost implications of retaining students, national data show that 2.4 million students (6%) are retained each year, costing nearly \$10 billion annually. In light of this national research, the finding from this study showing decreased retention rates is a very significant program outcome.

The table on the following page illustrates the K-3 retention rates during the past three years. For this analysis, the FY 1987/88 year is considered as baseline because many of the programs were able to implement their summer programs or after-school activities during spring 1989 in an effort to help those students most at risk of failing. As can be seen, the average retention rates at each grade level have decreased since the implementation of the at-risk programs. The greatest decrease occurred at the first grade level, where the number of students being retained decreased by over 5%.

Considering that nearly 20% of the at-risk students being served in 7-12 programs have already been retained at least twice, this decreased retention rate at the lower grade levels should

have a profound long-term effect. *Receiving additional assistance during the school year, rather than spending an extra year in school, benefits both the students and the state.* For the student, there is a decreased chance of dropping out, whereas the state is no longer responsible for paying the costs of an extra year or two of school. Other data revealed that a slight decrease in the average dropout rates among the at-risk pilot high schools had occurred since program implementation.



Attitudes: Student survey responses illustrated an overall positive attitude toward the program components. Specifically, the majority of the 7-12 students indicated that their grades, their attitude about completing school, and their confidence level had improved as a result of the at-risk program. However, these results varied depending on the program strategy to which the students were exposed. *It appeared that those who received the greatest amount of individualized support responded most positively.*

Overall teacher impressions suggested that at-risk program instructional activities improved student achievement and self-esteem. However, other aspects of the program were not always rated as highly. Teachers indicated that linkages with other school programs and the community had not occurred to a great degree. Although it was reported that many teachers were involved in additional staff development opportunities, teachers generally rated their district's overall staff development program as "average." In addition, although major efforts were directed toward increasing parental involvement, teachers as a whole indicated that improved parent interactions had not improved significantly from the prior year.

Table C-1
GRANT FUNDING¹
K-3 AND 7-12 AT-RISK PILOT PROGRAMS

	FY 1988/89	FY 1989/90	FY 1990/91
K-3 Phase I Districts:			
Ash Fork Unified	\$ 12,693	\$ 13,745	\$ 13,745
Chinle Unified	171,554	180,195	180,195
Coolidge Elem.	71,955	91,032	91,032
Creighton Elem.	232,050	216,656	216,656
Ganado Unified	221,030	206,367	206,367
Kayenta Unified	119,424	106,204	106,204
Laveen Elem.	88,176	163,391	163,391
Littleton Elem.	69,784	144,852	144,852
Mary C. O'Brien Elem.	59,845	56,895	56,895
Morristown Elem.	21,490	43,046	43,046
Murphy Elem.	255,000	238,083	238,083
Nogales Unified	212,489	198,393	198,393
Osborn Elem.	75,690	98,618	98,618
Page Unified	65,547	118,997	118,997
Phoenix Elem.	216,914	202,524	202,524
Picacho Elem.	81,229	69,791	69,791
Roosevelt Elem.	127,418	245,086	245,086
San Carlos Unified	60,600	99,015	99,015
Sanders Unified	54,000	145,617	145,617
Somerton Elem.	151,392	159,017	159,017
Whiteriver Unified	76,720	142,875	142,875
Wilson Elem.	255,000	232,083	232,083
K-3 Phase II Districts:			
Aguila Elem.		\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000
Avondale Elem.		154,004	154,004
Buckeye Elem.		53,897	53,897
Douglas Unified		258,392	258,392
Eloy Elem.		270,686	270,686
Ft. Thomas Unified		49,310	49,310
Gadsden Elem.		102,375	102,375
Holbrook Unified		109,999	109,999
Hyder Elem.		49,310	49,310
Isaac Elem.		266,936	266,936
Red Mesa Unified		57,400	57,400
Salome Consolidated Elem.		30,032	30,032
Stanfield Elem.		86,178	86,178

¹As reported by the Arizona Department of Education.

Table C-1 (continued)

	FY 1988/89	FY 1989/90	FY 1990/91
K-3 Phase II Schools:			
Balsz Elem. - Balsz Sch.		\$ 58,325	\$ 58,325
Dysart Unified - El Mirage Sch.		58,086	58,086
Peach Springs Elem. - Peach Springs Sch.		48,540	48,540
Sunnyside Unified - Los Ranchitos Sch.		60,000	60,000
Tempe Elem. - Scales Sch.		59,943	59,943
Tuba City Unified - Gap Sch.		59,939	59,939
Tuba City Unified - Cameron Sch.		59,805	59,805
7-12 Phase I Programs:			
Creighton Elem.	\$ 99,800	\$ 136,134	\$ 167,000
Dysart Unified	108,599	178,642	181,517
Ganado Unified	111,186	169,415	149,490
Kayenta Unified	125,865	182,320	234,611
Nogales Unified	193,957	205,803	239,289
Pinal Co. Consortium (9 programs)	190,632	201,400	232,422
San Carlos Unified	40,132	107,770	112,827
Sanders Unified	38,600	140,100	159,000
Somerton Elem.	95,844	198,364	256,425
Sunnyside Unified	121,780	164,080	164,080
Tucson Unified	117,684	196,822	253,196
7-12 Phase II Programs:			
Pima County Detention Center		\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
Marana Unified		201,662	175,134