

## **ABSTRACT**

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**CULTURAL CAPITAL TRANSMISSION  
MECHANISMS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

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Though Coleman (1966) claimed many school factors do not matter for students' educational outcomes, the role of extracurricular activities are not well understood. This study explores whether numbers and types of extracurricular activities in public schools are linked to the proportion of graduating seniors who go on to four year college. School-level data from 129 traditional public high schools in Maryland was examined in an elaboration model with proportion of students going on to four year college as a dependent variable, socioeconomic status (SES) as the category variable and number of different extracurricular activities available as the core independent variable. The higher SES schools showed a positive relationship between extracurricular activities and college attendance while the lower SES schools did not. A rough content analysis also revealed that in general, schools in higher SES areas offered activities with greater cultural value. Theoretical connections and policy implications are discussed.

CULTURAL CAPITAL TRANSMISSION MECHANISMS IN PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS.

By

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## **Introduction**

In 1966 James Coleman reported that school factors were far less influential in determining a student's academic outcomes than structural factors such as parents' income and education. Later, in the 1980s, he found that a few school factors such as school climate had some influence on student achievement outcomes, with higher levels of teacher interest and disciplinary fairness leading to higher levels of cognitive achievement (on standardized tests) and postsecondary educational aspirations independent of structural influences. One school factor that Coleman (later Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore 1982; and Coleman and Hoffer 1987) did not examine in much detail was the role of extracurricular activities on students' academic achievement.

Extracurricular activities exist for many purposes; schools provide them for fun, to help students build social and leadership skills, to help students develop character and responsibility, to allow students to practice and develop their skills and talents, and to expose students to the arts and culture. As a result, extracurricular activities may be school factors that directly impact one kind of class-structured capital – cultural capital. Since cultural capital may play a role in educational attainment, schools that provide more opportunity for students to participate in extracurricular activities are potentially increasing their students' chances for attaining admission to a four-year college.

This thesis examines 129 traditional public high schools in Maryland. It compares high and low SES schools on the number and types of extracurricular activities they offer and compares the differential effect of the number of extracurricular activities offered on the proportion of graduating seniors in that school who say they are going to a four-year college immediately after high school.

## **Literature Review**

The reproduction of inequality in the United States is a serious problem, especially because it is so complex and culturally rooted. To explore the mechanisms by which inequality is reproduced, scholars have analyzed school factors and culture at length. The theories of interest to this study are founded on the idea that cultural capital (expressed cultural elements that have value as symbols – see below) is unequally distributed in society, and this distribution benefits the children of the upper classes and majority race while hindering minority and lower-class students.

This study supports and utilizes these theories, and builds off of research on inequality in education, cultural capital in schools, and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field. The synthesis of these theories (by scholars including James Coleman, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Paul Willis, Peter Cookson and Caroline Persell, Lisa Delpit, Annette Lareau, and, especially Pierre Bourdieu) is that education in the United States is not offered equally, in part because of the kinds of cultural capital students from different backgrounds start with; and in part because of the kinds of cultural capital that they acquire from curricular and extracurricular activities. Because what students get from high school structures their postsecondary educational opportunities, what students get from high school is of great interest to many researchers, and is a main focus of this study.

Inequality in student achievement outcomes in public schools contribute to the seemingly inescapable cycles of inequality in America because grade school education can determine college attendance, employment and income. Inequality in student opportunities in public schools hinders children with lower socioeconomic status by blocking access to universities, the "arbiter of class position" (Bell 1973: 410). Social

mobility (see Marx, 1867; Collins, 1979; Boushey 2005) in the United States depends on admission to college, especially elite colleges (Kamens, 1974). A college degree can be so necessary for economic success later in life that even the smallest influences on college admissions decisions and students' educational aspirations may play a crucial part in the powerful role-sorting institutions of secondary and higher education (Jencks, 1972; Bell, 1973; Collins, 1979; Apple, 1990; Attewell, 2001).

A student's parents' SES is the attribute that grants access to a college degree and influences what kind of degree – if any – the student can attain. The effect of socioeconomic status (SES) on educational attainment is well-studied in sociology. Researchers have found that students' SES background co-determines achievement outcomes along with academic ability (see for example Hallinan, 1987; Teachman, 1987, Jencks, 1972, Jones, Vanfossen and Ensminger 1995). Researchers have studied this phenomenon in detail and found that SES not only impacts whether students go to college but even the quality of the institution they attend – even net of academic ability, grades and test scores (Karabel & Astin 1975; Alexander & Eckland 1977; Alexander & McDill 1976; Hearn 1991; Karen 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 2002; McDonough 1994; Davies & Guppy 1997). This thesis examines one way that parents' social class affects students' college attainment.

The Coleman Report (Coleman, 1966) brought attention to a gap in achievement outcomes between white and minority students and between the classes. Ten years later, Bowles and Gintis (1976, 2001) argued that the achievement gap Coleman identified acted to limit class mobility for minorities and the lower class. They contend that schools are structured like workplaces, and that lower-class students are thus prepared for life as

subordinate workers. Recent research, by Hertz (2001) on intergenerational class mobility demonstrates that social reproduction is still a problem in American society. Hertz showed that a person's social class was still very dependent on the social class of that person's father. The sons of the poor stay poor and the sons of the rich stay rich. Scholars have recognized an assortment of structural and cultural factors in our system of education that limit the opportunities of poor and minority students; but after over forty years of research, scholars and educators have not been able to illuminate many of the micro-mechanisms that produce inequality.

Coleman (1966) first believed that school factors were a lesser dynamic in determining student achievement. However, the issue is more complex than he reported initially, and Coleman revisited his statement in 1982 (and 1987) when he (and Hoffer and Kilgore) compared public high schools to private and Catholic and other private high schools and found a few school factors that had some influence, but on the whole, family socioeconomic background was the core determining factor on student educational attainment. The school factors examined by Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore (1982) as having influences on student outcomes were amount of coursework students take, amount of homework students complete, absenteeism, lateness, cutting classes, school size, and school climate (referring to discipline and fairness, as mentioned above).

Because schools in America are largely funded by local tax revenues (such as property tax), the question of school factors has become a chicken-and-egg conundrum – schools in poorer areas are not as well funded as schools in richer areas (Kozol, 1991). This makes it difficult to determine if school-specific factors are the cause of school success or failure, or merely an indicator of the economic status of the area they serve.

This project examines the effect of one school factor – extracurricular activities – on rates of transition to postsecondary education.

While Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore studied extracurricular activities, they only examine the difference in participation between public, Catholic and other private high schools, and they found that students at other private schools participated in more activities than public school students. Whether extracurricular activities themselves contributed to student cognitive or achievement outcomes was not studied in Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore's 1982 study or in Coleman and Hoffer's 1987 study. This thesis attempts to study this relationship.

By definition, high levels of SES provide economic capital that pays for expensive prep schools and college tuition, and, as reviewed above, high levels of SES provide more school resources; but some researchers studying college admissions directly have posited other dynamics. Alexander & Eckland (1975), for instance, theorize that high-SES students are more likely to expect and desire to go to college and to associate with college-oriented peers. Karen (1991b, 2002) proposes that high-SES families endow their children with cultural capital resources that help them get into college. Karen (1991b, 2002) also repeatedly found that elite families provide cultural capital resources that help their children get into more prestigious schools net of their economic advantage.

### *Cultural Capital in Schools*

In schools, the stratification of cultural capital resource access generally mirrors the stratification of economic capital. Inequalities in cultural capital reinforce the

dominant position of the upper classes. Children of the middle and upper classes come to school equipped with valued behaviors and cultural knowledge, and they share and refine their high-brow sensibilities with one another in school. Their class background provides them with prior knowledge that is useful for decoding literature, understanding science, and appreciating art. The comportment they display as a result of their middle-class mannered upbringing is the kind that is valued by school administrators and teachers, and leads to school success (Lareau 2003, Dumais, 2002).

In contrast to middle- and upper-class students, whose class-based dispositions and mannerisms tend to be valued by school officials, the class- and culture-based mannerisms of lower-class and minority children tend to be devalued by school officials. Delpit (1985) observes that “children from other kinds of families operate within perfectly wonderful and viable cultures but not cultures that carry the codes or rules of power” (25).

Lower-class and minority students cannot exchange and refine symbolic resources they do not have, and they may not learn “codes or rules of power” without exposure to higher class culture; thus they need school-structured opportunities to absorb more valued cultural capital. Delpit argues that schools do little to help the lower class and minority children learn the implicit cultural codes that grant access to higher school tracks and eventually admission to college.

Parents’ and students’ attitudes toward school may reflect cultural differences that have an impact on educational outcomes. In Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Intervention in Elementary Education, Annette Lareau (1989; see also Lareau, 1987 and Lareau 2003) studied families at two different elementary schools – one a high SES

school, and the other a low SES school - and examined how the parents of students interacted with the school system. She found that the parents in the high-SES school were more involved in part due to a host of cultural factors, including their perception of teachers as their equals. The working-class parents viewed the teachers as an authority not to be questioned. This lack of involvement was detrimental to their children's education. This echoes the findings of Coleman and Hoffer (1987) who found that the higher-SES parents of private and Catholic school students were far more involved in their children's education. They found that despite the fact that a public school typically contacted a higher proportion of parents about their children's behavior, 52.9% of public school officials surveyed reported that "parents lack interest in students progress" compared to 6.7% for Catholic school officials and 7.6% for other private school officials. Parents' involvement may reflect their attitude toward school, which may have an effect on student attitudes as well. Willis (1981) studied this link and found that some students from working class homes opposed the order and institution of the school itself, including viewing the authority of teachers as something imposed on them from outside (by *outsiders*), rather than something that supports and cultivates them (Willis, 1981). Thus, there is some indication that cultural capital in the home environment can hinder student success in school. But of more interest is how students acquire cultural capital once they are in school.

Elite prep schools are in the business of training the next generation of the upper class, and they do so in part by transmitting elite cultural capital to their students. In the 1980s, Cookson and Persell (1985; see also Persell, Catsambis, and Cookson, 1992) studied elite boarding schools. The students they studied typically went on to study at

Ivy League colleges and universities. Most of these preparatory schools were boarding schools; that is, the students spent the entire term at the school. Many of these schools accepted children as young as seven years old, and most of their childhood was spent at these schools. Bourdieu (1996) also believes cultural factors in our educational system help support an aristocracy of sorts, though he focuses more on control of state and corporate power by those who receive the appropriate academic titles (particularly Ivy League college degrees). The research of Cookson and Persell explores the top of the economy of cultural capital by examining how it is transmitted to the children of the elites.

Among the many factors determining elite prep school students' success in education and life was a mechanism by which privileged prep schools transmitted upper class cultural capital to the students. Things like etiquette, "high brow" art, and deeply culturally encoded "upper class" recreational activities were transmitted to the students along with the typical curriculum – as embellishment on the standard curriculum or as extracurricular activities. Instead of a class in "English," students would study "Hemmingway: The Man and His Work" (Cookson and Persell, 1985: 74). For recreation, they would play lacrosse and cricket, sail, and organize Amnesty International chapters. Students who are exposed to high-class culture are more likely to act and dress with a semblance of upper-class comportment and speak with a semblance of upper-class conversation. According to Cookson and Persell, the types of extracurricular activities the elite students engage in help them learn how to speak and act proper for their parents' social class.

Cultural capital affects how teachers perceive students and how they treat them. Delpit and Oakes both contend that the way a student dresses, acts and talks affects teacher and guidance counselor opinions of the student and recommendations in the student's favor. Additionally, Farkas, Grobe and Sheehan (1990) used the National Educational Longitudinal Survey to quantitatively test how teachers perceived students based on their expressed cultural capital (based on their class position). They found that cultural factors that contributed to the social-interaction context of teacher evaluations favored students with higher-class SES over students with lower-class SES. Based on their results, they believed that cultural capital expressed by low-SES students was more likely to lead teachers to negative perceptions of their work habits, net of student/teacher background characteristics.

While the work of Cookson and Persell (1985) is invaluable, and in fact serves as the inspiration for this project, it is limited. Their study of elite boarding schools does not cover the approximately 90% of American students who attend public schools. It is especially important to investigate how public schools transmit cultural capital resources to their students because the vast majority of American children go to public schools, including a greater proportion of lower-class and minority children (Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore, 1982) – the children suffer the most from the reproduction of inequality.

This paper terms the ways that schools transmit cultural capital to students cultural capital transmission mechanisms (CCTMs).<sup>1</sup> There are many ways to transmit cultural capital resources to students: through official classes, special programs, or extracurricular activities, for instance. Schools can transmit cultural capital of any value to students – from low- to high-value. Since the value of a cultural capital resource is

based on upper-class tastes, we could call the extremes of this continuum low- and high-class cultural capital. Teachers and school administrators – who have attended college and often graduate school, and whose income generally puts them in the middle class – almost always possess some high-class cultural capital. What capital they transmit to their students and how they transmit it might influence their students' future achievement, especially when it comes to getting into college or even deciding to apply.

### *Bourdieu's Habitus and Field*

To better understand how a person acquires cultural capital, it may be useful to apply Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field. A person's habitus is a set of cognitive structures and apparently individual dispositions by which he or she can come to understand the world. The habitus is learned by spending enough time occupying a certain position in the social world, such as a class position; but it also produces the social world through social actors' practices, driven by their expectations and preferences. These expectations and preferences may appear to be individually driven when, in actuality, they are socially manufactured from class and cultural locations. Habitus thus links the individual to the group, where the interrelations of groups form our society.

Fields are different arenas of the social world, such as sports, politics, higher education, et cetera. People occupy positions in these fields. A person's habitus informs their understanding of a field and generates the strategies and practices they enact within it. For instance, a lower-class person's habitus relates differently to the field of sports than an upper-class person's. A lower-class person would be more likely to consume

popular sports such as football and NASCAR racing, while an upper-class person would be more likely to consume elite sports like golf and sailing regattas.

Habitus may generate self-fulfilling prophecies: In theory, a lower class person would never expect to be able to win a regatta, so he or she is unlikely to acquire a taste for sailing. Consequently, he or she would not take sailing lessons; but, because he or she never took sailing lessons, he or she could not win a regatta. Using the logic of habitus and field, we might imagine that lower class students are less likely to expect to go to college, and thus, less likely to take college-prep classes, and thus unlikely to have good enough transcripts, and thus will probably not bother to apply; but because he or she never tried to build an attractive transcript in high school, he or she could not get into college – not easily, and not into a good, accredited, four-year college at any rate.

Expanding on Delpit (1995), schools should provide mechanisms for access to middle-class and elite field-positions such as “sailboat pilot” or “mock trial lawyer” so that their students can adapt their habitus (and thus their cultural practices) to a level more traditionally associated with college students. This idea (coupled with Bourdieu’s theory) implies that college admissions officers value students with elite habitus, as indicated by their college application materials. With elements of higher-prestige habitus on their college applications, lower- and working-class students might be able to pass themselves off as matching the level prestige and manner desired by colleges and universities. Whether by strategy or happenstance, schools that provide access to elite field-positions may be giving a subtle boost to their students’ chances of getting into college net of their SES.

## **How Extracurricular Activities May Affect Student Outcomes**

Empirical evidence suggests that extracurricular activities do have an impact on student outcomes. Kaufman and Gabler (2004) conducted an individual-level study of the effects of certain extracurricular activities on individual students' college matriculation chances using the National Educational Longitudinal Survey. They found that direct training in the arts (such as being a member of a band) improved a student's chances of going to college. Male students gained a benefit from participation in school support activities such as yearbook and newspaper. In general students who participated in activities were more likely to go to college than students who did not.

There are several ways in which extracurricular activities may affect student outcomes, and each will be discussed in turn. Several of these ideas relate to theories on cultural capital while others are related to social structure. One way extracurricular activities may affect student outcomes is through transmission of cultural capital. Lower-class students may change their personal wealth of cultural capital by adapting aspects of middle-class culture acquired through participation in activities that broaden their *habitus* by participation in field positions more commonly associated with a higher class (Bourdieu, 1977b). Another way extracurricular activities may affect student outcomes is through their value as status markers. Colleges may prefer students with higher status cultural capital, and some extracurricular activities may provide such status markers. A third way extracurricular activities may affect student outcomes is by increasing a student's commitment to education. Theoretically, since participating students like their extracurricular activities, they will value their constructive efforts in school in general.

Two other interesting dynamics may impinge on the effect of extracurricular activities on student outcomes. First, school resources are expended to produce extracurricular activities: money for supplies, technology and equipment; use of facilities; insurance; teacher compensation; and teachers' time and energy. Second, there is evidence that there is a participation gap in extracurricular activities: The most likely to participate are middle-class and upper-class students.

### *Transmission of Cultural Capital*

Extracurricular activities may transmit cultural capital by shifting a student's *habitus*. Leadership roles, exposure to the arts, and participation in middle and upper class activities may cause their habitus to shift into a range where college does not seem so unattainable. Extracurricular activities may make students want to go to college. In addition, they may help shape students' habitus by defining what kinds of activities constitute enjoyable challenges and what degree of intense concentration and academic work are normal for the student.

Extracurricular activities may transmit cultural capital to students by influencing their habitus in relation to cognitively challenging tasks. Csikszentmihalyi and Schneider (2000) examined a longitudinal study of adolescents and noticed that there were class differences in the expectations and preparation secondary students had for life after high school. They examined how family, peers, the media, the community, the school and the school's extracurricular activities influenced students' perceptions of work and play; effectively examining how these students' habitus was shaped. They found that higher-SES students learned to value disciplined and intense concentration in activities that

required a high degree of skill, such as competing at chess, preparing for a debate, or programming a computer. Extracurricular activities helped shift those students' expectations. Also, these students were more likely to realize that they needed to focus on as much math and science as possible in order to best prepare for their future career. Based on their research, they discuss ways schools and families can help prepare students for productive and successful adult lives by teaching creativity and problem-solving techniques and encouraging students to seek and find enjoyment in mentally engaging and challenging activities. It is possible that lower-SES students could gain the same benefits from extracurricular activities in some situations.

There is a host of benefits to being exposed to high class culture other than benefiting how students appear on their college applications. Cookson and Persell (1986) stress that the types of activities that the elite prep students engage in improve their leadership skills and give them a feeling that their effort can make a difference. They often engage in decision making along with school administrators, in curriculum, budgetary allotment, and discipline. It is interesting to note that Universities often allow undergraduate students the same kind of limited authority; however, not all public schools do. Extracurricular activities, especially high-class ones, can improve a student's social and leadership skills. Oakes (1985) contends that public schools teach higher-track (higher class) students more leadership and independent decision-making skills than they teach lower-track (lower class and minority) students. Echoing Bowles and Gintis (1976, 2001), Oakes contends that schools train the children of the lower class for a life of obedience and service work.

Leadership and social skills can be gained from participation in extracurricular activities, but if the nature and quality of these acquired social skills were related to a person's location in the social structure, then the skills acquired by lower-SES students would be the leadership and social skills of lower-SES field positions. These are often referred to as "street smarts," but they also include fluency in the fashions and tastes of the lower class. These skills are just as valid as upper-class social skills, but they are less valued by elites. Meanwhile, higher-SES students could be learning higher-SES social skills in their extracurricular activities – skills such as fluency in the fashions and tastes of the middle and upper classes. Furthermore, since habitus includes expectations, students attending lower-SES schools would be participating in extracurricular activities that guide them toward lowered expectations while students attending higher-SES schools would be participating in extracurricular activities that guide them toward raised expectations.

Schools with more money can afford to pay for more extracurricular activities, but that does not necessarily mean that they will have more. The most expensive activities are sports because they require funding for insurance, equipment, field maintenance, and transportation for away games. Teachers are often compensated more for coaching than sponsoring a student club. The cost for funding other clubs is much lower than sports; yet most schools offer students a good selection of extracurricular sports activities. Activities like debate, poetry and chess are very affordable; and activities like literary magazines and drama can defray their costs significantly through magazine and ticket sales. Thus, financial cost may play a role in structuring access to extracurricular activities, but probably not a very large one.

Another resource that may structure access to extracurricular activities for a school is teacher time and energy. Faculty and staff members must put time and energy into sponsoring clubs and activities. Schools with more energetic teachers are likely to have more activities and more effective activities. However, the factors that contribute to the energy level of a school's faculty and staff are likely to be more complicated than the school's SES alone.

The direct transmission model leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: Schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities, but the effect of extracurricular activities on college attendance rates will be insignificant for schools with lower SES.

### *Status Markers and Class Sorting*

Extracurricular activities are included on college applications, and in that role they are used as markers of status and social class. Cookson and Persell (1986) explain that while many elite private schools directly negotiate with college admissions officers to privilege their students, they also use extracurricular activities as a code to demonstrate their students' social class standing. Extracurricular activities are a major mechanism for transmitting cultural capital to students and thus communicating their social class to college admissions officers. Possession of privileged cultural capital resources is definitely an edge for the students of elite boarding schools, and it could be an edge for public school students as well. More, with the gradual dismantling of affirmative action policies in (or alleged "color-blinding" of) colleges and universities, ethnic minorities are

losing a major protection against admissions bias. The cultural capital information extracurricular activities transmit might facilitate unconscious racial prejudice in addition to class bias. Class and racial prejudices might cause a student who played junior varsity basketball and participated on the step team to be passed over for one who rowed for crew and participated in a madrigal choir.

Some qualitative studies have examined the process of admissions in elite colleges. Stevens (2003) and Karen (1990) both describe some cultural capital factors that can be summed up in these schools' "personal" rating of students and their valuation of extracurricular activities. These studies suggest that a student's application transmits coded information to admissions officers about the student's cultural habits and practices that the admissions officers use (intentionally or inadvertently) to favor students with high "personal" ratings whose cultural capital matches what they perceive as the desired prestige of the institution.

If extracurricular activities in lower-SES schools tend to reflect lower-class habitus, they may have lower symbolic value to college admissions officers. At the same time, higher-SES schools may be more likely to offer activities that transmit cultural capital to students. College admissions employees may consciously or subconsciously select for the most symbolically valuable extracurricular activities on transcripts.<sup>2</sup>

More well-to-do schools would have more "upper-class" extracurricular activities, such as those that are economically restricted or carry the imprimatur of elite culture (for example, equestrian club or amnesty international). These activities would look good on a college application and transmit codes of power to students, so that they could speak, act and engage in hobbies and leisure activities that refined their cultural capital. Less

well-to-do schools would have fewer of these activities, diminishing the value of additional extracurricular activities.

This explanation fits well with Bourdieu's theories on taste and class, and with many a lay-person's cynical suspicions about what kinds of people get into elite colleges; however, it requires further research to prove.

The status marker model leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: Higher-value extracurricular activities will be found with greater frequency in higher-SES schools.

### *Commitment to Education*

A well-researched effect of extracurricular activities is the connection with school commitment. Duncan (2000) found that students who participate in extracurricular activities had better grades and higher levels of attachment to their school. This was correlated with fewer behavioral problems in those schools. In addition, Gilman (2001) surveyed 321 students and found that students who participated in more extracurricular activities reported higher satisfaction with their school.

Perhaps, for middle-class schools, commitment to school is an important factor in educational attainment; middle-class students who rebel, become antisocial, and drop out or slack off are less likely to go to college. Other factors may inhibit lower-class students, though; so students in lower-class schools may be less likely to go to college regardless of their commitment to education. That is, if a family cannot afford tuition, no other factor really matters. The more committed students may still be blocked by other factors. Retention more directly correlates with college attainment in higher-class schools.

Higher class students who graduate go to college; lower class students who have the commitment to graduate may intend to pursue higher education, but structural factors often intervene against their agency (MacLeod, 1987). Thus the positive effect of extracurricular activities may be weakened somewhat.

The following hypothesis reflects the commitment to education effect:

H3: Lower-SES schools will have fewer graduating seniors going on to four-year colleges regardless of extracurricular activities.

### *School Resources and Extracurricular Activities*

If lower-SES schools have more limited resources, and extracurricular activities draw resources and student free time away from providing and training them in basic skills, it could suppress the positive effect of extracurricular activities in the lower-SES schools. Curricular instruction could be more instrumental in getting students to go to college because academic achievement leads to advanced-placement programs, higher SAT scores, and scholarships. If extracurricular activities draw student and teacher time and money away from learning important math, English, science and social studies skills, any positive benefit they may provide could be overmatched by the impact of their cost.

According to this explanation, at low-income schools, extracurricular activities may be seen as a luxury, to be dealt with after solving the problems of outdated materials, students' poverty, and low test scores. At higher-income schools, extracurricular activities may be seen as a luxury as well, but one that gives students a valuable edge both during and after high school. Middle class schools, however, do not need to expend resources to make up for student disadvantages, so extracurricular activities are more

likely to be a luxury they can afford. The assumption here is that educators see extracurricular activities as a less efficient use of resources than core curricular activities and preparation for high-stakes standardized tests.

The idea that extracurricular activities take away resources and energy that could be spent on core academic achievement leads to an alternate hypothesis:

H4: Lower-SES schools with more extracurricular activities will have lower four-year college attendance rates for their graduating seniors than lower-SES schools with fewer extracurricular activities.

On the other hand, some authors have found evidence that extracurricular activities actually are an efficient use of resources. Holloway (2000) recommends extracurricular activities as a bargain for schools. He found that schools that encourage high levels of participation in extracurricular activities had fewer discipline problems and lower dropout rates; and that students who participated in extracurricular activities had higher levels of academic success. Landers and Landers (1978) found similar effects among students in a single high school. Silliker and Quirk (1997) also found that during soccer season, students who played on the school's teams increased in academic performance; their GPAs went up while they were participating in an extracurricular activity. Hanks and Eckland (1976) analyzed data from the 1950s and found that nonathletic extracurricular activities had positive effects on both academic performance and achievement, net of socioeconomic background. These three studies indicate that extracurricular activities are not a waste of money, and do support curricular achievement.

These studies suggest an alternative hypothesis:

H5: Schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities at all SES levels.

### *The Effect of the Participation Gap*

Programs that encourage students to get involved in extracurricular activities are not entirely equitable. O'Brien and Rollefson (1995) found that students from lower-income families were less likely to participate in extracurricular activities. This implies that schools with more lower-income families will see less benefit from extracurricular activities. While it would seem that such schools would also have lower numbers of extracurricular activities, O'Brien and Rollefson also found that there was no disparity in the availability of extracurricular activities offered by schools in affluent versus poor areas.

This "participation gap" could be explained by SES as well as a host of hard-to-quantify school factors. Lower-SES families may demand more of a teenager's time for child care, household chores, or even income earning. As for less quantifiable school factors, the culture of the school, the enthusiasm of the administration, the quality of the faculty, and other factors may play a role in creating this participation gap. These issues would require qualitative research to investigate. One quantitative study (Otto and Alwin, 1977) that analyzed this effect found that while participation in extracurricular athletics had a positive effect on educational attainment, much of that effect was mediated by influence from significant others. Families that place high value on educational attainment are also likely to foster the high commitment to education in their children that

is often associated with extracurricular athletics. Families that need their children for child care, income earning, etc. or families whose children attend a school that is perceived as unsafe or lackadaisical in caring for students are less likely to foster this degree of commitment to education.

The participation gap may modify H1 to generate an alternate hypothesis:

H6: Schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities, but the effect of extracurricular activities on college attendance rates will be diminished (but significant) for schools with lower SES.

### *Race*

The effects of cultural capital with regards to social class also apply to race. Higher-class cultural capital is valued by elites and lower-class cultural capital is not. Similarly, minority-race cultural capital is not valued by elites, while white Anglo-Saxon cultural capital is. Several of the authors discussed above (Oakes 1985, Lareau 2003, Delpit 1995, etc.) also apply their findings to race and find that cultural capital resources are unequally distributed by race. Other quantitative researchers have also noted similar patterns: Kalmjin and Kraaykamp (1996) found that “cultural capital can serve as a route to upward mobility for less privileged minority groups” (p. 22) and that increased cultural capital among African-Americans was statistically associated with higher levels of schooling.

The literature on race and cultural capital leads to the following hypothesis:

H7: Schools with a high proportion of minority students will show more effect of extracurricular activities on the proportion of graduating seniors going on to four year colleges than schools with a low proportion of minority students.

## **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Does the number of extracurricular activities offered at a public school have an effect on the proportion of graduating seniors who report that they are going to college? What effect does the socioeconomic status (SES) makeup of a school have on the power of extracurricular activities? What is the relationship between the proportion of graduating seniors who go on to attend college and the number of cultural capital offered as extracurricular offerings at public schools?

Cultural capital is transmitted to a school's students in many ways, but of interest to this paper is whether cultural capital is transmitted to a school's students through their offerings in extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are conceived of as mechanisms for the transmission of cultural capital resources from educators – middle-class, educated people – to educands, who need to acquire these strategic resources for success in life. There are many kinds of CCTMs, but this study examines only extracurricular activities as mechanisms for transmitting cultural capital and potentially modifying students' habitus.

That students who participate in more extracurricular activities are more likely to get into or even want to attend college is not the central question for this study. This study examines whether the breadth of a school's regular extracurricular activity offerings improves its students' general chances of getting into and going to a four-year college. Do schools that offer more extracurricular activities have students that are more likely to go to college?

The hypotheses suggested by the literature review above, and tested in this paper, are as follows:

H1: H1: Schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities, but the effect of extracurricular activities on college attendance rates will be insignificant for schools with lower SES.

H2: Higher-value extracurricular activities will be found with greater frequency in higher-SES schools.

H3: Lower-SES schools will have fewer graduating seniors going on to four-year colleges regardless of extracurricular activities.

H4: Lower-SES schools with more extracurricular activities will have lower four-year college attendance rates for their graduating seniors than lower-SES schools with fewer extracurricular activities.

H5: Schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities at all SES levels.

H6: Schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities, but the effect of extracurricular activities on college attendance rates will be diminished (but significant) for schools with lower SES.

H7: Schools with a high proportion of minority students will show more effect of extracurricular activities on the proportion of graduating seniors going on to four year colleges than schools with a low proportion of minority students.

## Data

For this project, it was necessary to gather and analyze non-confidential, school-level data from public high schools in the state of Maryland. The data collected includes school name, county, percent of students on free and reduced lunch, Grade 12 Documented Decisions data, and complete lists of all extracurricular activities.

School name and county were useful for organizing data, but they will not be used in this paper. The percent of students on free and reduced lunch is publicly available data that each school publishes individually as part of the federal free and reduced meals program. Qualification for this program for the 2005-2006 school year were \$35,798 for a family of four to receive reduced meals, or \$25,155 for a family of four to receive free meals at school. The free and reduced meals statistics represent a gauge of a school's student population's socioeconomic status. Also, each school published its Grade 12 Documented Decisions data, based on a survey of seniors just two weeks before graduation. This survey asked graduating seniors what they were going to do immediately after graduation. This study considers all categories of college attendance, including 2-year and 4-year programs and combined work-and-school plans to be college attendance. The Grade 12 Documented Decisions Data for Maryland 2005 is summarized in Table 1.

Complete lists of extracurricular activities were much more difficult to compile. First, school web sites were checked for lists. For about half of the schools in the state, their web site provided a recently-updated, comprehensive list of sports, clubs and activities. For the remainder, schools had to be contacted. Email contacts were ineffective, so each school had to be called; and most had to be called multiple times.

About 60 schools were called in total, some multiple times. The majority of schools that had to be called were unable to provide extracurricular activities data. When schools included different versions of the same core activity, each version was included. For instance, one school might have a marching band, a jazz band, and a concert band. It was decided that all versions would be included because schools with higher populations most likely had more students interested in the same activity, so they had enough interested students to create those variants. In sports, men's and women's events were not separated, and varsity and junior varsity events were not separated. In some schools, yearbook and newspaper activities were curricular – that is, actual classes students could take. In those cases, this study still includes the activities as extracurricular because they were included in most other schools' extracurricular lists.

Because of theoretical interests, the study was limited to public schools. Because of the focus on transition to college education, the study focused on high schools, though it is understood that middle and even some elementary schools offer extracurricular activities. Of the 197 public senior high schools in the state of Maryland in the 2005-2006 school year, the data used in this study analyzed 129 schools. This means that 68 schools were omitted for various reasons.

The most common reason (by far) to omit a high school was that it was an evening or afternoon, technical or vocational school. 25 Maryland schools were in this category in 2005. These schools had few if any extracurricular activities. For most of these schools, students had a regular "home" school from which they commuted by bus or personal transportation to the vocational or technical school in the afternoons. Evening high schools were also omitted due to the vastly different circumstances of their

students. Most counties in Maryland had at least one vocational/technical school (several in large, urban counties like Prince Georges and Baltimore), and many had evening high schools. This is an interesting pattern that merits further study; but this paper will not address it except to mention it as a possible threat to validity.

The 43 remaining schools were omitted because of unavailability of data. Two schools that opened (or re-opened) in 2005 or 2006 were omitted because there was no data on the trajectory of their seniors, and no reliable graduation rates. The rest were omitted because data on their extracurricular activities was not available (no lists could be found online and phone calls and emails did not get any results). Baltimore city had a particularly high concentration of missing data for its size. Seven of the twelve high schools in Baltimore were omitted because of the difficulty of getting any data on them at all. These omissions probably weaken this study's results somewhat, but the schools were called at least twice and, where possible, e-mailed.

Because all the schools in the analysis are controlled by a single state board of education, some variance was controlled. The state-mandated curriculum, state teacher certification standards and state-standardized tests probably even out the effect of cultural capital transmission in the classroom to some degree. The general course content of all traditional, public high school courses in Maryland is standardized to allow students to easily transfer credits if they move between schools. The counties' curriculum guides all prepare the students for the same state High School Assessment tests. Teacher certification requirements are mandated by the state department of education. Second, the geographic specificity of the project will control for regional factors that might

influence cultural capital transmission. The limitation of focusing on one state is that the project's results are less generalizable.

## **Content Analysis of Extracurricular Activities**

In order to enrich the results of the quantitative analysis, a rudimentary content analysis was performed on the extracurricular activities lists of schools in Maryland. The goal of the analysis was to look for common activities and try to contribute to the general understanding of how schools that offer more activities may be offering more, richer, and more varied mechanisms for transmission of cultural capital. Activities were divided into various types, with some of the most common activities examined based on their frequency and distribution according to the socioeconomic status of the school's county.

Schools were grouped by SES in the same manner as the quantitative analysis. Schools with 20% or more students eligible for free and reduced meals were placed in the low-SES group; schools with less than 20% of students eligible for free and reduced meals were placed in the high-SES group. Four fairly common activities were selected for more detailed analysis.

### *Overall*

As the content analysis shows, schools in richer areas have somewhat more extracurricular activities. The activities that poorer schools are likely to have was not randomly distributed. There seems to be a core group of common high school extracurricular activities (baseball, football, soccer, track, yearbook, newspaper, student government, and a few other activities). When a school has more activities, they tend to go beyond the common, into unique and exciting – and often economically-restricted – activities. What is meant by “economically-restricted” is that some activities are restricted by access to certain physical resources that cost economic capital.

### *Performing Arts*

Every high school in Maryland that had a complete list of extracurricular activities available had a band, and most had a choir and a drama club as well. Though some schools did not list a stage crew separate from the drama club, presumably they had one as well, even if it did not have the interest to be organized as its own separate entity. Orchestras were less common.

According to some literature, middle-class students are more likely to seek enrichment in the arts, possibly due to parental pressure (Kaurman and Gabler, 2004). An interesting performing arts activity that had the opposite trend was step dance. Step dance is a form of folk dance that focuses on leg movements. African-inspired step dance was more popular in 2005, but Irish styles of step dance also exist. As a proportion of all extracurricular activities in each category, step dance was twice as common in low-SES schools – 1.02% of all activities – as high-SES schools - 0.50% of all activities. (See figure 2.)

### *Writing and Publishing*

Writing and publishing experience is valued by colleges; most academic work involves a lot of writing, and experience with publishing (electronic and print) shows responsibility and journalism skills, not to mention exposure to publishing software. Nearly every high school had a yearbook and newspaper club. The schools that did not have these listed as extracurricular activities had them as elective courses that students could take. Web design clubs were more common in schools in high-SES counties, but

there were some web design clubs in schools in lower-SES counties and even in the Baltimore metropolitan area. Web design clubs only exist in schools where there are enough students interested in and capable of designing web pages – an activity that requires a computer and an internet connection. A web design club is an economically-restricted activity. Students probably use school computers for club activities, but students with home computers and high-speed internet connections have more opportunity to research, learn, practice, and show off their skills.

Literary magazines were very common in high-SES schools, but there were literary magazines in many schools in low-SES areas as well (See Figure 2). As a percent of the total activities in all high-SES schools, literary magazines held a strong 1.06%. In low-SES schools, literary magazines are less common; representing only 0.70% of activities in low SES schools. Cultural capital may play a role in guiding which schools have literary magazines; the rural Maryland panhandle and eastern shore and the urban areas of Baltimore may be less likely to favor “bohemian” hobbies like publishing a literary magazine. Students in middle-class suburbia may have a more favorable *habitus* toward literary magazines. Such “bohemian” pursuits probably look very good to colleges and help students develop creative writing, business and technical publishing skills. Literary magazines are a concrete example of how cultural capital transmission mechanisms may be stratified by *habitus*.

#### *Academics (Teams/Clubs)*

There is a great effort in schools to make students interested in academic topics. A common way to do so is to make academics into a competition. Many academic clubs

are actually academic competition teams. The most common academic clubs are academic competition teams, in fact. But other academic clubs exist, and represent genuine student interest; these are students who are taking on extra academic study outside of class without anyone having to turn it into a game for them.

### *Academic Competition Teams*

It's Academic and Mathlete teams were found in every county, though not every school. "It's Academic" is an academic quiz game that is shown on Maryland and Virginia network television. "Mathletes" is another term for a math team, where students compete to solve math problems. It's Academic is much more popular in Maryland than Mathletes. There appeared to be no pattern of distribution for these teams. It's Academic teams appear to be among the common activities that nearly every school has.

### *Academic Clubs*

Not all academic clubs are competitive. Clubs like the "environmental science club"; the "literature club"; and the "homework club" serve students' academic needs. These clubs help students who are interested in going to college explore the academic topics they might study and look at the fields in more detail than their classes give them. Homework clubs fit into this category because they also directly support academic success. These clubs probably attract students who are interested in an extracurricular activity that will directly translate into better grades. The benefits of studying biology after school are a lot clearer than the benefits of playing flute or step dancing.

Higher-SES students may be more likely to find intrinsic enjoyment in activities that require concentration and skill, according to some researchers. Based on Csikszentmihalyi and Schneider's (2000) results, academic extracurricular activities should be more common in higher-SES schools. Environmental clubs and environmental competition teams were somewhat common at all SES levels, but they were slightly more common in high-SES schools. Of all activities in high-SES schools, 0.91% were environmental activities; 0.65% of activities in low-SES schools were environmental (see Figure 2). Environmental clubs are interesting because environmental science can lead a student into medical, biological, physical, or social science; or into law, policy, education or business. Environmental science is also a motivating field of study for teenagers; they can get involved in activism and effect positive, visible changes in their community and school. The Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education has had some influence in state high schools by helping these environmental clubs along. Environmental clubs are an example of how extracurricular activities can motivate students and allow them to try out various field positions.

### *Leadership and Politics*

The activities in this category include student government associations (SGA), Interact club (high school outreach for the Rotary Club), Key club (high school outreach for the Kiwanis Club), Leo club (high school outreach for the Lions Club), Young Democrats, and Young Republicans among others. Every school has an SGA at a minimum, so every high school in this study offered at least some opportunity for students to practice leadership and engage in school-level politics. Leadership and

politics clubs are dedicated to fostering leadership skills, political awareness, and community service.

Interestingly, the three “society” clubs were not much stratified by SES; the Interact, Key and Leo clubs were about as common in low-SES schools as high-SES schools, relatively. These three clubs represented 0.91% of all extracurricular activities offered by higher-SES schools and 0.87% of all activities in lower-SES schools. The most likely explanation is that the adult versions of these clubs are dedicated to community service, and outreach into schools in poor areas is equally as important as – if not more important than - outreach into schools in more well-to-do areas.

### *Hobby Clubs*

Most schools had at least one hobby club listed. There are a few notable, common hobby clubs. Chess clubs are very common, even among schools in low-SES counties. Membership in a chess club indicates a patient student who enjoys mentally challenging and rigorous tasks – qualities colleges look for. Though it is outside the range of this analysis, it seems that schools with more students attending the chess club, and students who have been in chess clubs from a young age may carry more valuable cultural capital. Photography clubs are economically-restricted; cameras, film and photographic paper are expensive and schools do not usually provide them for students to take home. Surprisingly, photography clubs were no more likely to be found in schools in high-SES counties; they represented 0.54% of all extracurricular activities offered in higher-SES schools and 0.49% of all activities in lower-SES schools.

### *Career Clubs*

The most common career clubs were Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (Jr. ROTC), Future Educators of America (FEA), Future Farmers of America (FFA), and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). These clubs appeared at all levels of SES, but interestingly, FBLA and Jr. ROTC were less common among the schools in the high-SES counties (data not shown). Presumably the students from the middle-class and upper-middle-class schools will be the future business leaders of America. Perhaps they do not need a club to help them along. Also, ROTC is for preparing officers, not enlisted, so it would seem likely to be more common in higher-SES counties than low. It could be that fewer students in high-SES counties aspire to be soldiers – even officers or that they are discouraged by their parents and peers to become soldiers or officers.

### *Sports*

The most common sports in high schools are (in no particular order) football, tennis, soccer, field hockey, pom poms, volleyball, cheerleading, basketball, indoor track, wrestling, baseball, softball, lacrosse, and track and field. Not all schools have all of these common sports, though most do. All schools seem to have baseball, softball, football, soccer, cheerleading, and track. There were several sports that only occurred in high-SES schools. Some were official county athletics, such as swimming and golf. Others were not official athletic teams, but turned up under the category of clubs, implying students paid the – occasionally hefty – economic cost of participation, training, and equipment themselves. These sports were skiing, snowboarding, ice hockey,

equestrian club, trail/hiking club, paintball club, rollerblading, and gymnastics. The most common of these clubs were skiing and ice hockey.

### *Community Service Clubs*

Maryland requires all high school students to do community service as a graduation requirement. There are several common school clubs devoted to service alone. The most common are Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), Booster Club, PTSA, Students Helping Other People (SHOP), and Best Buddies. Schools at all SES levels in Maryland had these clubs. Larger schools had more of them, obviously, but most schools had at least one (data not shown).

### *Religious Clubs*

Religious clubs are important enough to earn their own category, but they are not that common, and there are not many different kinds. Aside from Jewish and Muslim student associations (which were labeled ethnic awareness clubs), all religious clubs are Christian. Many schools have religious clubs, but because of the first amendment, the school cannot promote religion. The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) was the most common Christian club. The FCA is a large, nationwide organization that promotes evangelism in public schools through conveniently pre-existing networks of athletes and coaches.

Christian clubs showed an interesting pattern. Christian clubs (bible study, Christian clubs, and Catholic clubs) represented 0.66% of all activities in the high-SES schools, but they represented 0.91% of all activities in the low-SES schools (see Figure 2).

This indicates that students in lower-SES schools are more likely to take on a Christian extracurricular activity.

## Data Analysis

In order to test the relationship between extracurricular activities and college attendance, net of the effect of socioeconomic status, a Lazarsfeld-style elaboration model was constructed. This model was ideal due to two factors: First, the study is mostly exploratory and theoretical, establishing that there might be some effect of interest present. Clarity of results is thus more important than statistical power. Second, the study has a low case count, to a degree for which most powerful regression models are not comfortably robust.

The independent variable was count of extracurricular activities, and the dependent variable was the documented decisions data – whether a student planned to go to a four-year college or not. The data were split into two categories: Schools with less than 20% of students on the federal free or reduced meals program were in one category; and schools with 20% or more of students on the federal free or reduced lunch program were in the other. The median percent of students on free or reduced meals was 16%; the mean was 18.4% (sd=12.8%). The reason 20% was chosen was that it was close to the mean and would be easier for the reader to interpret. 20% indicates that at least one student in five was from a low-income family. It does not seem responsible to call any school with less than 20% of students on free and reduced meals “low-income.” The less balanced division of data introduces a conservative bias into the results. To check for anomalous results, the data were divided at 15% and 17%, and the same patterns emerged. The reader is reminded that categorical division of the data is not the same as statistical control, so only an unknown portion of the variance caused by socioeconomic status has

been eliminated from the analysis. As a result, this analysis should be considered exploratory, not conclusive.

### *Race Model*

In addition to the analysis by socioeconomic status alone, an elaboration model was constructed to analyze the effects of extracurricular activities on college attendance by race and socioeconomic status together. The proportion of students in each school that are African-American or Hispanic was used as the race categorizing variable. Maryland is overall 44% African-American and Hispanic, so the data were divided at the 44% mark; schools with over 44% African-American and Hispanic students were placed in the high-minority category while schools with under 44% African-American and Hispanic were placed in the low-minority category. (3)

## Quantitative Analysis Results

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for the analysis. First, graduation rates were slightly higher for the more well-off schools. Second, and more interestingly, there were more extracurricular activities with only slightly higher enrollment for the more well-off schools. Third, predictably due to the fact that the data were split by this variable, there was a vast difference in proportion of students on free and reduced meals. Finally, there was a difference in the percent of graduating seniors who reported that they were going on to a four-year college, with more high-SES students reporting that they intended to go to a four year college after graduation.

The regressions of extracurricular activities/student on college plans had some interesting results. For the schools with below 20% of students on free and reduced meals, extracurricular activities/student was significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) positively correlated with the proportion of students who had plans to go to a four-year college; that is, schools with relatively more extracurricular activities had more graduating seniors who wanted to go to college. The R-Squared value is moderate-to-low ( $R\text{-Squared} = 0.365$ ) most likely because extracurricular activities are far from the most powerful explanatory factor in why some students go to college and why some do not.

The regression coefficient for extracurricular activities ( $b = 0.537$ ,  $sd = 0.097$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) predicts that, controlling for enrollment, an increase of one extracurricular activity is correlated with an increase the school's average proportion of graduates going on to a four-year college by about 0.537%. (See Table 3: Regression Coefficients and Figure 1: Fit Line Plot for Under 20% Free and Reduced Meals Schools). This is a significantly large effect. To put it in perspective, for a school with 1,500 students one

additional extracurricular activity would be correlated with about 8 more students going on to four-year colleges.

For the low-income schools, the same pattern was not present. The pattern was weak and non-significant ( $b=0.111$ ,  $sd=0.101$ ,  $p=0.277$ ). The coefficient indicates that an increase in one activity per 100 students is correlated with an increase of 0.111% of graduating seniors going on to college. However, this result has a high standard deviation and is not significant, so these results probably indicate that there is no effect. (See Table 3: Regression Coefficients). It is worth noting that even breaking the data at the median or mean of students on free and reduced meals (instead of 20%), the lower-SES schools still had a non-significant, slightly-negative relationship between extracurricular activities per student and graduating seniors declaring that they are going to college.

Under the Lazarsfeld elaboration model, the pattern of results discovered here most likely indicates specification. Specification is indicated when the partial relationships are significantly different from each other. In this case, it appears justified because the relationship for higher SES schools is positive and significant while the relationship for lower SES schools is mildly negative and not significant. This indicates that most likely SES is not an intervening or antecedent variable in this analysis; that is, extracurricular activities probably have an effect on college attendance for the high-SES group net of SES within that group.

### *Race Results*

The resulting model for the analysis of socioeconomic status by race had four categories of high schools: High-SES Low-Minority, Low-SES High-Minority, High-SES High-Minority, and Low-SES Low-Minority. The most populous categories were the High-SES Low-Minority and the Low-SES High-Minority categories. Unfortunately, dividing the data four ways resulted in very low group sizes for the other two groups. The results for all four groups can be found in Table 4: Results by Race.

The only group that showed a statistically significant relationship between extracurricular activities and college attendance was the High-SES Low-Minority group, which showed a positive effect of extracurricular activities with moderate explanatory power ( $R^2=0.386$ ). For this group, the beta coefficient was 0.594 (sd=0.109,  $p<0.001$ ). This means that controlling for enrollment, an increase of 1 extracurricular activity was associated with a 0.594% increase in students graduating and going to college. This is a significant pattern that confirms that for this group, an increase in extracurricular activities is correlated with a serious increase in the number of students going to four-year colleges.

The regression for Low-SES High-Minority schools showed a non-significant ( $p=0.098$ ;  $R^2=0.274$ ) weak effect of extracurricular activities ( $b=0.192$ ,  $sd=0.112$ ). These results suggest an increase in four-year college attendance rates of 0.192% for every additional extracurricular activity; but the high standard deviation and low significance of the result means it is more reasonable to conclude that no pattern exists.

The analysis of Low-SES Low-Minority schools had an N of only 26 cases, and showed a non-significant ( $p=0.727$ ) positive effect of 0.067% ( $b=0.067$ ,  $sd=0.189$ )

increased college attendance for every 1 extracurricular activity, with very low predictive value ( $R^2=0.022$ ). There is most likely no relationship here.

There were so few cases (only 7) in the High-SES High-Minority schools group that the regression results in Table 4 are meaningless. The results are included for completeness' sake only. Linear regression analysis is highly imprecise with such a small population size.

Despite the two small categories, this analysis tentatively shows replication of the pattern in the SES-only model.

## Discussion

The results of this study indicate that upper- and middle-class schools where students are given more opportunities to acquire or reinforce cultural capital through extracurricular activities generally have higher proportions of graduating seniors who go on to college. For schools with fewer than 20% of students eligible for free and reduced meals, the number of the extracurricular CCTMs offered by a school is significantly, positively related to the proportion of graduating seniors who go on to college. In higher-SES schools, an increase of just one extracurricular activity relates to an increase in the percent of graduating seniors going on to four-year colleges of about 0.5%. Interestingly, this pattern does not hold for lower-SES schools.

### *Transmission of Cultural Capital*

The transmission of cultural capital theory would explain why extracurricular activities have a positive impact on college attendance rates in higher-SES schools, and no impact (or perhaps even a negative impact) on college attendance rates in lower-SES schools.

However, teachers are uniformly college-educated and are generally paid the same (relative to cost of living) everywhere, and it is teachers who sponsor extracurricular activities. A cynical counter-explanation would be that teachers in lower-SES schools take a less active role in the activities they sponsor, but that would be difficult to test empirically.

This theoretical conceptualization led to the hypothesis that schools with more extracurricular activities will have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to

four-year college than schools with fewer extracurricular activities, but the effect of extracurricular activities on college attendance rates will be insignificant for schools with lower SES. This hypothesis is supported by the results of this study's analysis of Maryland schools. The transmission of cultural capital theory appears sufficient to describe the relationship between extracurricular activities and four year college attendance rates.

### *Commitment to Education*

One flaw with the commitment to education explanation is that the data clearly did not support any positive correlation at all between more extracurricular activities per student and college attendance rates in the lower-class schools at all. Since retention (maintaining a higher graduation rate) is actually a bigger problem for poor schools than more prosperous schools in Maryland (see Table 2), and graduation from high school is a necessary prerequisite for most college attendance, extracurricular activities should have at least a small positive effect.

There is some research that may help explain why low-SES and high-minority schools gain less from extracurricular activities than high-SES and low-minority schools, though. Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999) found that low-SES and black students got less return from cultural capital investment due to micropolitical processes, such as those suggested by Farkas, Grobe and Sheehan (1990, see below), who found that teachers had more negative perceptions of low-SES students' work habits.

The commitment to education literature led to the hypothesis that regardless of all other factors, lower-SES schools will have fewer graduating seniors going on to four-year

colleges. Table 2 shows that this is likely to be the case, but the mean percentage of graduating seniors going to four-year colleges for schools in the lower-SES group is within one standard deviation of the mean for higher-SES schools. Still, a difference of 8% is not small.

### *School Resources*

Future research could analyze the budgets of schools in lower-SES areas of Maryland to determine if schools with large extracurricular activities budgets are drawing money from core curricular programs.

The limitation of the school resources effect is that it is hard to conceive of a principal making the conscious choice to sacrifice curricular instruction for extracurricular activities in a budget crunch. More plausible explanations include financial and social-psychological reward economies that encourage teachers and administrators to spend more time coaching sports or sponsoring clubs than tutoring and writing highly customized lesson plans; but here still, it is difficult to envision teachers letting their students fail at math and English while encouraging them toward success in a sport or hobby.

The effect of school resources as a zero-sum factor led to the hypothesis that lower-SES schools with more extracurricular activities will have lower four-year college attendance rates for their graduating seniors than lower-SES schools with fewer extracurricular activities. Since the effect of extracurricular activities on schools' rates of seniors going on to four-year colleges was non-significant but positive, it can be

concluded that school resources either do not play a large part in the effect of extracurricular activities; that they actually are worth at least as much as they cost; or that financial decision-making does not force schools into a zero-sum game where they must choose whether to invest resources, time and effort in better academic programs or more extracurricular activities.

### *The Participation Gap*

To examine the participation gap, further investigations could study not just what activities are available at different schools, but to what degree different classes of students participate in them. This question lends itself to ethnographic research, which could illuminate many of the nuances of the mechanism by which cultural capital is actually transmitted through extracurricular activities.

The participation gap suggested the hypothesis that schools with more extracurricular activities would have a higher proportion of graduating seniors going to four-year colleges than schools with fewer extracurricular activities, but the effect of extracurricular activities on college attendance rates will be diminished (but significant) for schools with lower SES. In this study, the effect of extracurricular activities for lower-SES schools was diminished significantly. For higher-SES schools, an increase of one extracurricular activity was correlated with an increase of 0.537% in the percent of seniors going to four year colleges. The standard deviation was relatively low (0.097%). The result was also statistically significant with a high confidence level ( $p < 0.001$ ). For the low-SES group, an increase of one extracurricular activity only correlated to an increase of 0.111% in the percent of graduating seniors going to four-year colleges. The

standard deviation was relatively very high (0.101%) such that the coefficient is almost within one standard deviation of zero; and it is not a significant result ( $p=0.277$ ).

The results of this study indicate that while the participation gap may be real and may contribute to the main effect, it is not a sufficient explanation for the relationship between extracurricular activities and four year college attendance rates.

### *Race*

The literature on race led to the hypothesis that when controlling for race, the results will replicate the pattern found in the SES-only analysis. Because of the low sample sizes in some categories (see Table 4), this hypothesis could not be fully tested. But within categories with tolerably high sample sizes, it appears that the data support this hypothesis.

### *Limitations*

This study originally intended to include a survey to admissions employees in four different universities, including private, public, ivy league, state, and liberal arts colleges. The survey was designed to learn how admissions employees rated various extracurricular activities by symbolic value. Unfortunately, the response rate was too low for the data to be of any use. An attempt to replicate that survey with more incentives for response (financial compensation) and a larger initial sample size would be a useful extension of this paper. Conducting the surveys over the phone may have been more effective as well.

The amount of missing data in this study limits several factors. As discussed below, it limits the study's generalizability. It also limits the power of the linear regressions – especially for some of the categories that came out small when the data was divided four ways in order to analyze race and SES. The longer the trend toward accountability in schools continues, the easier it will be for researchers to find complete data on schools, even for relatively “minor” factors like exact lists of extracurricular activities.

### *The Independence of the Effect of Extracurricular Activities*

Perhaps the most substantial counterargument against the conclusions drawn here about the connection between extracurricular activities and increased rates of four-year college attendance for high-SES seniors is the argument that the relationship is entirely spurious, and that SES is the root cause of both the number of extracurricular activities at a school and the rate at which the school's seniors go on to four year college. Socioeconomic status influences the number of extracurricular activities offered at a school, but it also directly influences a student's chances of going to college (Hallinan, 1987; Teachman, 1987, Jencks, 1972, Jones, Vanfossen and Ensminger 1995). It is possible that SES causes both extracurricular activities and student outcomes, and that there is no relationship between them independent of their common cause. Perhaps higher-SES parents are more likely to pressure their children to take on extracurricular activities; higher-SES students are more likely to participate; and lower-SES students are less likely to participate in extracurricular activities.

The results of this study show that extracurricular activities have more of an impact on four-year college attendance rates among graduating seniors for higher-SES schools. If the number of extracurricular activities was due to the same exact causal factor as four year college attendance rates, high and low SES schools should both show the same relationship between extracurricular activities and four-year college attendance; yet the relationships turned out different. However, it could be argued that schools with more than 20% of students receiving FARMs have too few students who are economically capable of going to college to produce any evidence of the effect of extracurricular activities. This argument is not supported by the documented decisions data: The unweighted mean of means for percent of graduating seniors going to a four year college for schools in this study with more than 20% of students receiving FARMs support was 40.8% (sd=11.4%; see Table 2). That is, more students are going to four year college in those schools than are getting free and reduced meals.

Furthermore, based on this study's review of the theory and literature on the effect of cultural factors including extracurricular activities, it makes sense that extracurricular activities would have some independent effect on seniors' rates of going on to four-year college. Even if much of their effect is tied to students' family SES, there must be some independent effect.

### *Generalizability*

This study was conducted in the state of Maryland, using only regular, public high schools. It is probably safe to generalize these results to states where schools have similar structures in place for handling extracurricular activities; in fact, the variation

within Maryland is probably as high as the variation between Maryland and most other US states. Generalization to states with year-round schools may be difficult because of the effect of summer vacation on school commitment and cultural capital attainment – or lack thereof – from the home and family environment during that time. States where the average school enrollment is much higher or lower than Maryland’s may also cause some problems of generalization. Coladarci and Cobb (1996) found that smaller schools had higher participation in activities despite having proportionally similar numbers of activities. They also found that larger schools had lower average levels of participation. Finally, Maryland has a good mix of urban, rural, suburban, rich, poor and middle-class areas. These results may be difficult to generalize to states that are significantly more rural such as Montana or Kansas, or less rural, like Rhode Island or New Jersey. Much of the missing data in this study came from Baltimore City, where the city core is represented by its own school district, separate from Baltimore County, so, while plenty of urban schools from the Washington, DC and Baltimore metropolitan areas are included, these results are likely to be less valid when applied to schools in the core areas of inner cities.

### *Theoretical Connections*

The results detailed in this paper reinforce and extend theories of cultural capital and cultural capital in schools. The ideas of habitus and field, especially, have been applied to a cultural factor involved in the reproduction of inequality in schooling. These results should be of use in future studies of cultural capital and schools.

Further, Lisa Delpit's recommendation that lower-class schools teach upper-class cultural capital to children has been indirectly tested. The data do not show that lower-class public high schools benefit from more extracurricular activities, but further research needs to be done to test this recommendation.

Additionally, a qualitative study of how teachers in different income-areas interact with students may be better able to improve upon these results and the quantitative results of Farkas, Grobe and Sheehan (1990) by shedding light on some of the micro-level mechanisms of the processes and effects of cultural capital on student outcomes.

Finally, the most basic aspects of this work applied some of Cookson and Persell's research to public schools. Cookson and Persell studied how upper-class prep school students were prepared for their elite futures, and this study examined one indicator of how public high school students of various socio-economic standings are prepared for their future lives.

### *Future Research*

A school's extracurricular CCTMs do seem to help students get into college – at least in the case of high SES schools. The next question that needs to be asked is “how?” Which of the explanations offered will stand up to further testing? Qualitative researchers may be able to study how extracurricular activities help high-SES schools' students get into four-year colleges. Further research may also help determine why students at higher-SES schools got significantly more benefit from extracurricular activities.

Another interesting question that the results cannot answer is “who benefits from high-class CCTMs?” Since this study uses school-level data, it loses some granularity. For instance, a school with low SES and many extracurricular activities could have one small clique of upper-middle-class students participating; none of the lower-class students would benefit, and the college attendance rate would be lower. But, on the other hand, what if a small clique of lower-class students was exclusively participating in all the symbolically valuable activities? Would they transmit the cultural capital they gained to other students? These patterns might only show up under the lens of more qualitative research.

### *Policy Recommendations*

This study should be relevant to school boards, high schools, and possibly middle schools that are considering their extracurricular activities programs.

First of all, for schools with lower percentages of students eligible for free and reduced meals – schools in more affluent areas – the simplest recommendation is to ensure a extracurricular activities program. It is clear that strong extracurricular activities programs with a good deal of variety for students (especially where students can start their own activities) is associated with higher rates of graduates going on to four-year colleges.

Second, it may be helpful for schools in poorer areas to look carefully at their extracurricular activities. These schools need to examine whether the participation gap is at work, wherein the most disadvantaged students do not partake of the opportunities the school’s extracurricular programs offer. Programs to help poorer students compensate

for economic barriers to participation may be needed. Some students may have to work to support the family; so the activity may need to have a flexible schedule. Some students may not have their own transportation, so the school may need to provide daily activity busses. Some students may not be able to get a meal except at home, so activities will need to provide food or end before dinner time.

In addition, schools in lower-SES areas need to make sure that their students are gaining the same benefits from the activities that they are participating in as students in higher-SES areas. For example, if students in higher-SES areas are learning how to behave so as to be seen favorably by and gain advantages from elites (or at least middle-class gatekeepers like college admissions workers); schools in lower-SES areas could benefit by providing the same guidance and by encouraging students with lower-class *habitus* to take advantage of it. While school-sponsored extracurricular activities that promote lower-class *habitus* are good for the inherent benefits they provide (safe fun, social interaction, learning responsibility, commitment to education) they may not be providing the same benefits that students in more affluent areas are getting from their extracurricular activities.

Overall, based on the evidence presented here in combination with previous research, a key recommendation is that school districts should not neglect extracurricular activities. The coefficients for extracurricular activities in all models presented here were positive, even when non-significant. That implies that there are at least a few students in every school that benefit from extracurricular activities in terms of future educational outcomes. Moreover, other researchers (for example, Holloway, 2000) have shown them to be a bargain for all the benefits they provide. Paying teachers for sponsoring

extracurricular activities also helps teachers find extra income if they need it; rewards teachers for their commitment to their job and the extra effort they give; and helps teachers and administrators forge stronger and more profitable connections with their students.

## Endnotes

- (1) This concept was borrowed from Lory Janelle Dance, my Master's thesis advisor at the University of Maryland. Dance borrowed the term from Prof. John Campbell for whom she was a teaching assistant while attending graduate school at Harvard University.
- (2) To support this conclusion, I attempted to survey college admissions employees at Georgetown, Harvard, Princeton and the University of Maryland. The survey asked them to rate the value they would place on different examples of extracurricular activities (drawn from actual Maryland schools), net of other factors. Unfortunately, my response rate was under 10%; I only got 4 surveys back. Those surveys indicated, very roughly, that activities that helped a student "stand out" were most valuable. Two respondents commented that positions of leadership in activities were more valuable than the activity itself. We can infer that activities where leadership positions actually carry serious responsibility would appear more valuable, in that case. That is, while both positions involve increased responsibility, the president of the philosophy club has less responsibility than the president of the yearbook club. This data is entirely unreliable, due to the low response rate.
- (3) When the percent African-American and Hispanic is multiplied by enrollment for each school and totaled, my data are only 34% African-American and Hispanic. The difference between my data and the state average is that the independent school district of Baltimore City represented a large proportion of

the schools for which I was unable to acquire lists of extracurricular activities. The district encompasses the city core. The city fringe and urban suburbs are mostly part of Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County and Howard County. At the time of the analysis, Baltimore City's schools were under heavy state scrutiny due to low test scores and attendance problems, and were undergoing massive restructuring, which I believe was part of why it was difficult to collect data on their extracurricular activities. This represents a correlation in the missing data for this study and, as a result, researchers should use caution when applying this study to schools in city cores.

## Tables and Figures

Table 1: Maryland Documented Decisions 2005

N=205 Schools (schools with two distinct programs were listed separately)

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Four Year College	41.9%	18.2%
Two Year College	15.0%	6.3%
Special School	6.0%	4.7%
High School Related Employment*	6.5%	7.5%
High School Unrelated Employment*	14.5%	10.8%
Military	4.9%	3.8%
Full-Time College and Employment	8.3%	4.0%
Part-Time College and Employment	14.8%	12.4%
Other	4.8%	4.7%

\* This distinction is relevant for vocational schools.

Note: This table represents all high schools in Maryland; not only the schools used in this project

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Mean (sd)	All (N=129)	Less than 20% Free and Reduced Meals	20% and Higher Free and Reduced Meals
Graduation Rate	88.8% (6.18%)	90.6% (5.4%)	86.4% (6.4%)
Extracurricular Activities	41.3 (18.4)	45.6 (19.6)	34.4 (14.7)
Enrollment	1494.6 (540.9)	1535.5 (434.7)	1435.0 (660.4)
Free and Reduced Meals	17.8% (12.4%)	9.1% (5.0%)	29.7% (9.0%)
Graduating Seniors Going to 4-Year College	45.3% (15.3%)	48.8% (17.1%)	40.8% (11.4%)

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Model (R <sup>2</sup> Value; N)	Variable	Beta Coefficient	Standard Deviation
Low-SES Group (R <sup>2</sup> =0.258; N=54)			
	Extracurricular Activities	0.111	0.101
	Enrollment	0.008*	0.002
High-SES Group (R <sup>2</sup> =0.365; N=70)			
	Extracurricular Activities	0.537**	0.097
	Enrollment	-0.001	0.004

\* p<0.01

\*\* p<0.001

Table 4: Results by Race

Model (R <sup>2</sup> Value)	Variable	Beta Coefficient	Standard Deviation
High-SES, High White (R <sup>2</sup> =0.386; N=63)			
	Extracurricular Activities	0.594**	0.109
	Enrollment	-0.001	0.005
High-SES, Low White (R <sup>2</sup> =0.438; N=7)+			
	Extracurricular Activities	0.275	0.156
	Enrollment	-0.011	0.012
Low-SES, High White (R <sup>2</sup> =0.022; N=26)			
	Extracurricular Activities	0.067	0.189
	Enrollment	0.002	0.006
Low-SES, Low White (R <sup>2</sup> =0.274; N=28)			
	Extracurricular Activities	0.192	0.112
	Enrollment	0.006*	0.003

+ These results should not be interpreted to mean anything due to the extremely low N for this group

\* p<0.05

\*\* p<0.001

Figure 1: Fit Line Plot for Under 20% Free and Reduced Meals Schools

**Extracurricular Activities and Four-Year College Attendance**

**For Higher-SES Schools**

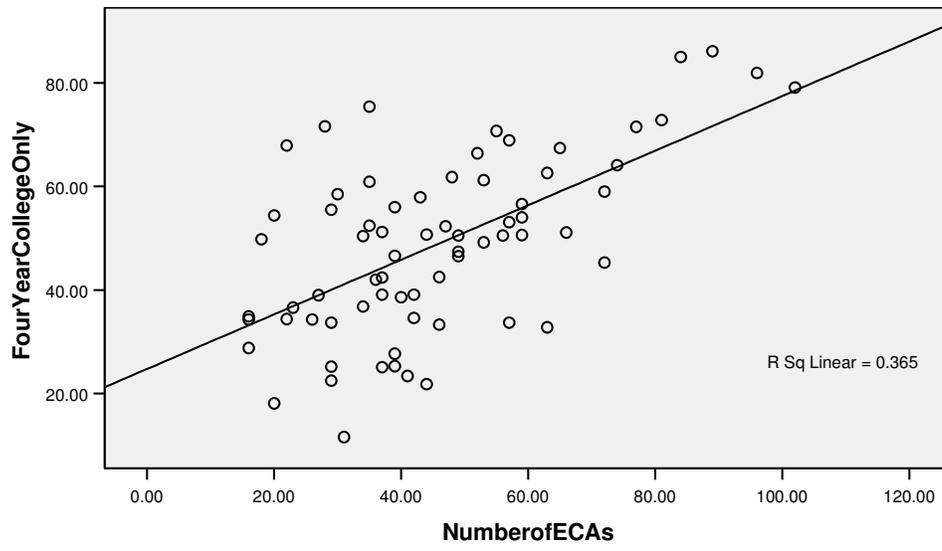
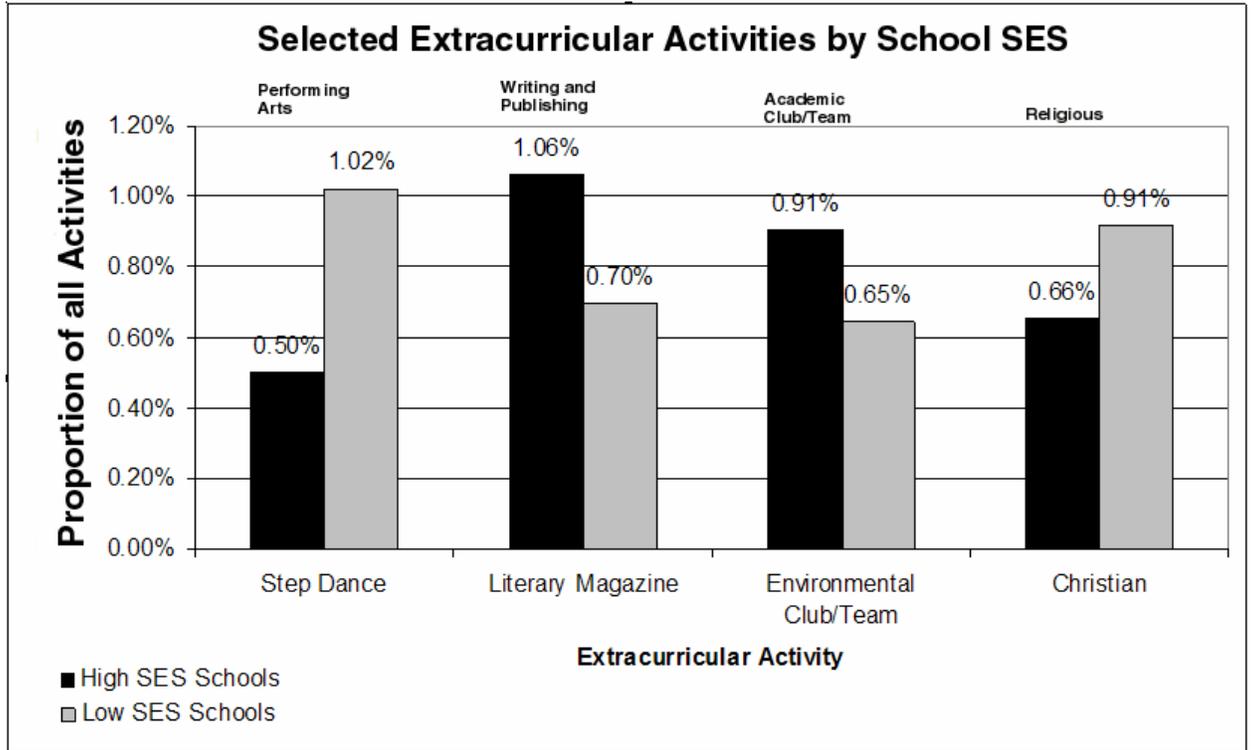


Figure 2: Selected Activities Compared by SES



## **Appendix: Clubs and Organizations in Maryland High Schools**

Duplicates were removed as best as possible. All clubs and teams fall into one category. The categories were developed inductively through examining the data and the naïve categorizations that schools themselves place their activities in. For instance, almost all schools differentiate sports from other clubs and activities. For this analysis, organized competitive sports (i.e. football, tennis, cross-country) have been mixed in with sports clubs (i.e. sailing club, paintball club, ice hockey club).

### *Academic Teams*

Academic Team

chem-a-thon team

Chesapeake Bay Bowl

computer bowl

Data Race

debate team

Envirothon Team

forensics team

Goucher Model Senate

Green Team

It's Academic!

lincoln-douglas debate club

Loch Raven Model Congress

math challenge

math league and AMC contests

MATH TEAMS

Mathletes

mock trial team

model oas

Model United Nations

national ocean sciences bowl

Odyssey of the Mind

Physics Olympics Team

Princeton/Harvard/Loch Raven Model Congress

quizmaster production unit

Robotics team

Robotics/Rocketry

science academic team

Science Bowl

Speech and Debate Club/Team

Student Stock Tournament Team

technology team

ThinkQuest Team

*Academic Clubs*

Archeology Club

Architecture Club

art history club

art/mural

ASL club

Astronomy and Telescope-Making Club

athlete study hall

bay ecology club

biology book club

Biology Club

calculus club

Carroll Manor Language Program

Chemistry Club

chemistry study hall

Computer Technology Club

Cyalume Arts Club

darwin biology

Digital Art Club

digital technology club

dreamwrighters

EAST (International Space Settlement Design)

Ecology Club

electric car project

electronics club

Engineering Club

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CLUB

FIRST robotics

FLEX / FLES

ford advanced technology study hall

Forensic Science Club

German Club

Global Ecology Program

global position system

Greatness in Literature

Green Schools Physics Club

Gunpowder Agricultural Clubs

History Club

History Day

Homework Club

house project

Italian Club

japanese club

Junior Academy of Science

Junior Engineering Technical Society

Junior Litho Club  
korean war oral history book project  
Language and Culture Club  
Latin Club (Junior Classical League)  
Legislative Club  
Literary Club (Got Ink?)  
literary guild  
Literature Club  
LORAX environmental club  
Math Club  
math study hall  
medical ethics club  
Mural Club  
music theory and composition  
national academy of science / science club  
natl history day  
office technology  
Oriental Art Club  
Outdoor Science Club  
Painting Club  
Palette and Brush  
philosophy club  
Physics/Biology Club

project linus  
Psychology Club  
russian club  
Science Club  
science fair  
sign language club  
solar car club  
Spanish Club  
spanish conversation club  
spanish study hall  
Speech Club  
sports medicine club  
Student Academy of Science  
student art league  
students with artistic talent  
Tech Entre  
technology student assn  
the latin club  
Vietnamese Club  
Weather Station  
Website Club  
Women in Math and Science  
Women In Science

Wootton Aeronautics Club

young scientist club

young women in science and engineering

*Career Clubs*

academy of finance

All About Me Club

armed drill team

broadcast journalism

Career Club

CJustice

College Club

college tour

corps of cadets

DECA (Nat. Marketing Assn.)

Dundalk High Communications

Finance

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)

Future Educators of America

Future Farmers of America

future homemakers of america

Future Investors of America  
Future Medical Careers  
Future Nurses Association  
Future Shining  
Future Teachers of America  
Future Teachers of Maryland  
Health Careers  
Health Occupations Students Organization  
Horticulture Club  
Internships  
Investors Club  
Job Shadow  
Journalism  
Jr ROTC Cadet Corps  
legal interns  
legislative interns  
machine tool  
Maryland Page Program  
Medical Explorer Program at Suburban Hospital  
military club  
Money Management and Investment Club  
natl soc black engineers  
NJROTC

Preparation for Real Life Club

Restaurant/Culinary Arts

ROTC

SKILLS USA (VICA)

Stock Market Club

student academy of finance club

Success team

Talbot Advisement Program

upward bound

Vocational-Industrial Clubs of America (VICA)

*Community Service Clubs*

academic support

algebra tutoring

American Field Service

Amnesty International

Animal Rights Club

athletic promotion

Best Buddies Club

big brothers

blood drive

booster club  
campus beautification project  
campus club  
Cancer Awareness  
CASS (creativity action service)  
character education  
Children for Atyrá  
Cluster Tutoring  
computer resource  
cooperative learning  
cooperative study  
designated hitter program  
Diabetes Awareness Club  
drama boosters  
drama publicity committee  
Each One Teach One  
eagle ambassadors  
ESOL support club  
Expanding Horizons  
Expanding the Boundaries  
First Aid Unit at Kensington VFD  
For Our Troops  
Gator Guides

green school project

habitat for humanity

Health Club

Health Suite Aides

helping other people everywhere

Hereford's Organization for Protecting the Environment

HOPE

Humane Society Club

IMPACT club

industrial paper recycling

junior civitan

Kids Helping Hopkins

kindness, acceptance respect and equality

Library Club

Library Volunteers

Little Bear Nursery

make a wish

Male Mentoring Club

Maryland's Tomorrow

master tutors

math tutoring

media center assistants

memorial garden

Mentorship  
Morning Announcers  
music boosters  
music production  
musical production  
Office Aides  
Overseas Relief  
parenthood education  
Patriot Ambassadors  
peace club  
Peer Assistants  
peer coaching  
peer counselors  
peer facilitators  
Peer Mediators  
Peer Mentors  
Peer Tutor/Mediation  
Peer Tutors  
people for animal welfare  
PH Good Friends  
Preschool  
Project Community  
Project Yes

Public Address Crew

Rec. Club

Recycling/Environmental Club

Red Cross Club

Santa's Workshop

SAT Coordinators

SAT Prep- Math

SAT Prep- Verbal

save (non violence)

school bank

School Store

service learning recycling

SMILES volunteers

Smoking Cessation and Education

social studies tutorial

spirit club

Student Assistance Program

Student Service Learning

student sharing coalition

Students Against Destructive Decisions

Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD)

Students Against Sweatshops

students for environmental action

Students for Liberty

Students for the Animals

Students Helping Other People

students taking a responsible stand

The Lignums Project

the viking service club

translation and beyond club

ushers

veterans club

Volunteer Program

wellness club

Wellness Representatives

Wootton Tutoring Association

y-care

YMCA ambassador's club

*Ethnic/Cultural Awareness*

africa united club

African Alliance Club

African American/Hispanic Cultural Exchange

African Heritage Club

African-American Club  
Aloniz  
ambassadors  
Asian Awareness Club  
Asian Culture Club  
asian pacific american club  
asian pacific american cultural club  
asian students in america  
Asian-American Society  
black and white  
black awareness club  
black purists  
Black Student Achievement Program  
Black Student Union  
caribbean SA  
Celtic Club  
Chinese Club  
club india  
culturally international club  
Culture Club  
daughters of nandi  
Desi Club  
Diversity Club

Ebony Awareness  
ebony cultural club  
Escorpiones Latinos  
ESOL  
Ethnic Awareness Club  
Exchange Club  
Experience Israel  
foreign cultures / youth ambassadors for peace  
GSA  
Heritage Club  
Hindu Culture  
Hispanic Awareness  
hispanic culture club  
hispanic voices  
human relations council  
International Club  
International cultural Achievement Student Heritage Club  
international eagle  
international ESOL club  
international student newspaper  
International Student Organization  
Jewish Awareness  
Jewish Culture Club

jewish SA  
L.U.C.H.A (Latin Knights)  
la raza hispanic students group  
las OLAS  
Latino Club  
Latinos Unidos  
MESA club  
minority awareness club  
minority support group  
mosaic  
Multicultural Club  
multi-ethnic club  
Muslim Student Association  
Persian-Indus Club  
Punjabi Club  
Rainbow / GSA  
SAGA (Stright & Gay Alliance)  
Shalom Squad  
South Asian Student Association  
Student Cultural Awareness Alliance  
teens for gender equality  
The African American Awareness Association  
welcoming diversity club

## *Hobby Clubs*

Adventure Club

amateur radio club

Animation Club

anime and RPG club

annapolis artisans

aviation club

baking club

birdwatching club

Bookaholics Anonymous

Book-of-the-Month Club

Bookworm Club

bridge club (like the card game)

Cartoon Club

cereamics club

Chess Club

Chess/Checkers club

Chess/Games Club

Coffee House

Collectible Card Club

comic book club  
communications club  
Craft Club  
crossword puzzle club  
Culinary Club  
DDR (Dance Dance Revolution Club)  
dominoes club  
educational board games  
electronic music  
fashion show  
Field and Stream  
Film Club  
Fishing Club  
floral design shop  
fly fishing  
flying club  
games club  
Got INK?  
Graphic Arts Club  
graphics club  
hackey sack club  
historical and political film club  
internet club

Isshinryo Karate Club  
japanese animation and manga club  
jewelry club  
JROTC Raider Team  
JROTC Rifle Team  
knitting club  
Knitwits  
Ko Revolution Club  
mini crafts  
Miniature Golf and Billiards Club  
modeling club  
music appreciation  
Musings  
Photography Club  
popular literature reading club  
Radio On-Air Club  
READ  
Reading Club  
renaissance  
Rifle Team  
rock and metal improvement club  
rock music appreciation club  
Savin' the Music

scrabble club

Scrapbooking

Skateboard Club

Socrates' Café

Sports Talk Club

STELLA Models

strategic gaming club

TEEN TALK

toastmasters

Towson Book Club

travel and tourism

trip to spain

Video Club

Wootton Roller-Blade Club

Writing Club

Young Jedis Club

yu-gi-oh club

*Honor Societies*

Alpha Scholars

Alpha Achievers

alpha omega  
Alpha Theta Rho  
Congressional Award Club  
foreign language club  
french nhs  
Frosh/Soph Scholars  
german NHS  
High Flyers  
honor club  
International Qull & Scroll Society  
Italian Honor Society  
japanese HS  
la sociedad honoraria hispanica  
Maryland Technological Honor Society (MTHS)  
MATH Honor Society  
Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society  
National arts society  
National Chinese Honors Society  
National Foreign Language Honor Society  
National History Club  
National Junior Art Honor Society  
National Junior Classical League Honor Society  
national latin HS

National Music Honor Society

national science HS

Natl art HS

Natl spanish HS

NHS

NIA sorority

patriots achieving total success

SAT 1200 Club

Scholars Program

Scholarship Club

science NHS

slavic honor society

spanish NHS

Student of the Month

Theater HS

thespian society

Tri-M music HS

twelve good men

### *Leadership & Politics Clubs*

Black Leaders in the Action

brotherhood of super stars  
brothers and sisters united  
Class Steering Committees  
current events club  
democratic club  
Diamond Girls  
freedom writers  
Freshman Class  
get politically active  
girls athletic board  
girls varsity club  
Government Awareness Program  
graduation coordination  
high school democrats  
Interact (Rotary) Club  
Junior Class  
junior democrats club  
Junior Statesmen of America - JSA  
Key Club  
ladies of excellence  
leadership committee  
leo club  
lettermans club

Lightning Leaders  
Montgomery Exceptional Leader (MEL)  
Octagon/Interact Club  
Politically Active Youth (PAY)  
Politics  
Prom Committee  
PTSA  
republican club  
Rotary Interact Club  
SCA Student Council  
School Elections  
school improvement team  
Senior Class  
Social Action Club  
sophisticated ladies  
Sophomore Class  
Speech Club/Student Congress  
Steering Committees  
student activities club  
student alliance for justice in education  
Student Board of Election  
student congress  
Student Court

Student Government Association (SGA)

Student Leadership Council

student senate

superleaders

teen court

The Young Greens

touch of class

varsity club

Young Democrats

young politicians

Young Republicans

Youth and and Government

Youth for a Better Society

Youth for International Awareness & Activism

Youth in Government

*Publications*

electronic publishing

Literature Magazine

Newspaper

Publications Officers

RHS Video magazine

school newspaper

sports announcers

Video Yearbook

Yearbook

*Performing Arts*

band front

Band/Instrumental Music

Barbershop Quartet

beat club

blessed choir

brass ensemble

breakdancing club

Brown Bag Productions

BSAP Step Squad

chamber choir

Chamber Orchestra

Chorus/Choir

Concert Band

Concert Choir

Dance Guild/Dance Honor Society

Dance Troupe

Drama Club

eternity dance team

festival productions

flags

Gospel Choir

Guitar Ensemble

handbells

Hip Hop Dance Team

honor choral group

Improv club

Indoor Guard

indoor percussion

intense art and theater program

International Dance Club

jazz and wind and dixieland club

Jazz Ensemble

Jazz Singers

JROTC Color Guard

JROTC Drill

keyboard

Knight Players

korean traditional drumming club  
latino dance troupe  
Madrigals  
Marching Band  
Marching Band and Guard  
marshals  
Media Production Club  
Modern Dance  
musical theater  
Orchestra  
Pep Band  
pep club  
PH Theatre Society  
Pipeband  
players club  
poetry club  
Poms/Dance Team  
select choir/musical theater troupe  
set and costume construction  
Shake Troupe  
shakespeare day  
shakespearian club  
show choir

show orchestra  
Silks  
Social Satire Club  
south carroll idol  
stage band  
Stage Director  
steel drums  
step team  
steppin divaz  
Street Stringz  
string ensemble  
student productions  
Stunts and Choreography  
symphonic band and winds  
symphonic orchestra  
symphonic orchestra/strings  
Technical Theatre Crew  
the dance company  
Theater & Poetry  
Theater Technician Club  
Theatre  
treble chorus  
tv production

Umojo Ensemble  
unarmed drill team  
Variety Club  
Veil of Plenty Dancers  
Vignette  
Vocal Jazz Ensemble  
Vocal Music Groups  
whitman shorts TV show  
WI-HI PEP BAND  
wind ensemble  
winter guard  
womens a capella  
women's choir  
Wootton Performing Arts Society  
yearly musical

*Religious Clubs*

Bible Club (Open Arms)  
bible study  
Catholic Club  
Christian Club

Christian Fellowship

christians in action

faith is contagious

Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

Gathering Club

NAO christian club

Oasis Youth Ministry

Spread The Joy Club

Teens in Truth

truth bible club

YOFC bible club

### *Sports*

Aikido

airsoft club

Allied Sports

Badminton Club

baseball

basketball

botball

bowling team

cheerleading  
Crew  
Cricket Club  
cross-country  
developmental golf  
Equestrian Club  
Fellowship of Student Athletes  
fencing club  
field hockey  
Fitness  
football  
Frisbee Club  
g basketball  
Golf  
Gymnastics Team  
High School Sports Scene  
Hockey Team  
Ice Hockey Club  
indoor field hockey  
indoor track  
intramurals  
lacrosse  
martial arts club

mountain biking club

Mountain Club

Orienteering Club

outdoor track

Outdoors Club

paintball club

PE Intramurals

powder puff football

rock climbing

Rugby

running club

sailing club (team!)

Ski & Snow Board Club

Snowboarding

soccer

Softball

Surf Club

swimming

swimming and diving

Table Tennis Club (Boys)

Table Tennis Club (Girls)

tennis

Tennis Club

Track (outdoor)

track and field

Trail

ultimate frisbee

unified sports

volleyball

Walt Whitman Recreation and Ski Club

Weight Training Intramural

Winter Sports Club

world cup soccer

wrestling

*Other / Unidentified*

100 strong

180 Club

ACT-SO

AFS

AKL

AMATE

AOF

ASF

ASOHAP

AVID

B.R.O.T.H.E.R.S.

blue crew

Blueprint

bridges

Brillig

brothers

BSSU

C.O.E. Club

C.U.P.

CATS

CCASC

Chrysalis

Club Ultimate

Colophon

COP Club

CROSS club

D.O. Club

Destination Imagination

DUCKS

Dulanians

F.C.C.L.A.

FHA

formosa club

gear up

gen-y

gold

Great Expectations

H.O.S.A.

Harambe

Harbinger

HERE

Iron Eagles

ivory club

Kick Ash

LCDR

M.S.S.P.

MARC

on the road

OOMPAH

Ophelia Club

Optimist Club

outward bound

PAVE

pcast

Period 8

PLOOM

POTS

Project Sleeping Bag

PYD

quintessence

Respect

rice club

rites of passage

Roots and Shoots

rose arches

S.I.S.T.E.R.S.

S.O.M.E.

SECME

Secret Sisters Club

SHOUT

Sister to Sister

sisters in action

sisters in success

sisters unlimited

SKA Club

SOS

Stand Proud

star

Tri-Hi-Y/Hi-Y

Ujima

UMOJA

unity club

VICA

WATE

WAWOYAKA

WCHS

Wild Things

you choose

Young Life

Youth Alive

youth rise

zoobots

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