

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**High School Sports Participation  
Tops 7.6 Million, Sets Record**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (September 8, 2010) — Participation in high school sports increased for the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive school year in 2009–10, eclipsing the 7.6 million mark for the first time.

Based on figures from the 50 state high school athletic/activity associations, plus the District of Columbia, that are members of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), participation for the 2009–10 school year reached a record-breaking total of 7,628,377 participants, according to the 2009–10 High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS.

Boys and girls participation figures also reached respective all-time highs with 4,455,740 boys and 3,172,637 girls participating in 2009–10. Boys participation increased by 33,078 this year, while the girls figure increased by 58,546.

“It is a significant achievement for our member state associations that in these difficult economic times, student participation increased for the 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive year,”

said NFHS Executive Director Bob Gardner. “This reinforces the values that high school sports provide as part of the education of our students. The NFHS actively promotes participation in, and support for, the programs throughout the nation.”

Based on the survey, 55.1 percent of students enrolled in high schools participate in athletics, which emphasizes and reinforces the idea that high school sports continue to have a significant role in student involvement in schools across the country.

Outdoor track and field gained the most combined participants in 2009–10, with an increase of 25,561 participants, followed by soccer with 19,597 combined participants and cross country (11,925). In girls sports, soccer gained the most participants (11,582), followed by outdoor track and field (11,445) and fast-pitch softball (9,290). Outdoor track and field led the way in boys sports with 14,116 additional participants, followed by cross country (8,156) and soccer (8,015).

The top participatory sports for boys remained the same from 2008–09: 11-player football led the way with 1,109,278 participants, followed by outdoor track and field (572,123), basketball (540,207), baseball (472,644), soccer (391,839), wrestling (272,890), cross country (239,608), tennis (162,755), golf (157,756), and swimming and diving (131,376).

Outdoor track and field continued to be the leading sport for girls with 469,177 participants. Second was basketball (439,550), followed by volleyball (403,985), fast-pitch softball (378,211), soccer (356,116), cross country (201,968), tennis (182,395), swimming and diving (158,419), competitive spirit squads (123,644) and golf (70,872).

The top 10 states based on combined participation also remained the same from last year’s survey. Texas led the way with a combined total of 780,721 participants.

California was second with 771,465, followed by New York (379,677), Illinois (344,257), Ohio (334,797), Pennsylvania (317,426), Michigan (313,818), New Jersey (253,097), Florida (247,428) and Minnesota (230,043).

The participation survey has been compiled since 1971 by the NFHS through numbers it receives from its member associations. The complete 2009–10 Sports Participation Survey is available on the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

### 10 MOST POPULAR BOYS PROGRAMS

Schools	Participants
1. Basketball 17,969	1. Football – 11–Player 1,109,278
2. Track and Field – Outdoor 16,011	2. Track and Field – Outdoor 572,123
3. Baseball 15,786	3. Basketball 540,207
4. Football – 11–Player 14,226	4. Baseball 472,644
5. Cross Country 13,942	5. Soccer 391,839
6. Golf 13,693	6. Wrestling 272,890
7. Soccer 11,375	7. Cross Country 239,608
8. Wrestling 10,363	8. Tennis 162,755
9. Tennis 9,916	9. Golf 157,756
10. Swimming and Diving 6,820	10. Swimming and Diving 131,376

### 10 MOST POPULAR GIRLS PROGRAMS

Schools	Participants
1. Basketball 17,711	1. Track and Field – Outdoor 469,177
2. Track and Field – Outdoor 15,923	2. Basketball 439,550
3. Volleyball 15,382	3. Volleyball 403,985

4. Softball – Fast Pitch	15,298	4. Softball – Fast Pitch	378,211
5. Cross Country	13,809	5. Soccer	356,116
6. Soccer	10,901	6. Cross Country	201,968
7. Tennis	10,166	7. Tennis	182,395
8. Golf	9,651	8. Swimming and Diving	158,419
9. Swimming and Diving	7,171	9. Competitive Spirit Squads	123,644
10. Competitive Spirit Squads	4,879	10. Golf	70,872

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*This press release was written by Lauren Fellmeth, a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a recent graduate of Elon (North Carolina) University.*

**About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and Rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.6 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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