

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

High School Sports Participation Increases for 25th Consecutive Year, Sets All-Time High of Almost 7.8 Million

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 20, 2014) — The number of participants in high school sports increased for the 25th consecutive year in 2013-14 with a record total of almost 7.8 million, according to the annual High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

Based on figures from the 51 NFHS member state high school associations, which includes the District of Columbia, sports participation for the 2013-14 school year reached an all-time high of 7,795,658 – an increase of 82,081 from the previous year. This one-year increase was the highest since 2009-10.

Girls participation increased for the 25th consecutive year with an additional 44,941 participants from 2012-13 and set an all-time record of 3,267,664. Boys participation eclipsed 4.5 million for the first time (4,527,994), breaking the mark of 4,494,406 in 2010-11.

The increase in boys participation was due in part to the first increase in football numbers in five years. An additional 6,607 boys participated in 11-player football in 2013-14, pushing this past year's total to 1,093,234. In addition, another 1,715 girls participated in 11-player football last year, an increase of 184 from the previous year.

"We are pleased with the increase in participation numbers in the sport of football for the 2013-14 school year," said Bob Gardner, NFHS executive director. "With the precautions that are in place nationwide to address concussions in all high school sports, including football, we have maintained that the risk of injury is as low as it ever has been. Certainly, this rise in football numbers is a confirmation of those beliefs and indicates the strong continued interest nationwide in high school football."

Among the top 10 boys sports, baseball registered the largest gain with an additional 7,838 participants, followed by football and soccer (6,437). The top 10 boys sports remained unchanged from last year: football, outdoor track and field, basketball, baseball, soccer, wrestling, cross country, tennis, golf, and swimming and diving.

Volleyball gained the most participants among girls sports (9,426) from the previous year, and its total of 429,634 was within 3,710 of basketball for the No. 2 position. Track and field, with an additional 5,946 participants from 2012-13, remained the No. 1 sport for girls, followed by basketball, volleyball, soccer, fast-pitch softball, cross country, tennis, swimming and diving, competitive spirit squads and lacrosse.

"This past year's report on sports participation in our nation's high schools was another great statement about the importance of these education-based programs," Gardner said. "We are encouraged that schools are continuing to

respond to the funding challenges, and are particularly pleased to see that the increase this past year was evenly distributed between boys and girls.”

In terms of combined participation, lacrosse continued to register sizeable increases as overall participation for boys and girls increased by 9,744 to 188,689. The sport ranks 10th for girls and 11th for boys.

The top 10 states by participants remained in the same order as last year, with Texas and California topping the list with 805,299 and 783,008, respectively. The remainder of the top 10 was New York (389,475), Illinois (343,757), Ohio (325,448), Pennsylvania (317,318), Michigan (299,246), New Jersey (285,020), Florida (268,266) and Minnesota (232,909). Overall, 33 states reported higher figures from the previous year, up from 30 states that had increases the previous year.

The participation survey has been compiled since 1971 by the NFHS through numbers it receives from its member associations. The complete 2013-14 High School Athletics Participation Survey is attached in PDF format and will be posted soon on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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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 performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing 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 16 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 almost 7.8 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, 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.

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