

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**High School Sports Participation Increases Again; Girls Exceeds  
Three Million for First Time**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (September 5, 2007) — For the 18th consecutive year, the number of student participants in high school athletics increased in 2006–07, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

Based on figures from the 50 state high school athletic/activity associations, plus the District of Columbia, that are members of the NFHS, participation for the 2006–07 school year rose by 183,006 students to 7,342,910, according to the 2006–07 High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. In addition, girls participation exceeded three million for the first time, with 3,021,807 females participating in 2006–07. Through the survey, it was also determined that 54.2 percent of students enrolled in high schools participate in athletics.

“This is certainly another great report on the interest of high school sports in our nation’s schools,” said NFHS Executive Director Robert F. Kanaby. “The girls participation figure is particularly exciting since this year is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Title

IX. We are pleased that more and more girls are taking advantage of the opportunity to participate in high school sports. The results support the NFHS 2005–2008 Strategic Plan, in which the organization committed to providing stronger leadership and support for high school athletics and fine arts activities.”

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Last year, the NFHS began a new brand identity emphasis using a communications tag line of “Take Part. Get Set for Life.™” In addition to its chief task of writing playing rules for high school sports, the NFHS is striving to gain awareness and support from state and local governments, media, corporate partners, and especially students and their parents.

Not only is participation at an all-time high, this year’s increase of 183,006 participants from last year is the largest one-year jump since a rise of 225,168 between the 1994–95 and 1995–96 school years.

“Although we’ve had increases in participation for 18 consecutive years, a jump of 183,000 makes a strong statement that students want these programs,” Kanaby said. “We must do all we can to keep these programs alive in our nation’s high schools. We can demonstrate that participation in athletics and activities helps students succeed in life.”

In addition to the overall numbers, the boys participation total of 4,321,103 is the highest participation in the past 29 years. This year’s boys participation figure is second only to the record 4,367,442 in 1977–78.

Soccer gained the most female participants in 2006–07 with 16,077, followed by volleyball with 15,798 and cross country with 7,422.

Eleven-player football gained the most participants among boys sports in 2006–07 with 32,773, followed by soccer with 19,064, outdoor track and field with 10,195 and basketball with 9,934.

Basketball remained the most popular sport for girls with 456,967 participants, followed by outdoor track and field (444,181), volleyball (405,832), fast pitch softball (373,448), soccer (337,632), cross country (183,376), tennis (176,696), swimming and diving (143,639), competitive spirit squads (95,177) and golf (66,283).

In boys sports, 11-player football once again topped the list with 1,104,548 participants, followed by basketball (556,269), outdoor track and field (544,180), baseball (477,430), soccer (377,999), wrestling (257,246), cross country (216,085), golf (159,747), tennis (156,944) and swimming and diving (106,738).

Texas held its title as having the most sports participants with 763,967, followed by California (735,497), New York (350,349), Illinois (334,358), Michigan (321,400), Ohio

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(315,473), Pennsylvania (276,911), New Jersey (247,332), Florida (230,312) and Minnesota (220,241).

The participation survey has been compiled since 1971 by the NFHS through numbers it receives from its member associations. The complete 2006–07 Participation Survey is available on the NFHS Web site <[www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)>.

#### TEN MOST POPULAR BOYS PROGRAMS

Schools	Participants	Schools	Participants
1. Basketball	17,762	1. Football — 11-player	1,104,548

2. Track and Field — Outdoor	15,709	2. Basketball	556,269
3. Baseball	15,458	3. Track and Field — Outdoor	544,180
4. Football — 11-player	13,922	4. Baseball	477,430
5. Golf	13,541	5. Soccer	377,999
6. Cross Country	13,354	6. Wrestling	257,246
7. Soccer	11,066	7. Cross Country	216,085
8. Wrestling	9,445	8. Golf	159,747
9. Tennis	9,438	9. Tennis	156,944
10. Swimming and Diving	6,358	10. Swimming and Diving	106,738

#### TEN MOST POPULAR GIRLS PROGRAMS

Schools		Participants	
1. Basketball	17,458	1. Basketball	456,967
2. Track and Field — Outdoor	15,578	2. Track and Field — Outdoor	444,181
3. Softball — Fast Pitch	14,968	3. Volleyball	405,832
4. Volleyball	14,881	4. Softball — Fast Pitch	373,448
5. Cross Country	13,146	5. Soccer	337,632
6. Soccer	10,503	6. Cross Country	183,376
7. Tennis	9,678	7. Tennis	176,696
8. Golf	9,046	8. Swimming and Diving	143,639
9. Swimming and Diving	6,708	9. Competitive Spirit Squads	95,177
10. Competitive Spirit Squads	3,743	10. Golf	66,283

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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 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 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 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; 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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