

EAST LANSING, Mich. – July 9 – Participation in high school sports in which postseason tournaments are sponsored by the Michigan High School Athletic Association decreased slightly for the third straight school year in 2013-14, following a continuing trend of declining member school enrollments. However, nine MHSAA sports saw increases in participation from 2012-13, and four sports set records for the second straight school year.

A total of 288,230 participants took part in the 28 tournament sports offered by the MHSAA during the past year – a 1.9-percent decrease from the 2012-13 figure of 293,810. However, enrollments at member schools also decreased 0.7 percent from 2012-13 and have fallen 10 percent since the 2006-07 school year – while MHSAA participation has fallen only 7.9 percent during that time. This year’s dip was slightly larger than the 1.2-percent decrease from 2011-12 to 2012-13.

Overall boys participation fell 1.7 percent from 2012-13 to 2013-14, while girls participation fell 2.2 percent. The overall MHSAA totals count students once for each sport in which they participate, meaning students who are multiple-sport athletes are counted more than once.

For the second straight school year, both boys and girls lacrosse (5,089 and 2,540, respectively) and boys and girls cross country (8,882 and 8,703) set participation records. Both lacrosse totals have increased annually during their 10 years as MHSAA tournament sports; the girls saw an increase of 1.6 percent from 2012-13. Participation in both boys and girls cross country increased for the fifth straight seasons – the girls this time by 3.9 percent.

Three girls sports rebounded from recent declines. Girls swimming and diving (6,604) broke a two-year downturn in participation with its highest total since 2010-11, while girls golf (3,427) increased by 2.8 percent and girls soccer (13,619) increased one percent after also falling from 2011-12 to 2012-13. Girls track and field (17,259) posted its second straight increase and highest participation total since 2009-10.

However, troubling trends continued in two of the most popular girls sports. Girls basketball participation fell for the eighth straight season to 16,329 participants, the sport’s fewest since records first were kept in 1991-92. The girls basketball total has decreased 14.7 percent since a U.S. District Court decision led to the switching of girls basketball season from fall to winter beginning in 2007-08. Comparatively, girls enrollment at MHSAA schools during that time has fallen 10.4 percent.

The sport that swapped seasons with girls basketball and moved to fall, volleyball, saw a 6.5-percent drop in participation this school year to 18,607 athletes, its fewest since 1993-94 and a decrease of 13.6 percent since its final season as a winter sport.

Also of note in this year’s survey:

§ Total, nine sports saw increases in participation in 2013-14 (three boys, six girls), while 19 had decreases (11 boys, eight girls).

- § Football participation, 11 and 8-player teams combined, dropped for the sixth straight season but this time by only 2 percent to 40,673 athletes. The drop from 2011-12 to 2012-13 was 3.7 percent.
- § Wrestling saw a decrease for the fifth straight year, but also by a smaller percentage than the year before – 2.2 percent versus a 4.8-percent drop from 2011-12 to 2012-13.
- § Baseball participation increased for the second straight year, up 0.7 percent to 18,227 participants. But softball saw the third-largest dip in 2013-14, 7.2 percent to 13,443 participants.
- § Gymnastics (600) saw a decrease for the second straight year, this time by 11 percent – the largest percentage decrease of any sport this school year. Boys skiing (745) saw the second-largest drop, 9.7 percent.

The participation figures are gathered annually from MHSAA member schools to submit to the National Federation of State High School Associations for compiling of its national participation survey. Results of Michigan surveys from the 2000-01 school year to present may be viewed on the MHSAA Website – www.mhsaa.com – by clicking on **Schools > Administrators > Sports Participation Listing**.

The following chart shows participation figures for the 2013-14 school year from MHSAA member schools for sports in which the Association sponsors a postseason tournament:

BOYS

GIRLS

SPORT	SCHOOLS (A)	PARTICIPANTS	SCHOOLS (A)	PARTICIPANTS (B)
Baseball	630/646/2	18,220	-	-/7
Basketball	727/732/2	21,504	676/723	16,321/8
Bowling	341/359/1	3,573	326/357	2,939/7
Competitive Cheer	-	-	311/337	7,120
Cross Country	591/626/0	8,882	577/622	8,703/0
Football – 11 player	596/660/3	39,963	-	-/43
8-player	36/39/0	667	-	-
Golf	515/542/12	6,768	317/327	3,365/62

Gymnastics	-	-	56/74	600
Ice Hockey	219/268/2	3,564	-	-/19
Lacrosse	125/130/0	5,089	86/88	2,540/0
Skiing	81/104/0	745	78/104	662/0
Soccer	475/496/12	14,242	466/478	13,619/48
Softball	-	-	569	13,443
Swimming & Diving	242/266/1	5,243	260/274	6,064/8
Tennis	312/318/2	6,464	338/347	8,856/6
Track & Field	648/679/0	22,716	634/673	17,259/0
Volleyball	-	-	662	18,607
Wrestling	451/474/28	10,179	-	-/105

(A) The first number is the number of schools reporting sponsorship on the Sports Participation Survey. The second number indicates schools sponsoring the sport including primary and secondary schools in cooperative programs as of May 9, 2014. The third number indicates the number of schools that had girls playing on teams consisting primarily of boys.

(B) The second number indicates the number of additional girls playing on teams consisting primarily of boys and entered in boys competition.