

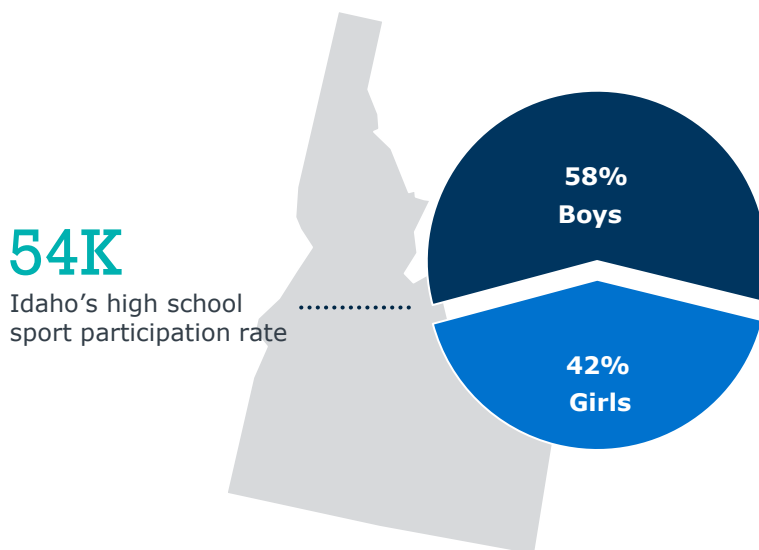
High School Sports Participation State Profile

State Profile: Idaho

Boys Account for Most High School Sport Participation

As of 2023-2024, the high school sports participation rate was 54,678 in Idaho. Mirroring the national trend, boys accounted for more than half of participation.

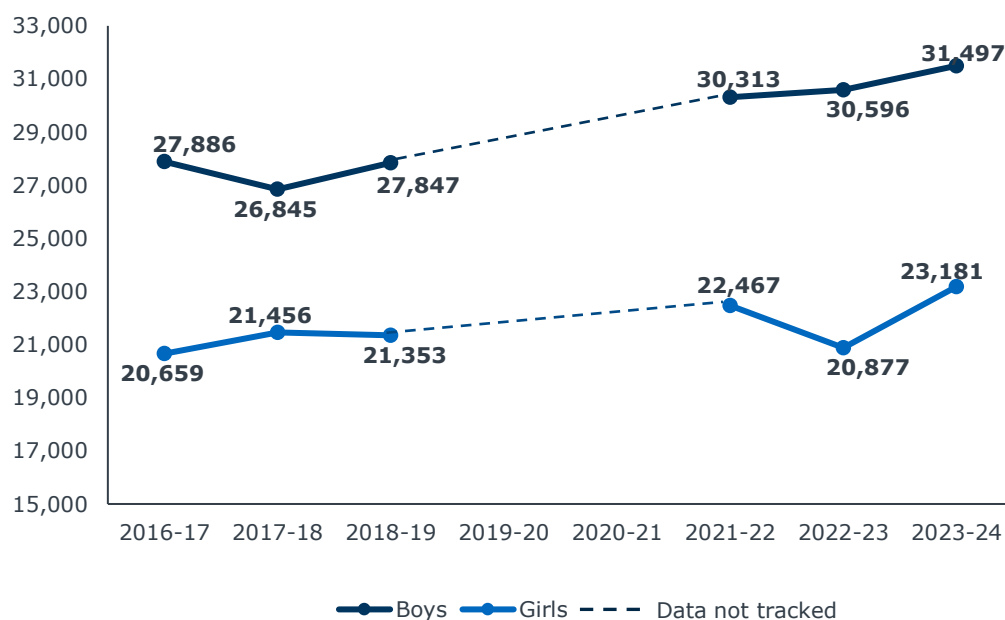
High School Sport Participation, Share of Girls v. Boys, 2023-24
n=54,678 (total participation)



Gap Between Boys, Girls Persists After Pandemic

Participation in high school sports is growing among boys and girls over the last eight years. The gap between girls and boys started to shrink slightly after expanding just before the pandemic.

Change in Participation Rates, 2013-14 to 2022-23



Source: EAB analysis of National Federation of State High School Association data.

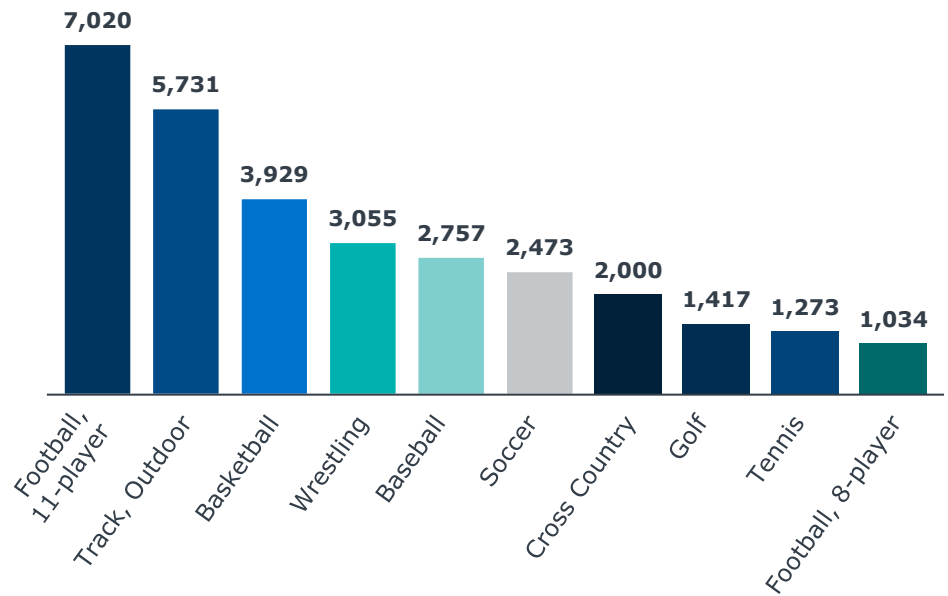
Top Boys' and Girls' Sports

Football the Top Boys' Sport

Like many other states, football was the biggest boys' sport in Idaho as of 2023-2024. Nine of the top 10 biggest sports were similar to those nationally. The only exception is 8-player football, which is the 10th largest sport in Idaho and not in the top 10 nationally.

Top 10 Boys' Sports by Participation Rate, 2023-2024

n=31,497

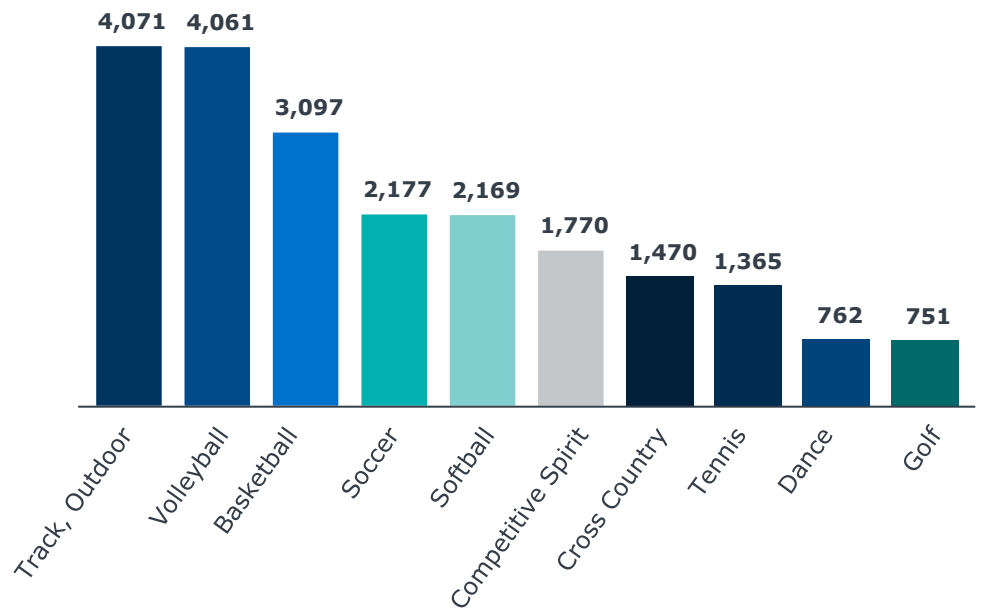


Track, Volleyball Nearly Tied for Top Sport Among Girls

The top girls' sports in Idaho are also similar to national trends. For example, Track and Volleyball are the first and second biggest sports, respectively, in the state and in the U.S. Otherwise, the biggest deviations are dance and golf, which did not make the top 10 nationally.

Top 10 Girls' Sports by Participation Rate, 2023-2024

n=23,181



Source: EAB analysis of National Federation of State High School Association data.

Short- and Long-Term Changes in Participation

Boys

Areas of Consistent Growth

Five sports grew both in the last year and across the last eight years. This trend may signal emerging and/or sustainable recruitment areas. They included:

- Basketball
- Golf
- Soccer
- Track & Field, Outdoor
- Wrestling

Areas of Steady Decline

In comparison, participation fell in the last year and across the last eight years in one sport: 8-player football.

Because the participation rate double counts multi-sport athletes, it is possible some of these declines may be attributed to growing specialization.

Sport	2023-2024 Participation	Change, 2022-23 to 2023-24	Change, 2016-17 to 2023-24
Football, 11-Player	7,020	0%	4%
Track and Field, Outdoor	5,731	10%	161%
Basketball	3,929	2%	2%
Wrestling	3,055	15%	186%
Baseball	2,757	-21%	7%
Soccer	2,473	4%	16%
Cross Country	2,000	8%	-1%
Golf	1,417	16%	36%
Tennis	1,273	0%	12%
Football, 8-player	1,034	-1%	-2%
Swimming & Diving	633	6%	N/A
Competitive Spirit	113	N/A	-2%
Unified Track and Field, Outdoor	50	N/A	N/A
Dance	12	-14%	N/A

Source: EAB analysis of National Federation of State High School Association data.

Biggest, Fastest Growth, Largest Decline

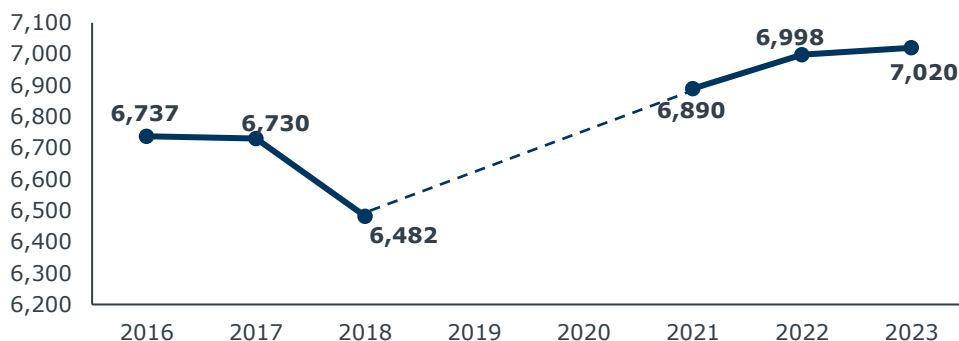
Boys

Biggest Sport

Football Recovering After Pre-Pandemic Declines

Boys' participation in football increased 4% between 2016 and 2023, after rebounding from several years of declines before the pandemic.

Change in Boys' Football Participation, 2016-17 to 2023-24

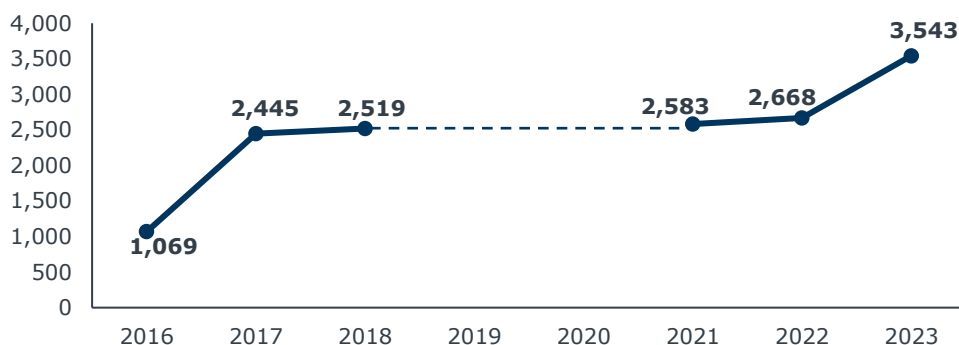


Fastest Growth

Steady Growth in Wrestling

Participation in boys' wrestling has grown dramatically between 2016 to 2023 (+186%). The biggest increases occurred in 2017 and 2023, while participation was mostly flat in between.

Change in Boys' Wrestling Participation, 2016-17 to 2023-24

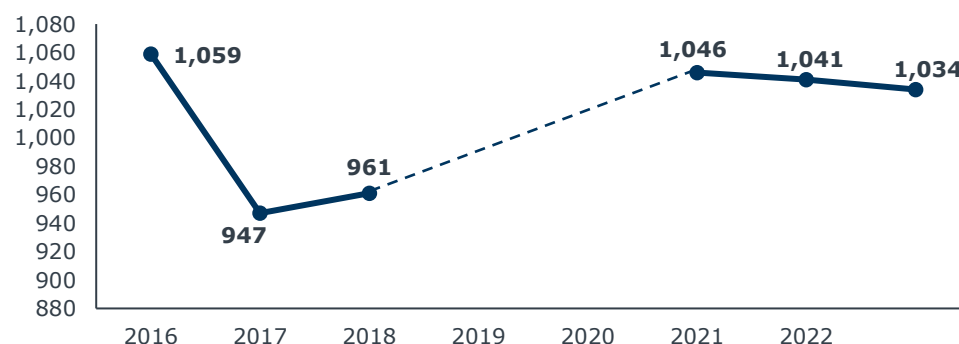


Largest Decline

8-Player Football Declining After Pandemic Recovery

In contrast to 11-player football, 8-player is declining, albeit only by 2% over eight years. It is possible that some of the decline can be attributed to growth in 11-player football.

Change in Boys' 8-Player Football Participation, 2016-17 to 2023-24



Source: EAB analysis of National Federation of State High School Association data.

Short- and Long-Term Changes in Participation

Girls

Areas of Consistent Growth

Six sports grew both in the last year and across the last eight years. This trend may signal emerging and/or sustainable recruitment areas. They included:

- Football, 11-player
- Golf
- Tennis
- Track & Field, Outdoor
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

Areas of Steady Decline

In comparison, participation fell in the last year and across the last eight years among three sports. Because the participation rate double counts multi-sport athletes, it is possible some of these declines may be attributed to growing specialization.

- Basketball
- Soccer
- Softball

Sport	2023-2024 Participation	Change, 2022-23 to 2023-24	Change, 2016-17 to 2023-24
Track and Field, Outdoor	4,071	5%	16%
Volleyball	4,061	1%	8%
Basketball	3,097	-1%	-6%
Soccer	2,177	-2%	-1%
Softball, Fast Pitch	2,169	-5%	-1%
Competitive Spirit	1,770	N/A	18%
Cross Country	1,470	4%	-3%
Tennis	1,365	9%	18%
Dance	762	10%	N/A
Golf	751	10%	25%
Wrestling	715	43%	1,688%
Swimming & Diving	701	-7%	N/A
Unified Track and Field, Outdoor	50	N/A	N/A
Football, 11-Player	20	18%	82%
Football, 8-player	2	-83%	N/A

Source: EAB analysis of National Federation of State High School Association data.

Biggest, Fastest Growth, Largest Decline

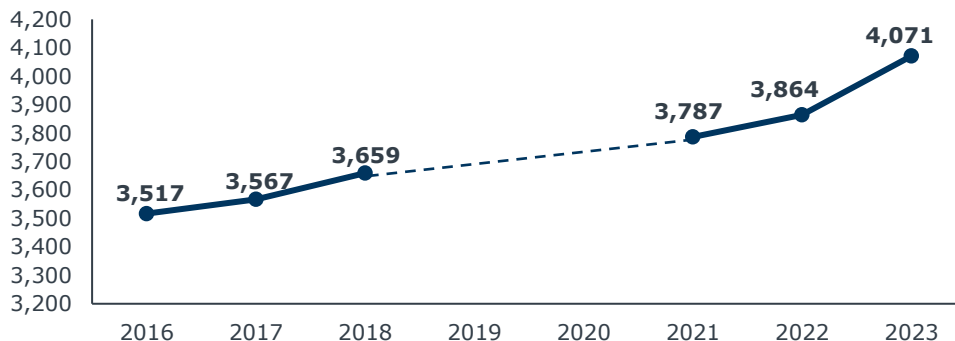
Girls

Biggest Sport

Steady Growth for Track and Field in Idaho

Participation in girls track is up 16% since 2016. Unlike many sports, track grew immediately after the pandemic and continues to do so.

Change in Girls' Outdoor Track and Field Participation, 2016-17 to 2023-24

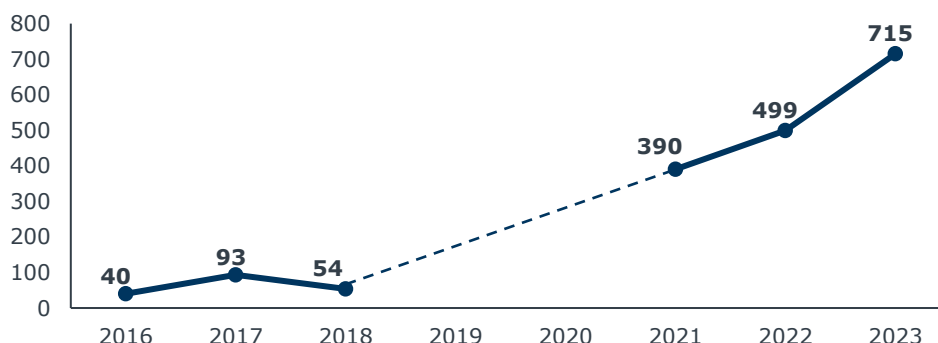


Fastest Growth

Wrestling Small but Growing Fast Among Girls

Wrestling shows signs of quick growth among girls. Specifically, participation increased 1,688% between 2016 and 2023. While increasing in popularity, that explosive growth is largely due to such a small n-size.

Change in Girls' Wrestling Participation, 2016-17 to 2023-24

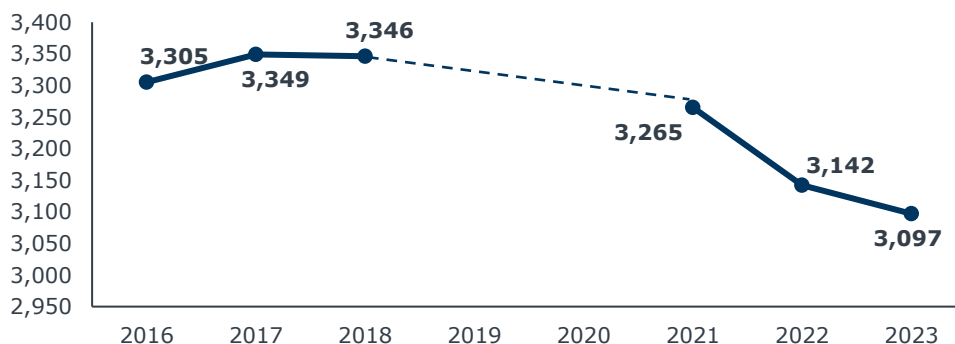


Largest Decline

Steady Decline in Basketball

Participation in basketball declined every year but one between 2016 and 2023. However, overall participation is down just 6%, and it remains the third largest sport among girls in Idaho.

Change in Girls' Basketball Participation, 2016-17 to 2023-24



Source: EAB analysis of National Federation of State High School Association data.

Appendix: About the Data

Data in this report come from the National Federation of State High School Association's "[High School Athletics Participation Survey](#)."

Limitations of the Data

- The numbers cited in this report reflect the "participation rate." An individual who participated in two sports is counted twice, three sports – three times and so on.
- Participation rates are not adjusted for population changes.
- Most states exclude data from independent schools, unless they are part of the state league, which varies by state and sport.
- Data do not include club sport participation.
- Some states did not report data for all years included in the report. Meanwhile, others appear to have reported duplicate data in a few cases. These cases are called out in the report when applicable.

Definitions

"Adapted" refers to sports that are modified (e.g., rules, equipment) for special-needs students.

"Unified" refers to sports that are open to special-needs students but aren't adapted to meet their needs.

Appendix: National High School Sports Participation

2023-2024 Top 10 Sports in USA by Participation

Top Boys' Sports

1. Football – 11-Player	1,031,508
2. Track and Field – Outdoor	625,333
3. Basketball	536,668
4. Baseball	471,701
5. Soccer	467,483
6. Wrestling	291,874
7. Cross Country	239,874
8. Tennis	157,835
9. Golf	155,174
10. Swimming and Diving	116,799
Total Boys' Participation	4,638,785

Top Girls' Sports

1. Track and Field – Outdoor	506,015
2. Volleyball	479,125
3. Soccer	383,895
4. Basketball	367,284
5. Softball – Fast Pitch	345,451
6. Tennis	195,766
7. Cross Country	192,969
8. Competitive Spirit	181,023
9. Swimming and Diving	138,174
10. Lacrosse	101,204
Total Girls' Participation	3,423,517

Source: EAB analysis of National Federation
of State High School Association data.