

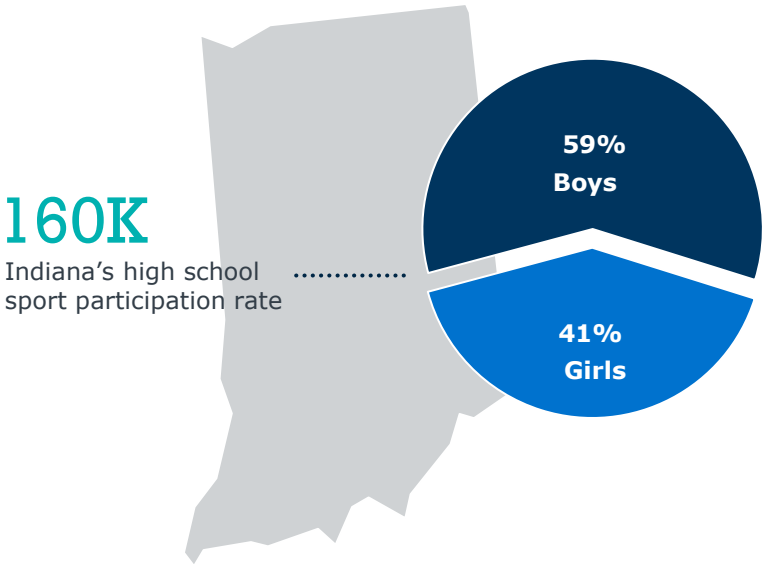
High School Sports Participation State Profile

State Profile: Indiana

Account for Most High School Sport Participation

As of 2022-2023, the high school sports participation rate was 160,245 in Indiana. Mirroring the national trend, boys accounted for more than half of participation.

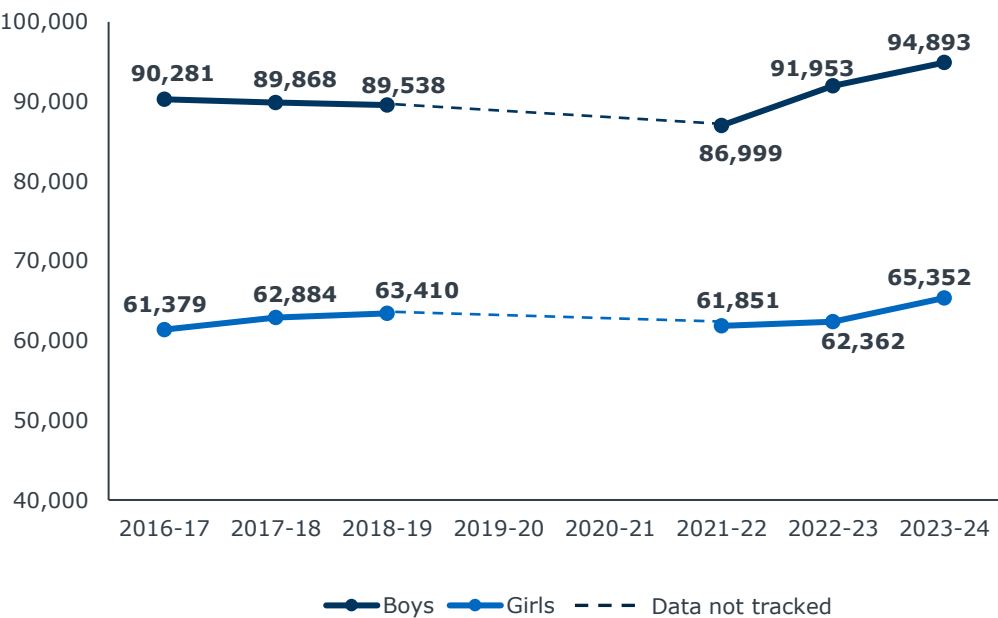
High School Sport Participation, Share of Girls v. Boys, 2023-24
n=160,245 (total participation)



Participation Growing After Pandemic-Era Dip

Participation in high school sports is growing among boys and girls over the last eight years. The gap in participation has started to expand after shrinking slightly between 2016 and 2021.

Change in Participation Rates, 2016-17 to 2023-24

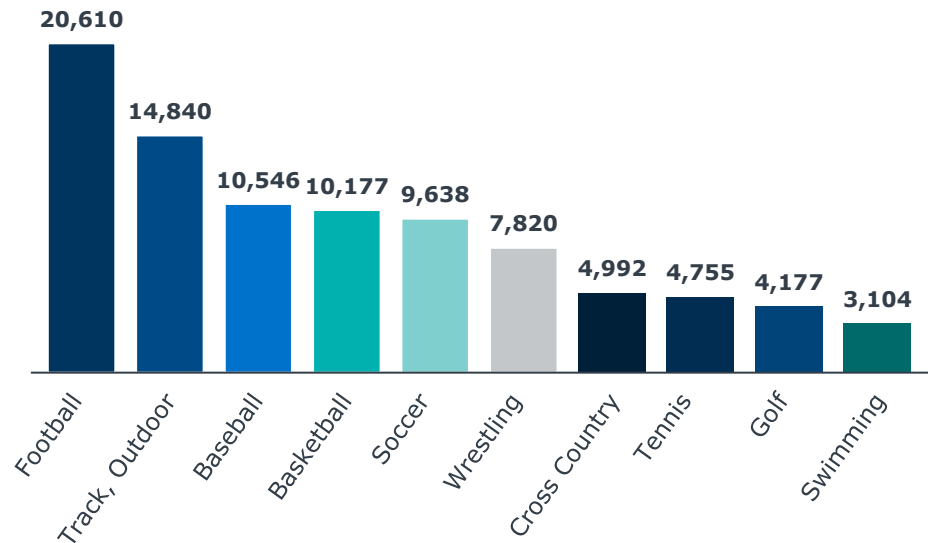


Top Boys' and Girls' Sports

Top Boys' Sports Match National Trends

Like most states, football was the biggest boys' sport as of 2023-2024. Overall, the top 10 sports in Indiana closely resembled the top 10 nationally. The only difference is that baseball is bigger than basketball in Indiana.

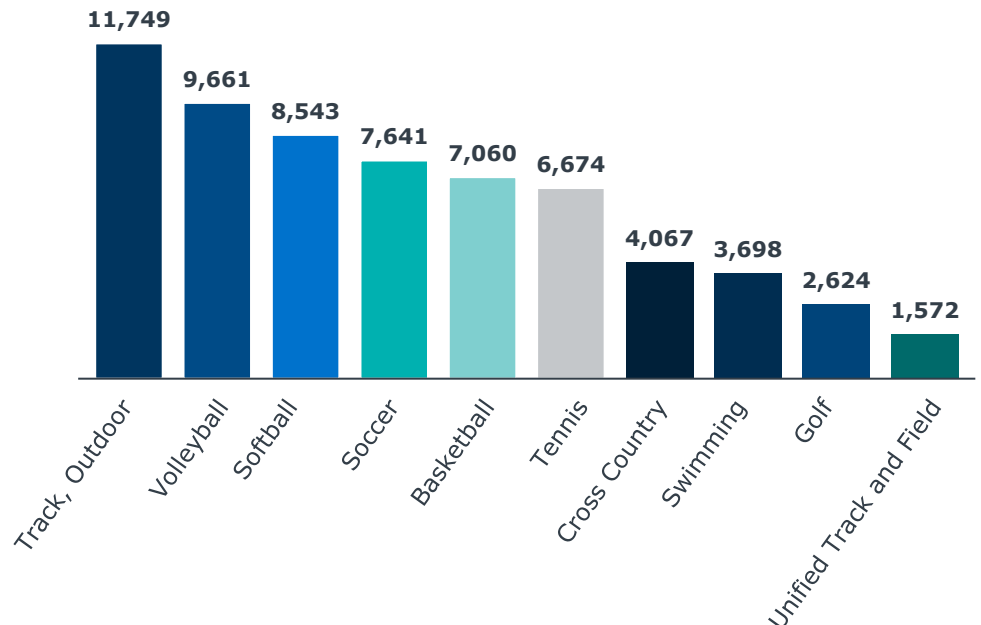
Top 10 Boys' Sports by Participation Rate, 2022-2023
n=94,893



One of Few States with Unified Sports in the Top 10

The top girls' sports in Indiana vary more from national trends. For example, competitive spirit and lacrosse, which are respectively the 8th and 10th largest sports nationally are not in the top 10 in the state. Otherwise, the biggest deviation is unified track and field, the 10th largest sport in Indiana. Few other states have a unified sport in their top 10.

Top 10 Girls' Sports by Participation Rate, 2023-2024
n=65,352



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:

- Golf
- Outdoor Track & Field
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Wrestling

Areas of Steady Decline

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

- Basketball
- Swimming & Diving

Sport	2023-2024 Participation	Change, 2022-23 to 2023-24	Change, 2016-17 to 2023-24
Football, 11-Player	20,610	0%	-5%
Track and Field, Outdoor	14,840	2%	10%
Baseball	10,546	1%	-2%
Basketball	10,177	-1%	-9%
Soccer	9,638	5%	5%
Wrestling	7,820	10%	15%
Cross Country	4,992	3%	-10%
Tennis	4,755	1%	7%
Golf	4,177	7%	15%
Swimming & Diving	3,104	-4%	-15%
Volleyball	2,221	73%	N/A
Unified Track and Field, Outdoor	1,438	11%	N/A
Unified Flag Football	575	1%	N/A

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

Biggest, Fastest Growth, Largest Decline

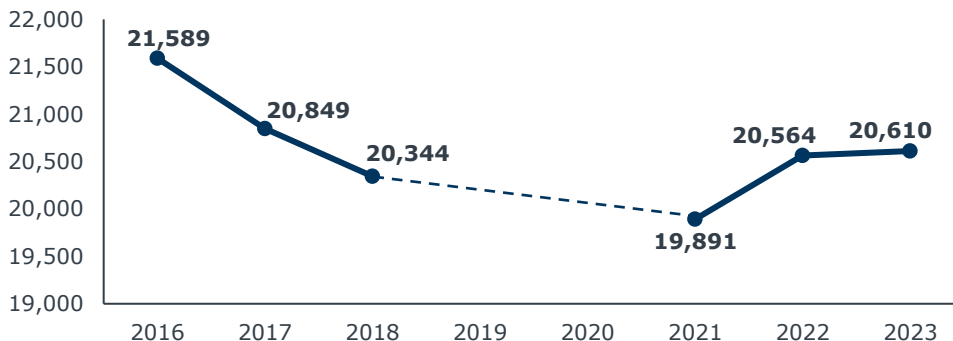
Boys

Biggest Sport

Despite Pandemic Recovery, Football Still Down

Boys' participation in football decreased 5% between 2016 and 2023. However, it is showing recent signs of growth. Participation increased nearly 4% from 2021 to 2023.

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

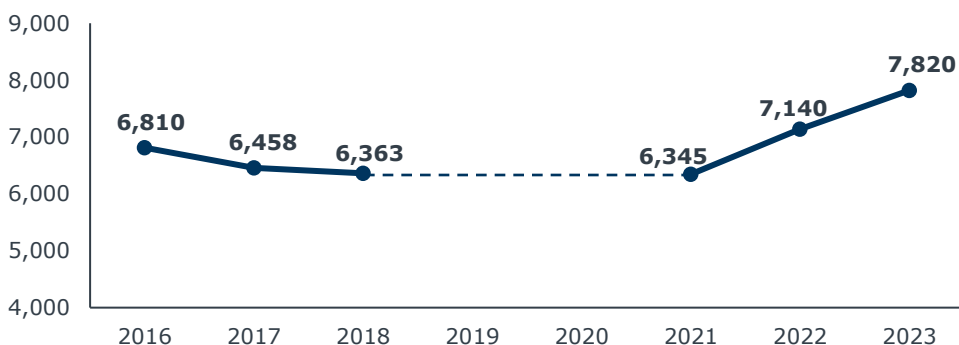


Fastest Growth

Strong Growth for Wrestling After a Few Years of Decline

In contrast, participation in boys' wrestling grew 15% between 2016 and 2023. The fastest growth occurred starting 2021. Prior to the pandemic, the sport had been shrinking in Indiana.

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

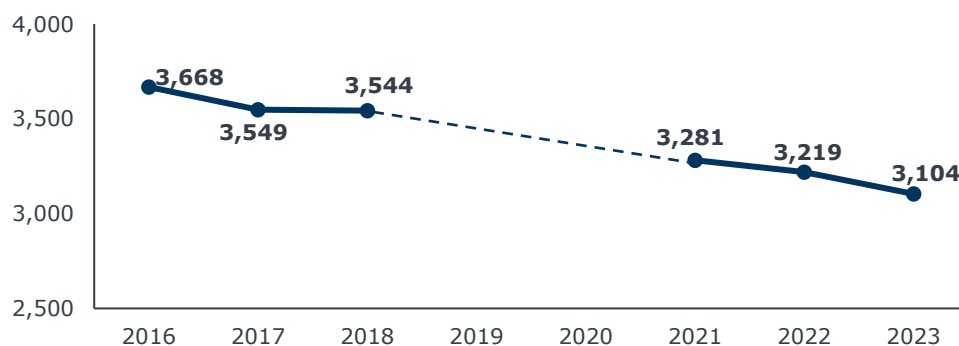


Largest Decline

Steady Decline for Swimming and Diving

Participation in swimming and diving has dropped year after year since 2016, with a total decline of 15% over eight years.

Change in Boys' Swimming & Diving 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:

- Golf
- Outdoor Track & Field
- Soccer
- Softball
- Tennis
- Volleyball

Areas of Steady Decline

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

- Gymnastics
- Swimming & Diving

Sport	2023-2024 Participation	Change, 2022-23 to 2023-24	Change, 2016-17 to 2023-24
Track and Field, Outdoor	11,749	5%	14%
Volleyball	9,661	1%	2%
Softball, Fast Pitch	8,543	16%	8%
Soccer	7,641	5%	3%
Basketball	7,060	0%	-12%
Tennis	6,674	7%	13%
Cross Country	4,067	0%	-15%
Swimming & Diving	3,698	-7%	-17%
Golf	2,624	4%	5%
Unified Track and Field, Outdoor	1,572	12%	N/A
Wrestling	1,207	70%	N/A
Gymnastics	488	-4%	-24%
Unified Flag Football	368	8%	N/A

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

Biggest, Fastest Growth, Largest Decline

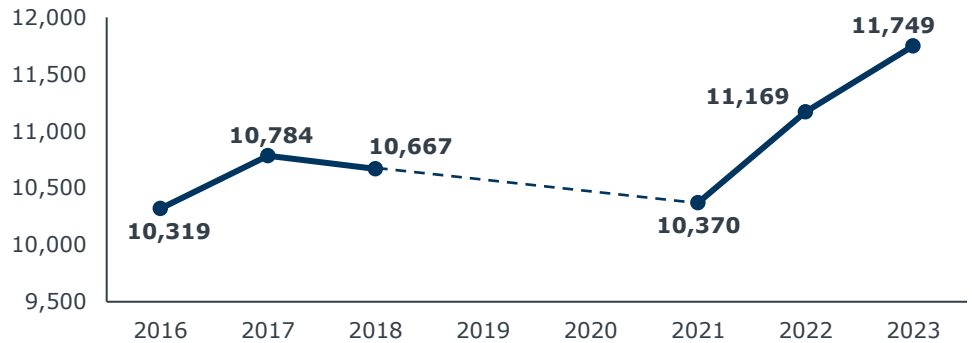
Girls

Biggest Sport

Quick Growth for Track and Field in Recent Years

Participation in girls track is up 14% since 2016. It grew fastest after the pandemic, increasing 13% from 2021 to 2023.

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

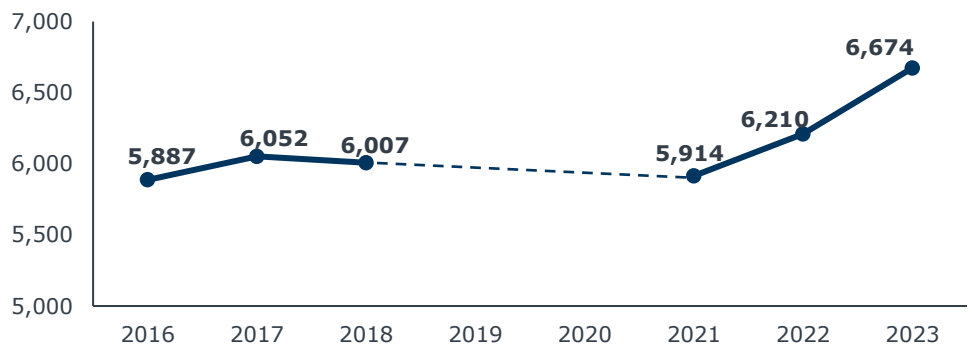


Fastest Growth

Tennis Just Behind Track as Fastest-Growing Sport

While tennis is shrinking in many states, it has started to grow in Indiana after several years of decline. Ultimately, participation is up 13% since 2016, with most growth happening since the pandemic.

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

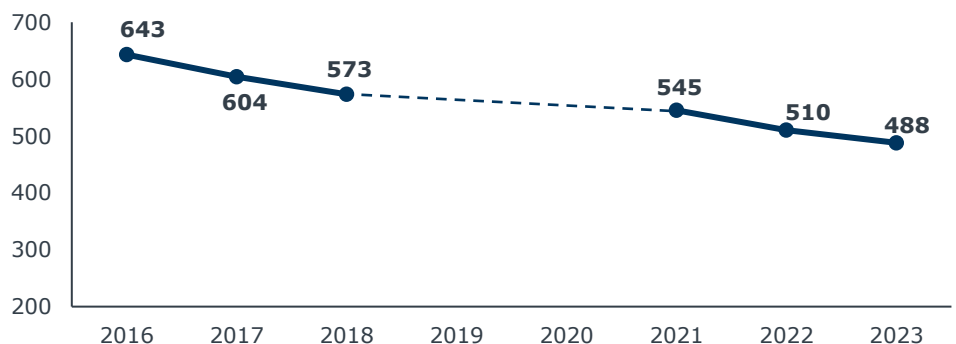


Largest Decline

Gymnastics Small and Shrinking

Participation in gymnastics has dropped year after year since 2016, with a total decline of 24% over eight years.

Change in Girls' Gymnastics 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.