

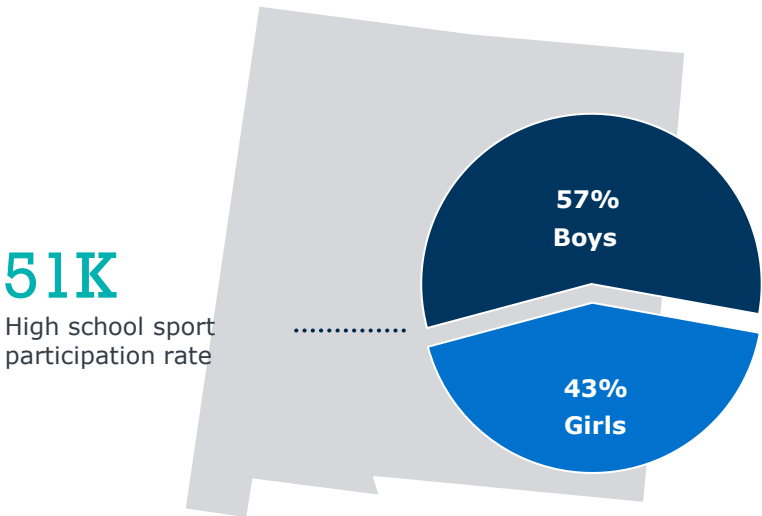
High School Sports Participation State Profile

State Profile: New Mexico

Boys Account for Most High School Sport Participation

As of 2023-2024, the high school sports participation rate was 51,796 in New Mexico. Mirroring the national trend, boys accounted for more than half of participation.

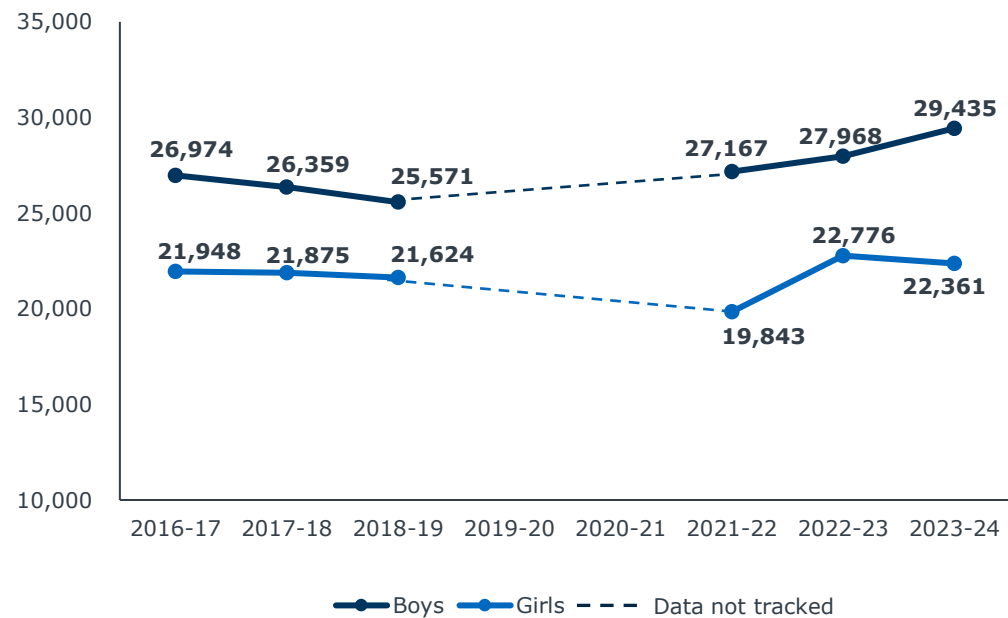
High School Sport Participation, Share of Girls v. Boys, 2023-24
n=51,796 (total participation)



Gap Between Boys, Girls Expanding After Pandemic

Participation in high school sports is growing among boys and girls over the last eight years. However, the gap is expanding after a recent decline in girls' participation.

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



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

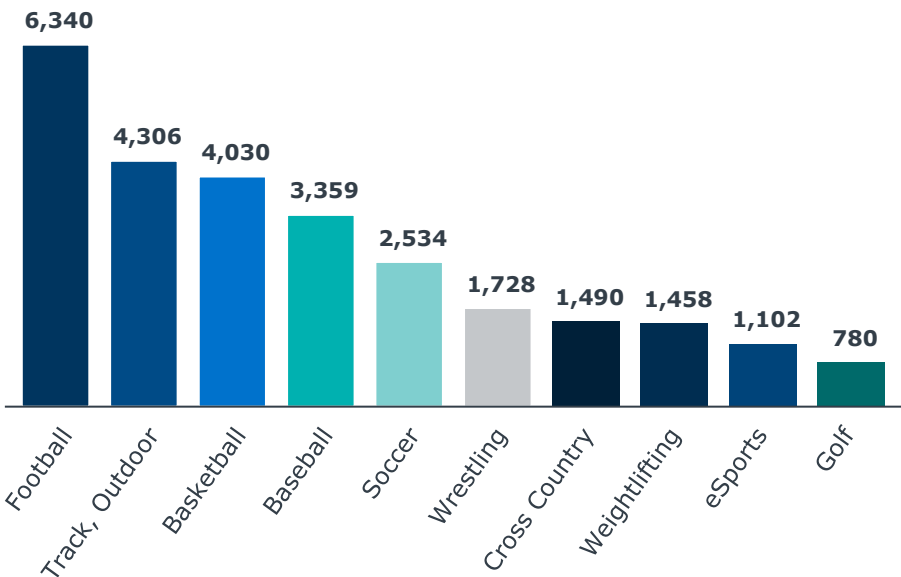
Top Boys' and Girls' Sports

eSports Emerges in Top 10

Like most states, football was the biggest boys' sport as of 2023-2024. The biggest deviation from national trends was eSports, which was the ninth largest sport in New Mexico and not in the top 10 nationally.

Top 10 Boys' Sports by Participation Rate, 2022-2023

n = 29,435 (boys' participation rate)

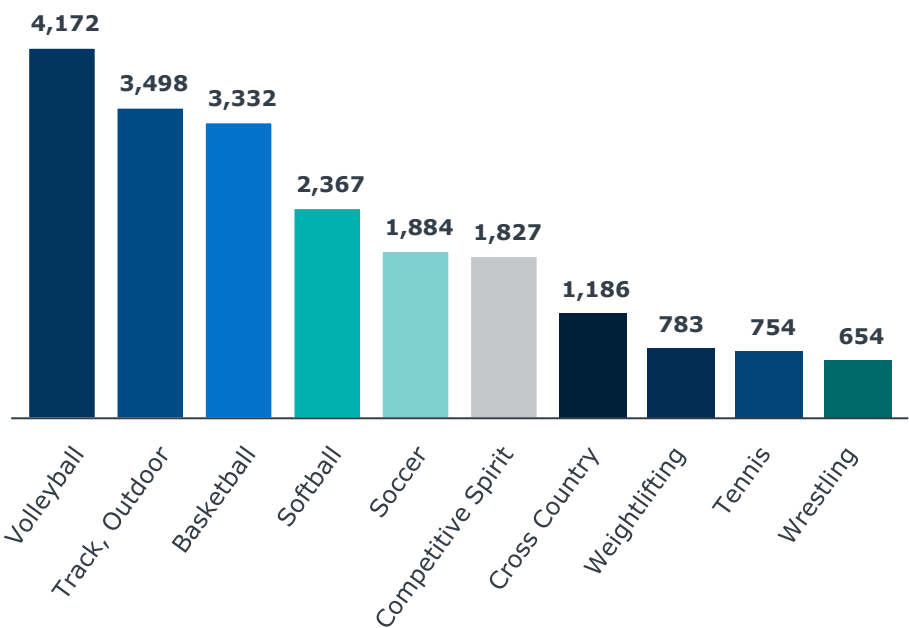


Top Girls' Sports Mostly Reflect National Trends

The top girls' sports in New Mexico closely align with national trends. The biggest deviations are weightlifting and wrestling, which are the eighth and 10th largest sports in the state, respectively, and not in the top 10 nationally.

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

n = 22,361 (girls' participation rate)



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:

- Baseball
- Bowling
- Golf
- Soccer
- Wrestling

Areas of Steady Decline

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

- Basketball
- Competitive Spirit
- Dance
- Football, 11-Player
- Tennis

Sport	2023-2024 Participation	Change, 2022-23 to 2023-24	Change, 2016-17 to 2023-24
Football, 11-player	6,340	-3%	-7%
Track & Field, Outdoor	4,306	3%	-3%
Basketball	4,030	-2%	-3%
Baseball	3,359	1%	2%
Soccer	2,534	9%	1%
Wrestling	1,728	3%	5%
Cross Country	1,490	8%	-10%
Weightlifting	1458	86%	N/A
eSports	1102	67%	N/A
Golf	780	10%	17%
Tennis	676	-5%	-12%
Swimming & Diving	513	1%	-11%
Football, 8-player	296	11%	N/A
Bowling	287	38%	35%
Volleyball	215	-6%	N/A
Football, 6-player	192	5%	N/A
Competitive Spirit	122	-2%	-30%
Dance	7	-68%	-73%

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

Biggest, Fastest Growth, Largest Decline

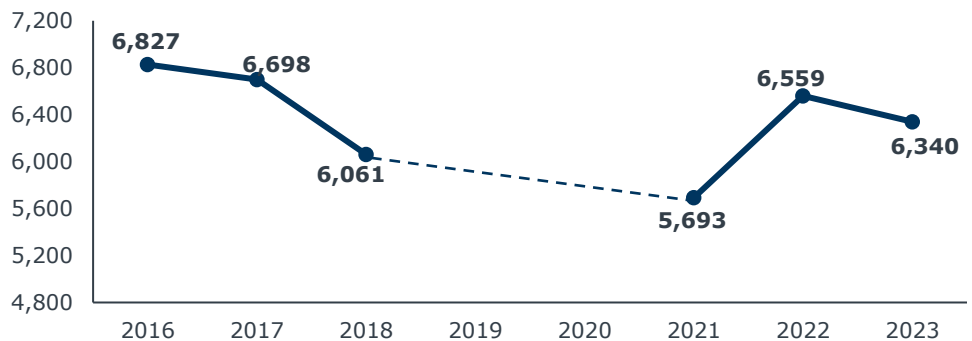
Boys

Biggest Sport

Football Still Recovering from Pandemic-Era Slide

Participation in football decrease 7% between 2016 and 2023. It shrunk every year through 2021, after which it rebounded near to pre-pandemic levels.

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

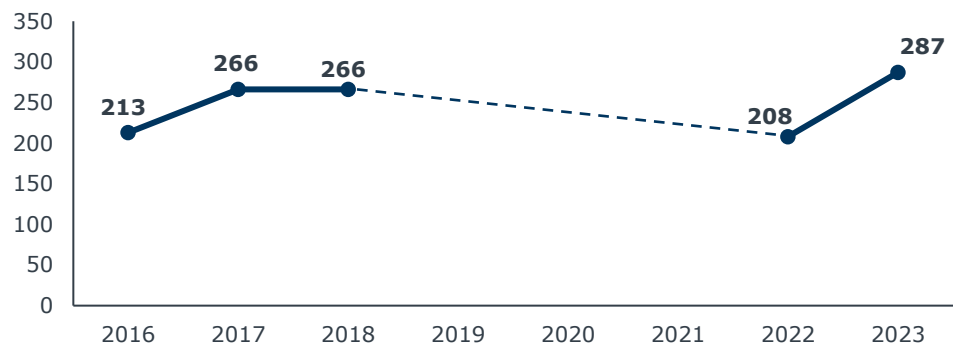


Fastest Growth

Bowling At New High After Pandemic Decline

Participation in bowling is up 35% between 2016 and 2023. However, it remains outside of the top 10 sports in the state.

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

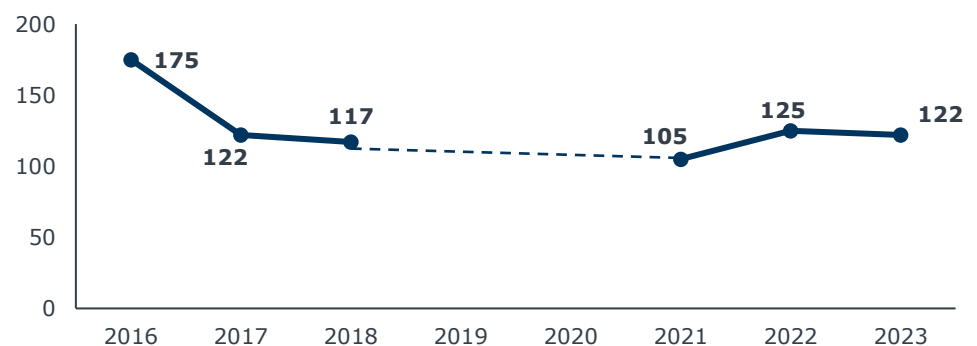


Largest Decline¹

Steady Decline in Competitive Spirit

Boys' participation in competitive spirit is down 30% since 2016, after declining every year but one.

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



1) Excludes sports with fewer than 100 participants

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

Short- and Long-Term Changes in Participation

Girls

Areas of Consistent Growth

Three 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
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

Areas of Steady Decline

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

- Basketball
- Bowling
- Dance
- Soccer
- Swimming & Diving

Sport	2023-2024 Participation	Change, 2022-23 to 2023-24	Change, 2016-17 to 2023-24
Volleyball	4,172	3%	13%
Track and Field, Outdoor	3,498	5%	-4%
Basketball	3,332	-4%	-9%
Softball	2,367	3%	-6%
Soccer	1,884	-8%	-13%
Competitive Spirit	1827	-2%	8%
Cross Country	1,186	1%	-16%
Weightlifting	783	0%	N/A
Tennis	754	5%	-10%
Wrestling	654	14%	619%
Swimming & Diving	584	-1%	-22%
Dance	416	-19%	-28%
Golf	414	3%	3%
eSports	270	-59%	N/A
Bowling	127	-39%	-41%
Baseball	52	174%	-37%
Football, 11-player	39	-26%	N/A
Football, 8-player	2	-50%	N/A

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

Biggest, Fastest Growth, Largest Decline

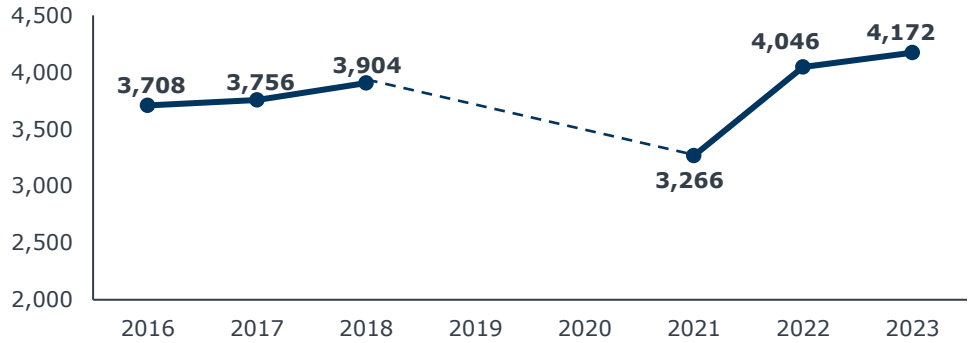
Girls

Biggest Sport

Volleyball Recovering from Pandemic Decline

Participation in volleyball increased 13% between 2016 and 2023. The sport shrunk immediately after the pandemic but has since resumed growth.

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

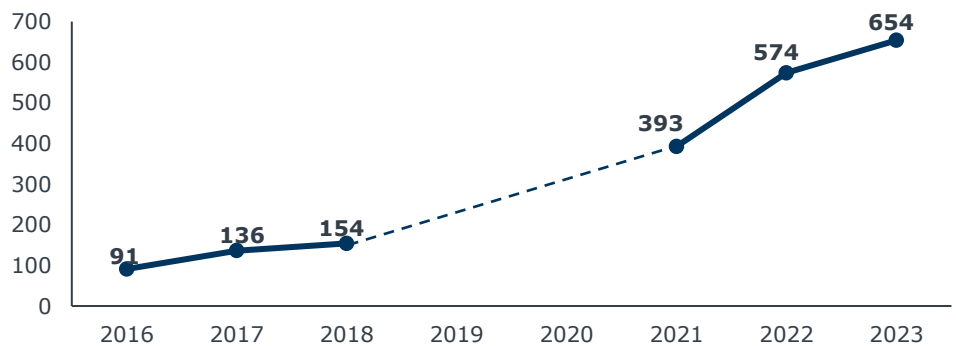


Fastest Growth

Wrestling Small but Growing Fast Among Girls

Participation in wrestling increased 619% between 2016 and 2023, bringing it into the top 10 sports in the state.

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

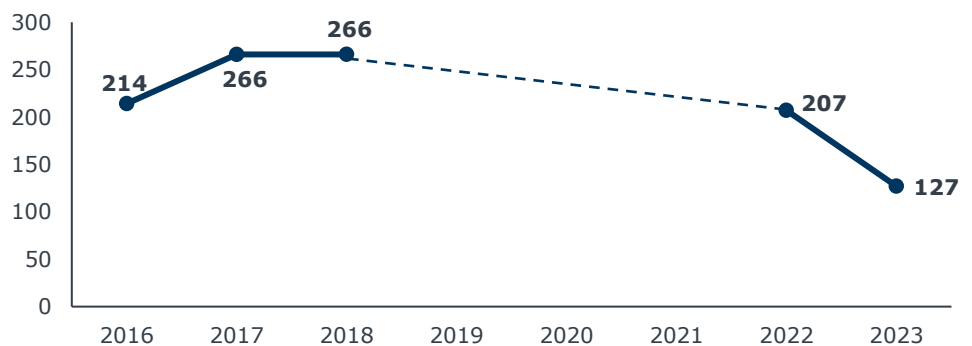


Largest Decline

Bowling on the Decline After Pre-Pandemic Growth

In contrast to boys, participation in girls' bowling is down 41% since 2016. Data were not reported in 2021.

Change in Girls' Bowling 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.