



# media information

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## **Girls Cross Country Participation Benefits From Fall Season Changes**

**EAST LANSING, Mich. – Dec. 21** – Participation in girls high school cross country in the state of Michigan increased 15.18 percent during the 2007 season compared to 2006, and it appears to be the major beneficiary of sports seasons changes being implemented this school year as a result of Federal court action. The increase in girls cross country – 1,054 participants – more than offsets the losses in girls volleyball and girls golf at Michigan High School Athletic Association member senior high schools.

All three sports whose seasons were changed to the fall experienced drops in participation. Girls volleyball was down 3.08 percent (658 participants), girls Lower Peninsula golf down 8.97 percent (291 participants), and boys Lower Peninsula tennis was down 11.43 percent (931 participants). The MHSAA routinely collects participation data from member schools to report to the National Federation of State High School Associations.

The fourth fall sport for girls, Lower Peninsula swimming and diving, increased 0.94 percent (60 participants) versus last school year.

Among the other fall boys sports, football participation was up 2.45 percent (1,109 participants), boys cross country was up 5.05 percent (403 participants), and boys Lower Peninsula soccer increased 2.32 percent (338 participants). Overall participation for the fall for boys and girls was up 0.89 percent (1,015) over last year.

These results are based reports from all 766 MHSAA member senior high schools, comparing actual figures at the same schools between the current school year and the 2006-07 school year.

The school's responses to the MHSAA also included this information:

- 61 fewer schools made cuts in their girls volleyball programs
- 21 schools dropped freshman girls volleyball; and no programs were added
- 4 schools added junior varsity girls volleyball; and none dropped the program
- 5 fewer schools made cuts in their girls Lower Peninsula golf programs
- 22 fewer schools made cuts in their boys Lower Peninsula tennis programs.

This information indicates that not only is participation down in these sports this year, but the number of students trying out for these teams in these sports is down as well.

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,800 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments, which attract approximately 1.6 million spectators each year.

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