

SUMMARY REPORT

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
TASK FORCE ON MULTI-SPORT PARTICIPATION
MULTI-SPORT PARTICIPATION SURVEY

2021-22 School Year

Introduction:

With the rise of overuse injuries and burnout among young athletes that tend to cause a lifetime of chronic injuries and related health problems, early sport specialization has become one of the most serious issues related to health and safety in all of youth sports. In early 2016, the Michigan High School Athletic Association appointed the Task Force on Multi-Sport Participation as part of continued efforts to promote and protect participant health and work to address the issues leading to early sport specialization.

The MHSAA Task Force on Multi-Sport Participation has undertaken the initiative of measuring multi-sport participation in MHSAA member schools for the dual purposes of identifying significant broad themes and recognizing “achievers” – that is, schools that surpass the norm given their enrollment, location and other factors that affect school sports participation. Identifying schools with high levels of multi-sport participation, as well as trends, and questions that might be researched will help point school-sponsored sports leadership toward policies, procedures, and programming that will tend to increase multi-sport participation and improve the experience of students in interscholastic athletic programs of Michigan and beyond.

With data not collected for the 2019-20 school year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spring of 2022 marked the fourth year of data collection on multi-sport participation among athletes at MHSAA member schools. As done previously, all 752 MHSAA member schools were surveyed regarding multi-sport participation among their athletes – schools were simply asked to identify the total number of individuals who were members of athletic teams in MSHAA-sponsored sports and the number of those athletes who participated in more than one MHSAA-sponsored sport. As in the previous years, the 2021-22 survey also asked specifically how many sports each athlete played. This summary is based on usable data from the 639 schools responding to the survey.

Observations:

- Overall response rate was 85.0% (Table 1). This consistent with the 81.5% response rate for 2020-21, 82.9% response rate for 2018-19 and the 79.9% response rate for 2017-18.
- Just as in the first three years of data collection, smaller schools tend to have a higher percentage of their students participating in athletics. This tendency not only holds across classes (Table 2), but also across different enrollments within Class A (Table 5).
- Similarly, smaller schools tend to have a higher percentage of athletes participating on multiple sports teams. This tendency not only holds across classes (Table 3), but also across different enrollments within Class A (Table 6).
- The percentage of athletes participating in multiple sports is higher among boys than girls – this holds across all classes (Table 3) and different enrollments within Class A (Table 6) – the only exception is Class D, which shows a nearly equal proportion of athletes at these schools are multi-sport athletes (Table 3). Again, this is the same as the 2020-21, 2018-19 and 2017-18 data.

- The percentage of athletes participating in multiple sports has remained consistent across all classes over the three years data has been collected:

Class A – 35.9% in 2017-18; 35.4% in 2018-19; 36.4% in 2020-21; 36.7% in 2021-22

Class B – 46.7% in 2017-18; 48.7% in 2018-19; 48.4% in 2020-21; 49.5% in 2021-22

Class C – 55.2% in 2017-18; 56.7% in 2018-19; 57.3% in 2020-21; 58.3% in 2021-22

Class D – 58.1% in 2017-18; 61.8% in 2018-19; 62.9% in 2020-21; 60.8% in 2021-22

- Table 4 shows how many sports athletes participated in during the 2021-22 school year. These data support the tendencies described above. Schools with larger enrollments tend to have a higher percentage of single sport athletes, and the percentage of single sport athletes is higher among girls than boys.
- The percentage of 2 sport athletes is somewhat similar among all classes – approximately one-third of athletes participate in two sports (Table 4).
- There is a significant difference in the percentage of 3 sport athletes between classes – schools with lower enrollments have a much higher percentage of athletes participating in 3 sports (Table 4).
- Several schools have appeared in the top 10% of their class with regard to multi-sport participation for 2017-18, 2018-19, 2020-21, and 2021-22 school years:

School	Class	Years in Top 10%		
Athens	D	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21
Battle Creek Harper Creek	A	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22
Detroit Cody	A/B	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21
Gibraltar Carlson	A	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Grand Rapids Northview	A	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Hamtramck	A	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Kinross Maplewood Baptist	D	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22
New Baltimore Anchor Bay	A	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21
Ovid-Elsie	B	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Warren Lincoln	B	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22

Survey Data:

Table 1. Multi-Sport Participation Survey Responses by Class

	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Combined
Number of schools surveyed	185	188	187	192	752
Number of responding schools*	161	165	158	155	639
Response rate (# surveyed / # responding)	87.0%	87.8%	84.5%	80.7%	85.0%

*The term "responding schools" refers to schools submitting surveys with usable data – 647 schools submitted responses, but data from 28 schools that was clearly inaccurate based on the size of the school was excluded from analysis, as it would have skewed the data. From this point forward, in order to avoid needless repetition, "responding schools" will just be referred to as "schools".

Table 2. Sport Participation among General Student Population by Class and Gender – (%) of Student Enrollment (Total # Athletes / Total # Students Enrolled)

Gender	Class A			Class B			Class C			Class D			Classes Combined		
	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%
Boys	46,899	113,783	41.2%	21,354	48,322	44.2%	11,202	22,245	50.4%	4,225	7,898	53.5%	83,680	192,248	43.5%
Girls	36,861	108,429	34.0%	17,817	46,517	38.3%	9,640	21,367	45.1%	3,808	7,609	50.0%	68,126	183,922	37.0%
Combined	83,760	222,212	37.7%	39,171	94,839	41.3%	20,842	43,612	47.8%	8,033	15,507	51.8%	151,806	376,170	40.4%

Table 3. Multi-Sport Participation among Athlete Population by Class and Gender – (%) of Athlete Population (# of Multi-Sport Athletes / Total # Athletes)

Gender	Class A			Class B			Class C			Class D			Classes Combined		
	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%
Boys	18,434	46,899	39.3%	11,171	21,354	52.3%	6,777	11,202	60.5%	2,564	4,225	60.7%	38,946	83,680	46.5%
Girls	12,340	36,861	33.5%	8,208	17,817	46.1%	5,370	9,640	55.7%	2,318	3,808	60.9%	28,236	68,126	41.4%
Combined	30,774	83,760	36.7%	19,379	39,171	49.5%	12,147	20,842	58.3%	4,882	8,033	60.8%	67,182	151,806	44.3%

Table 4. Number of Sports Played among Athlete Population by Class and Gender - (%) of Athlete Population (# of athletes participating in that number of sports / total # of athletes)

Class A											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	46,899	28,465	60.7%	14,656	31.3%	3,649	7.8%	129	0.3%	18,434	39.3%
Girls	36,861	24,521	66.5%	10,278	27.9%	1,990	5.4%	72	0.2%	12,340	33.5%
Combined	83,760	52,986	63.3%	24,934	29.8%	5,639	6.7%	201	0.2%	30,774	36.7%
Class B											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	21,354	10,183	47.7%	7,670	35.9%	3,360	15.7%	141	0.7%	11,171	52.3%
Girls	17,817	9,609	53.9%	5,946	33.4%	2,135	12.0%	127	0.7%	8,208	46.1%
Combined	39,171	19,792	50.5%	13,616	34.8%	5,495	14.0%	268	0.7%	19,379	49.5%
Class C											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	11,202	4,425	39.5%	4,042	36.1%	2,442	21.8%	293	2.6%	6,777	60.5%
Girls	9,640	4,260	44.2%	3,459	35.9%	1,697	17.6%	214	2.2%	5,370	55.7%
Combined	20,842	8,685	41.7%	7,501	36.0%	4,139	19.9%	507	2.4%	12,147	58.3%
Class D											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	4,225	1,664	39.4%	1,472	34.8%	925	21.9%	164	3.9%	2,564	60.7%
Girls	3,808	1,493	39.2%	1,297	34.1%	802	21.1%	216	5.7%	2,318	60.9%
Combined	8,033	3,157	39.3%	2,769	34.5%	1,727	21.5%	380	4.7%	4,882	60.8%
Classes Combined											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	83,680	44,737	53.5%	27,840	33.3%	10,376	12.4%	727	0.9%	38,946	46.5%
Girls	68,126	39,883	58.5%	19,683	28.9%	6,624	9.7%	629	0.9%	28,236	41.4%
Combined	151,806	84,620	55.7%	47,523	31.3%	17,000	11.2%	1,356	0.9%	67,182	44.3%

Table 5. Sport Participation among General Student Population at Class A Schools by Enrollment and Gender – (%) of Student Enrollment (Total # Athletes / Total # Students Enrolled)

Gender	Enrollment less than 1,000			Enrollment 1,000-1,500			Enrollment 1,501-2,000			Enrollment over 2,000			All Class A Combined		
	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%	Total Athletes	Student Enrollment	%
Boys	6,759	13,205	51.2%	16,708	42,805	39.0%	8,807	24,340	36.2%	10,008	28,099	35.6%	42,282	108,449	39.0%
Girls	3,787	10,567	35.8%	12,892	41,269	31.2%	6,863	23,381	29.4%	7,880	27,847	28.3%	31,422	103,064	30.5%
Combined	10,546	23,772	44.4%	29,600	84,074	35.2%	15,670	47,721	32.8%	17,888	55,946	32.0%	73,704	211,513	34.8%

Table 6. Multi-Sport Participation among Athlete Population at Class A Schools by Class and Gender – (%) of Athlete Population (# of Multi-Sport Athletes / Total # Athletes)

Gender	Enrollment less than 1,000			Enrollment 1,000-1,500			Enrollment 1,501-2,000			Enrollment over 2,000			All Class A Combined		
	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Total Athletes	%	# Multi-Sport Athletes	Student Enrollment	%
Boys	2,864	6,759	42.4%	7,023	16,708	42.0%	3,126	8,807	35.5%	3,199	10,008	32.0%	16,212	42,282	38.3%
Girls	1,413	3,787	37.3%	4,507	12,892	35.0%	2,314	6,863	33.7%	2,380	7,880	30.2%	10,614	31,422	33.8%
Combined	4,277	10,546	40.6%	11,530	29,600	39.0%	5,440	15,670	34.7%	5,579	17,888	31.2%	26,826	73,704	36.4%

Table 7. Top 10% of Class A Schools with Regard to Multi-Sport Participation (Ranked by % of Multi-Sport Athlete Population – Boys and Girls Data Combined)

Rank	School	Total Boy Athletes	# Boy Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Boy Athletes	Total Girl Athletes	# Girl Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Girl Athletes	Total Athletes	Total Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Athletes
1	Bay City Central	141	119	84.4%	155	114	73.5%	296	233	78.7%
2	Livonia Franklin	277	233	84.1%	253	179	70.8%	530	412	77.7%
3	Clinton Township Chippewa Valley	565	430	76.1%	478	358	74.9%	1043	788	75.6%
4	Parma Western	239	177	74.1%	196	151	77.0%	435	328	75.4%
5	Grand Rapids Northview	286	209	73.1%	253	167	66.0%	539	376	69.8%
6	Gibraltar Carlson	309	229	74.1%	217	103	47.5%	526	332	63.1%
7	Battle Creek Harper Creek	164	99	60.4%	145	90	62.1%	309	189	61.2%
8	Hamtramck	121	64	52.9%	44	33	75.0%	165	97	58.8%
9	Warren Fitzgerald	114	54	47.4%	100	70	70.0%	214	124	57.9%
10	Wyandotte Roosevelt	366	230	62.8%	271	130	48.0%	637	360	56.5%
11	Warren De La Salle Collegiate	580	325	56.0%	0	0	0%	580	325	56.0%
12	East Grand Rapids	302	184	60.9%	236	111	47.0%	538	295	54.8%
13	Plainwell	207	118	57.0%	178	92	51.7%	385	210	54.5%
14	Ann Arbor Skyline	479	263	54.9%	458	242	52.8%	937	505	53.9%
15	Spring Lake	242	142	58.7%	238	116	48.7%	480	258	53.8%
16	Midland	271	161	59.4%	255	120	47.1%	526	281	53.4%

Table 8. Top 10% of Class B Schools with Regard to Multi-Sport Participation (Ranked by % of Multi-Sport Athlete Population – Boys and Girls Data Combined)

Rank	School	Total Boy Athletes	# Boy Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Boy Athletes	Total Girl Athletes	# Girl Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Girl Athletes	Total Athletes	Total Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Athletes
1	Brooklyn Columbia Central	136	114	83.8%	103	91	88.3%	239	205	85.8%
2	Detroit Southeastern	45	35	77.8%	20	20	100.0%	65	55	84.6%
3	Warren Michigan Collegiate	70	60	85.7%	55	45	81.8%	125	105	84.0%
4	Durand	69	59	85.5%	75	60	80.0%	144	119	82.6%
5	Adrian	246	200	81.3%	204	159	77.9%	450	359	79.8%
6	Elk Rapids	61	48	78.7%	51	41	80.4%	112	89	79.5%
7	Ludington	177	126	71.2%	123	100	81.3%	300	226	75.3%
8	Ovid-Elsie	75	60	80.0%	65	45	69.2%	140	105	75.0%
9	Warren Lincoln	191	141	73.8%	66	51	77.3%	257	192	74.7%
10	Tecumseh	87	75	86.2%	79	49	62.0%	166	124	74.7%
11	Hazel Park	90	67	74.4%	77	57	74.0%	167	124	74.3%
12	Clare	126	95	75.4%	103	73	70.9%	229	168	73.4%
13	Bridgeport	66	51	77.3%	61	41	67.2%	127	92	72.4%
14	Constantine	107	80	74.8%	70	47	67.1%	177	127	71.8%
15	Detroit Country Day	337	253	75.1%	284	185	65.1%	621	438	70.5%

Table 9. Top 10% of Class C Schools with Regard to Multi-Sport Participation (Ranked by % of Multi-Sport Athlete Population – Boys and Girls Data Combined)

Rank	School	Total Boy Athletes	# Boy Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Boy Athletes	Total Girl Athletes	# Girl Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Girl Athletes	Total Athletes	Total Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Athletes
1	Brown City	105	99	94.3%	79	77	97.5%	184	176	95.7%
2	Decatur	51	44	86.3%	44	39	88.6%	95	83	87.4%
3	Niles Brandywine	107	92	86.0%	101	86	85.1%	208	178	85.6%
4	Ishpeming Westwood	102	86	84.3%	82	67	81.7%	184	153	83.2%
5	Flint Beecher	38	28	73.7%	13	13	100.0%	51	41	80.4%
6	St Charles	59	46	78.0%	65	51	78.5%	124	97	78.2%
7	St Ignace	55	39	70.9%	47	40	85.1%	102	79	77.5%
8	Potterville	68	48	70.6%	63	53	84.1%	131	101	77.1%
9	Delton Kellogg	60	42	70.0%	62	52	83.9%	122	94	77.0%
10	Oscoda	131	99	75.6%	124	95	76.6%	255	194	76.1%
11	Addison	72	52	72.2%	65	50	76.9%	137	102	74.5%
12	Reading	67	49	73.1%	40	30	75.0%	107	79	73.8%
13	Unionville-Sebewaing	54	41	75.9%	54	38	70.4%	108	79	73.1%
14	Ironwood	36	26	72.2%	64	47	73.4%	100	73	73.0%
15	Eau Claire	42	31	73.8%	26	18	69.2%	68	49	72.1%

Table 10. Top 10% of Class D Schools with Regard to Multi-Sport Participation (Ranked by % of Multi-Sport Athlete Population – Boys and Girls Data Combined)

Rank	School	Total Boy Athletes	# Boy Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Boy Athletes	Total Girl Athletes	# Girl Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Girl Athletes	Total Athletes	Total Multi-Sport Athletes	% Multi-Sport Athletes
1	Coldwater Pansophia Academy	24	24	100.0%	35	35	100.0%	59	59	100.0%
2	Kinross Maplewood Baptist	16	16	100.0%	9	9	100.0%	25	25	100.0%
3	McBain Northern Michigan Christian	43	43	100.0%	31	30	96.8%	74	73	98.6%
4	Ewen-Trout Creek	18	18	100.0%	17	15	88.2%	35	33	94.3%
5	Detroit Douglass	24	22	91.7%	0	0	0%	24	22	91.7%
6	Holland Calvary	7	7	100.0%	16	13	81.3%	23	20	87.0%
7	Owendale-Gagetown	6	4	66.7%	22	20	90.9%	28	24	85.7%
8	Atlanta	21	18	85.7%	23	19	82.6%	44	37	84.1%
9	Escanaba Holy Name	4	3	75.0%	2	2	100.0%	6	5	83.3%
10	Bloomfield Hills Academy of the Sacred Heart	0	0	0%	57	47	82.5%	57	47	82.5%
11	Ontonagon	27	20	74.1%	27	24	88.9%	54	44	81.5%
12	Gaylord St Mary	36	31	86.1%	21	15	71.4%	57	46	80.7%
13	Watersmeet	16	12	75.0%	9	8	88.9%	25	20	80.0%
14	Hillsdale Academy	37	30	81.1%	40	31	77.5%	77	61	79.2%