

SUMMARY REPORT

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

2023-24 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 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 launched an initiative to measure multi-sport participation across MHSAA member schools. This effort aims to identify broad trends and highlight "achievers"—schools that exceed participation norms based on factors such as enrollment, location, and other influences on sports involvement. By recognizing schools with high multi-sport participation and pinpointing key trends and research questions, this initiative will guide school sports leaders in shaping policies, procedures, and programs that promote multi-sport involvement and enhance the overall student experience in Michigan's interscholastic athletic programs and beyond.

With data not collected for the 2019-20 school year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spring of 2024 marked the sixth year of data collection on multi-sport participation among athletes at MHSAA member schools. As done previously, all 753 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 2023-24 survey also asked specifically how many sports each athlete played. This summary is based on usable data from the 480 schools responding to the survey.

Observations:

- The overall response rate for the 2023-24 survey was 63.7% (Table 1), marking a significant drop compared to response rates from the past five years: 85.2% in 2022-23, 85.0% in 2021-22, 81.5% in 2020-21, 82.9% in 2018-19, and 79.9% in 2017-18.
- As observed in the first five years of data collection, smaller schools consistently show a higher percentage of student participation in athletics. This trend is evident both across different school classes (Table 2) and within varying enrollment sizes in Class A (Table 5).

- Similarly, smaller schools tend to have a higher percentage of athletes participating on multiple sports teams. This trend is consistent both across different school classes (Table 3) and among various enrollment sizes 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 percentage of athletes participating in multiple sports has remained consistent across all classes over the six years data has been collected:

CLASS	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
A	35.9%	35.4%	36.4%	36.7%	36.9%	38.2%
B	46.7%	48.7%	48.4%	49.5%	49.6%	48.0%
C	55.2%	56.7%	57.3%	58.3%	59.0%	59.4%
D	58.1%	61.8%	62.9%	60.8%	62.5%	63.1%

- Table 4 shows how many sports athletes participated in during the 2023-24 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).
- Three schools have appeared in the top 10% of their class for multi-sport participation five times:

School	Class	Years in Top 10%				
Battle Creek Harper Creek	A	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2022-23	2023-24
Detroit Cody	A/B	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grand Rapids Northview	A	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21	2022-23	2023-24

- Five schools have appeared in the top 10% of their class for multi-sport participation four times:

School	Class	Years in Top 10%			
Decatur	C	2018-19	2020-21	2022-23	2023-24
East Grand Rapids	A	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Manton	C	2018-19	2020-21	2022-23	2023-24
Parma Western	A	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Warren Michigan Collegiate	B	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24

- Twenty schools have appeared in the top 10% of their class for multi-sport participation three times:

School	Class	Years in Top 10%		
Athens	D	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21
Clare	B	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Constantine	B	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Detroit Douglass	D	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23
Flint Beecher	C	2018-19	2021-22	2023-24
Gaylord St Mary	D	2018-19	2021-22	2023-24
Gibraltar Carlson	A	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Hamtramck	A	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Hillsdale Academy	D	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Holland Calvary	D	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Kinross Maplewood Baptist	D	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22
Lake Leelanau St Mary	D	2018-19	2022-23	2023-24
Livonia Franklin	A	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23
Marquette	A	2017-18	2018-19	2022-23
Mayville	C/D	2018-19	2020-21	2023-24
New Baltimore Anchor Bay	A	2017-18	2018-19	2020-21
Ovid-Elsie	B	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
Saginaw Michigan Lutheran Seminary	C	2017-18	2018-19	2023-24
Warren Fitzgerald	A	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23

Survey Data:

Table 1. Multi-Sport Participation Survey Responses by Class

	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Combined
Number of schools surveyed	188	188	189	188	753
Number of responding schools*	128	124	123	105	480
Response rate (# surveyed / # responding)	68.1%	66.0%	65.1%	55.9%	63.7%

*The term "responding schools" refers to schools submitting surveys with usable data - data 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	38,052	87,987	43.2%	17,830	35,391	50.4%	9,202	16,621	55.4%	3,091	5,177	59.7%	68,175	145,176	47.0%
Girls	30,483	84,830	35.9%	14,822	34,238	43.3%	7,648	15,565	49.1%	2,768	4,817	57.5%	55,721	139,450	40.0%
Combined	68,535	172,817	39.7%	32,652	69,629	46.9%	16,850	32,186	52.4%	5,859	9,994	58.6%	123,896	284,626	43.5%

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	15,584	38,052	41.0%	9,186	17,830	51.5%	5,723	9,202	62.2%	1,985	3,091	64.2%	32,478	68,175	47.6%
Girls	10,572	30,483	34.7%	6,479	14,822	43.7%	4,289	7,648	56.1%	1,713	2,768	61.9%	23,053	55,721	41.4%
Combined	26,156	68,535	38.2%	15,665	32,652	48.0%	10,012	16,850	59.4%	3,698	5,859	63.1%	55,531	123,896	44.8%

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	38,052	22,468	59.0%	12,453	32.7%	3,042	8.0%	89	0.2%	15,584	41.0%
Girls	30,483	19,911	65.3%	8,604	28.2%	1,879	6.2%	89	0.3%	10,572	34.7%
Combined	68,535	42,379	61.8%	21,057	30.7%	4,921	7.2%	178	0.3%	26,156	38.2%
Class B											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	17,830	8,644	48.5%	6,199	34.8%	2,763	15.5%	224	1.3%	9,186	51.5%
Girls	14,822	8,343	56.3%	4,762	32.1%	1,623	10.9%	94	0.6%	6,479	43.7%
Combined	32,652	16,987	52.0%	10,961	33.6%	4,386	13.4%	318	1.0%	15,665	48.0%
Class C											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	9,202	3,479	37.8%	3,313	36.0%	2,151	23.4%	259	2.8%	5,723	62.2%
Girls	7,648	3,359	43.9%	2,612	34.2%	1,493	19.5%	184	2.4%	4,289	56.1%
Combined	16,850	6,838	40.6%	5,925	35.2%	3,644	21.6%	443	2.6%	10,012	59.4%
Class D											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	3,091	1,106	35.8%	1,130	36.6%	739	23.9%	116	3.8%	1,985	64.2%
Girls	2,768	1,055	38.1%	919	33.2%	658	23.8%	136	4.9%	1,713	61.9%
Combined	5,859	2,161	36.9%	2,049	35.0%	1,397	23.8%	252	4.3%	3,698	63.1%
Classes Combined											
Gender	Total Athletes	Single Sport	%	2 Sports	%	3 Sports	%	4 or More Sports	%	TOTAL Multi-sport Athletes	%
Boys	68,175	35,697	52.4%	23,095	33.9%	8,695	12.8%	688	1.0%	32,478	47.6%
Girls	55,721	32,668	58.6%	16,897	30.3%	5,653	10.1%	503	0.9%	23,053	41.4%
Combined	123,896	68,365	55.2%	39,992	32.3%	14,348	11.6%	1,191	1.0%	55,531	44.8%

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	7,725	14,926	51.8%	13,899	33,587	41.4%	10,672	26,113	40.9%	5,756	13,361	43.1%	38,052	87,987	43.2%
Girls	6,269	14,000	44.8%	11,349	32,736	34.7%	8,190	25,199	32.5%	4,675	12,895	36.3%	30,483	84,830	35.9%
Combined	13,994	28,926	48.4%	25,248	66,323	38.1%	18,862	51,312	36.8%	10,431	26,256	39.7%	68,535	172,817	39.7%

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	3,430	7,725	44.4%	6,103	13,899	43.9%	4,192	10,672	39.3%	1,859	5,756	32.3%	15,584	38,052	41.0%
Girls	2,359	6,269	37.6%	4,252	11,349	37.5%	2,687	8,190	32.8%	1,274	4,675	27.3%	10,572	30,483	34.7%
Combined	5,789	13,994	41.4%	10,355	25,248	41.0%	6,879	18,862	36.5%	3,133	10,431	30.0%	26,156	68,535	38.2%

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	Macomb L'Anse Creuse North	455	432	94.9%	248	234	94.4%	703	666	94.7%
2	Battle Creek Harper Creek	267	189	70.8%	215	160	74.4%	482	349	72.4%
3	Grand Rapids Northview	288	196	68.1%	264	180	68.2%	552	376	68.1%
4	Berkley	288	104	36.1%	266	256	96.2%	554	360	65.0%
5	Kalamazoo Loy Norrix	258	178	69.0%	210	123	58.6%	468	301	64.3%
6	Traverse City Central	328	158	48.2%	384	226	58.9%	712	384	53.9%
7	Lansing Eastern	120	69	57.5%	108	51	47.2%	228	120	52.6%
8	East Grand Rapids	238	170	71.4%	297	109	36.7%	535	279	52.1%
9	Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern	319	224	70.2%	243	67	27.6%	562	291	51.8%
10	Dearborn Heights Crestwood	161	89	55.3%	103	47	45.6%	264	136	51.5%
11	Wayland	216	114	52.8%	166	82	49.4%	382	196	51.3%
12	Plainwell	217	115	53.0%	196	96	49.0%	413	211	51.1%
13	Midland	296	160	54.1%	218	101	46.3%	514	261	50.8%
14	Grand Rapids Kenowa Hills	286	163	57.0%	145	53	36.6%	431	216	50.1%
15	Mason	245	132	53.9%	206	91	44.2%	451	223	49.4%

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	Parma Western	239	179	74.9%	221	180	81.4%	460	359	78.0%
2	Constantine	100	83	83.0%	79	52	65.8%	179	135	75.4%
3	Clare	114	82	71.9%	90	52	57.8%	204	134	65.7%
4	Reed City	82	63	76.8%	77	41	53.2%	159	104	65.4%
5	Grass Lake	137	94	68.6%	107	62	57.9%	244	156	63.9%
6	Allendale	299	198	66.2%	141	73	51.8%	440	271	61.6%
7	Michigan Center	116	79	68.1%	108	58	53.7%	224	137	61.2%
8	Frankenmuth	167	119	71.3%	149	74	49.7%	316	193	61.1%
9	Detroit Cody	76	53	69.7%	84	44	52.4%	160	97	60.6%
10	Parchment	110	65	59.1%	97	60	61.9%	207	125	60.4%
11	Montague	128	77	60.2%	99	59	59.6%	227	136	59.9%
12	Hillsdale	102	58	56.9%	90	56	62.2%	192	114	59.4%
13	Muskegon Oakridge	106	66	62.3%	85	47	55.3%	191	113	59.2%
14	Onsted	120	72	60.0%	94	54	57.4%	214	126	58.9%
15	Hopkins	135	85	63.0%	123	66	53.7%	258	151	58.5%

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	Warren Michigan Collegiate	70	65	92.9%	50	45	90.0%	120	110	91.7%
2	Flint Beecher	66	60	90.9%	60	55	91.7%	126	115	91.3%
3	LeRoy Pine River	64	56	87.5%	50	46	92.0%	114	102	89.5%
4	Cass City	94	79	84.0%	78	66	84.6%	172	145	84.3%
5	Decatur	59	47	79.7%	55	48	87.3%	114	95	83.3%
6	Manton	71	55	77.5%	58	50	86.2%	129	105	81.4%
7	Oscoda	81	67	82.7%	70	52	74.3%	151	119	78.8%
8	Harrison	53	40	75.5%	47	37	78.7%	100	77	77.0%
9	Beal City	58	48	82.8%	58	40	69.0%	116	88	75.9%
10	Marlette	46	36	78.3%	39	28	71.8%	85	64	75.3%
11	Mayville	34	29	85.3%	27	16	59.3%	61	45	73.8%
12	Saginaw Michigan Lutheran Seminary	86	67	77.9%	70	47	67.1%	156	114	73.1%
13	Rudyard	57	41	71.9%	46	34	73.9%	103	75	72.8%
14	Brown City	54	43	79.6%	55	36	65.5%	109	79	72.5%
15	Ithaca	89	68	76.4%	81	55	67.9%	170	123	72.4%

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	Gaylord St Mary	37	34	91.9%	33	31	93.9%	70	65	92.9%
2	Lake Leelanau St Mary	19	17	89.5%	17	16	94.1%	36	33	91.7%
3	Wyoming West Michigan Lutheran	6	5	83.3%	5	5	100.0%	11	10	90.9%
4	Deckerville	27	26	96.3%	27	23	85.2%	54	49	90.7%
5	Marcellus Howardsville Christian	23	21	91.3%	22	19	86.4%	45	40	88.9%
6	Morrice	31	27	87.1%	22	19	86.4%	53	46	86.8%
7	Ewen-Trout Creek	14	12	85.7%	14	12	85.7%	28	24	85.7%
8	Vestaburg	33	26	78.8%	36	33	91.7%	69	59	85.5%
9	Alanson	25	20	80.0%	15	14	93.3%	40	34	85.0%
10	Wolverine	27	22	81.5%	19	17	89.5%	46	39	84.8%
11	St Joseph Our Lady of the Lake Catholic	26	22	84.6%	23	19	82.6%	49	41	83.7%
12	Akron-Fairgrove	24	19	79.2%	14	12	85.7%	38	31	81.6%
13	Litchfield	17	15	88.2%	14	10	71.4%	31	25	80.6%
14	Mackinaw City	17	15	88.2%	13	9	69.2%	30	24	80.0%

