A total of 274,126 participants competed or had begun practices in MHSAA-sponsored sports during the 2019-20 school year. The overall MHSAA participation totals count students once for each sport in which they participate, meaning students who are multiple-sport athletes are counted more than once.

Boys participation fell 2.7 percent to 157,323, and girls participation also decreased, by three percent to 116,803. However, both measures include totals received for Spring sports, which saw reduced participation reported in eight of nine sports offered and the majority by significant percentages indicating the effect of the COVID-19 stoppage.

However, data collected for the Fall and Winter revealed mostly consistent comparisons with eight sports showing increases in participation from 2018-19 and 11 showing decreases (not counting girls tennis, which is played in Fall in the Upper Peninsula but by the great majority of the state’s teams in the Lower Peninsula during Spring). Girls and boys bowling both set participation records with the girls total of 3,134 athletes up 1.3 percent over the previous season and the boys total of 4,495 up 3.8 percent over 2018-19.

Girls alpine skiing and wrestling enjoyed the second-largest percentage increases in participation in 2019-20 of three percent each, girls skiing to 786 athletes (the sport’s most since 2004-05) and wrestling to 9,777 participants. Volleyball bounced back from a dip in 2018-19 with an increase of nearly a percent to 19,248 participants, and boys swimming & diving similarly bounced back with a 1.1-percent increase to 5,059 participants. Girls golf (0.6 percent, 3,610 total participants) and boys tennis (1.3 percent, 6,339 athletes) also saw increases despite Upper Peninsula seasons in those sports not being played. Girls lacrosse, with 3,224 participants, was up 1.4 percent and set a record despite the sport being halted prior to the start of competition.

Of the 11 Fall and Winter sports that saw decreases in participation from 2018-19, eight were by 1.6 percent or less. Football, with 34,339 participants during the 2019 season, remained the most-played sport despite a 3-percent decrease from the previous year. Boys track & field (21,650) and boys basketball (21,016) had the next-highest totals of participants reported. Volleyball (19,248) remained the most popular girls sport by participation, followed by girls track & field (16,274) and girls basketball (15,133).

The following chart shows participation figures for the 2019-20 school year from MHSAA member schools for sports in which the Association sponsors a postseason tournament:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   | **BOYS** | **GIRLS** |
| **Sport** | **Schools (A)** | **Participants** | **Schools (A)** | **Participants (B)** |
| Baseball | 658/4 | 16,455 | - | 0/4 |
| Basketball | 737/3 | 21,005 | 729 | 15,133/11 |
| Bowling | 418/15 | 4,469 | 407 | 3,134/26 |
| Competitive Cheer | - | - | 361 | 6,567 |
| Cross Country | 671/2 | 9,457 | 669 | 8,066/11 |
| Football - 11 player | 560/87 | 32,628 | - | 0/100 |
|                   8-player | 93/16 | 1,591 | - | 0/20 |
| Golf | 531/66 | 5,729 | 351 | 3,610/132 |
| Gymnastics | - | - | 102 | 666 |
| Ice Hockey | 295/10 | 3,261 | - | 315/11 |
| Lacrosse | 171/10 | 5,305 | 122 | 3,224/14 |
| Skiing | 116/2 | 916 | 114 | 786/3 |
| Soccer | 503/16 | 14,195 | 484 | 12,429/69 |
| Softball | - | - | 648 | 12,657 |
| Swimming & Diving | 274/22 | 4,987 | 273 | 5,474/72 |
| Tennis | 310/18 | 6,304 | 340 | 8,621/35 |
| Track & Field | 696/1 | 21,645 | 694 | 16,274/5 |
| Volleyball | - | - | 720 | 19,248 |
| Wrestling | 492/216 | 9,376 | - | 0/401 |

**(A) The first number is the number of schools reporting sponsorship on the Sports Participation Survey, including primary and secondary schools in cooperative programs as of May 15, 2020. The second number indicates the number of schools that had girls playing on teams consisting primarily of boys.**

**(B) The second number indicates the number of additional girls playing on teams consisting primarily of boys and entered in boys competition.**