FACT SHEET

Does Your High School Have an Athletics Participation Gap?

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What is an athletic participation gap?

The participation gap is the percentage point gap between the percentage of students who are girls and the percentage of athletic participation opportunities (counted as roster spots) provided to girls. For example, if at school A, girls are 45% of all students but receive only 35% of all the athletic opportunities, school A has a participation gap of 10 percentage points.

To find out if your middle or high school has an athletics participation gap, use the U.S. Department of Education’s national online database, the Civil Rights Data Collection.

• Search for your school here: http://ocrdata.ed.gov/DistrictSchoolSearch.*

• Enter your school’s name and other identifying information in the appropriate search boxes. Click on your school’s name to go to its information page. On the lower right of the screen is a blue-shaded box titled “Additional Profile Facts Available.” (See below.) Click on the 5th bullet, which is entitled “Single Sex Interscholastic Athletics,” to view athletics information.

Additional Profile Facts Available

Characteristics and Membership

• LEP
• Students w/ Disabilities (IDEA)
• Students w/ Disabilities (504)
• EDFacts IDEA
• Single Sex Interscholastic Athletics
• Single-Sex Classes

• A four-bar graph will appear on the screen. (See below.) The first bar shows the school’s male and female enrollment. (Male is below in light purple, female is above in dark purple.) The fourth bar, farthest to the right, shows the percentage of the school’s athletic participation opportunities provided to males and females. Of the total athletic opportunities provided by the school, the top portion of the bar represents the percentage that is provided to females. (If a single student participates in three sports, that is considered three athletic opportunities, or three “Team Participants.”) You can see if your school has an athletic “participation gap” by taking the percentage of females enrolled in the school (the first bar) and subtracting the percentage of female athletic opportunities (the fourth bar). The two bars in the middle show the percentages of the school’s sports and teams that are male and female. (If one sport has Varsity and JV teams, it will count as one “sport” and two “teams”).
In this example, the female share of enrollment is 49.0% and the female share of participation opportunities is 38.5%, so the athletic opportunity gap is 49.0% – 38.5% = 10.5 percentage points.

To look at district-wide information, return to the original search page and hit the “Find District(s)” tab on the top left.

*The U.S. Department of Education estimates that the CRDC includes information on about 85 percent of the nation’s public school students.

Are you concerned about sports inequities at your school?

Call NWLC @ 1.855.HERGAME