



**PROJECT
PLAY**



**REIMAGINING
SCHOOL SPORTS**

Top Reasons Students Engage in High School Sports

Having fun	81%
Exercise	79%
Learning and improving skills	66%
Playing with and making new friends	64%
Competing	59%
Winning games	53%

Source: National Student Survey Analysis, Aspen Institute and Resonant Education

Top Reasons Students Don't Play High School Sports

Schoolwork	42%
Don't enjoy sports	32%
No sports offered that are of interest	26%
I don't think I'm good enough	25%
Work schedule	22%
Family responsibilities	21%

Source: National Student Survey Analysis, Aspen Institute and Resonant Education

Most Requested Sports Not Offered at Their School

Archery

13%

Gymnastics

7%

Lacrosse

7%

Bowling

7%

Source: National Student Survey Analysis, Aspen Institute and Resonant Education

High School Student Interest in Physical Activity		
	Male	Female
Strength training	44%	29%
Biking	26%	23%
Parkour	20%	9%
Skateboarding	17%	24%
Yoga	7%	33%
Dance	4%	32%

Source: National Student Survey Analysis, Aspen Institute and Resonant Education

The Underrepresented in High School Sports



Girls make up **44%** of high school athletes vs. 56% who are boys

Girls at heavily minority schools have **39%** of the sports opportunities as girls at heavily White schools



27% of Asian American students don't play high school sports because no offered sport interests them



Male

HISPANIC 20%

BLACK 20%

WHITE 27%

Female

BLACK 6%

WHITE 11%

HISPANIC 12%

Fewer male students of color meet physical fitness guidelines than White youth – and all female students fare even worse

Native American adolescents are **30%** more likely than White adolescents to be **obese**

Nearly

1 IN 3

LGBTQ youth play sports (school, community league or club) – **lower than the broader youth population**



An estimated **6%-25%** of students with **disabilities** participate in high school sports

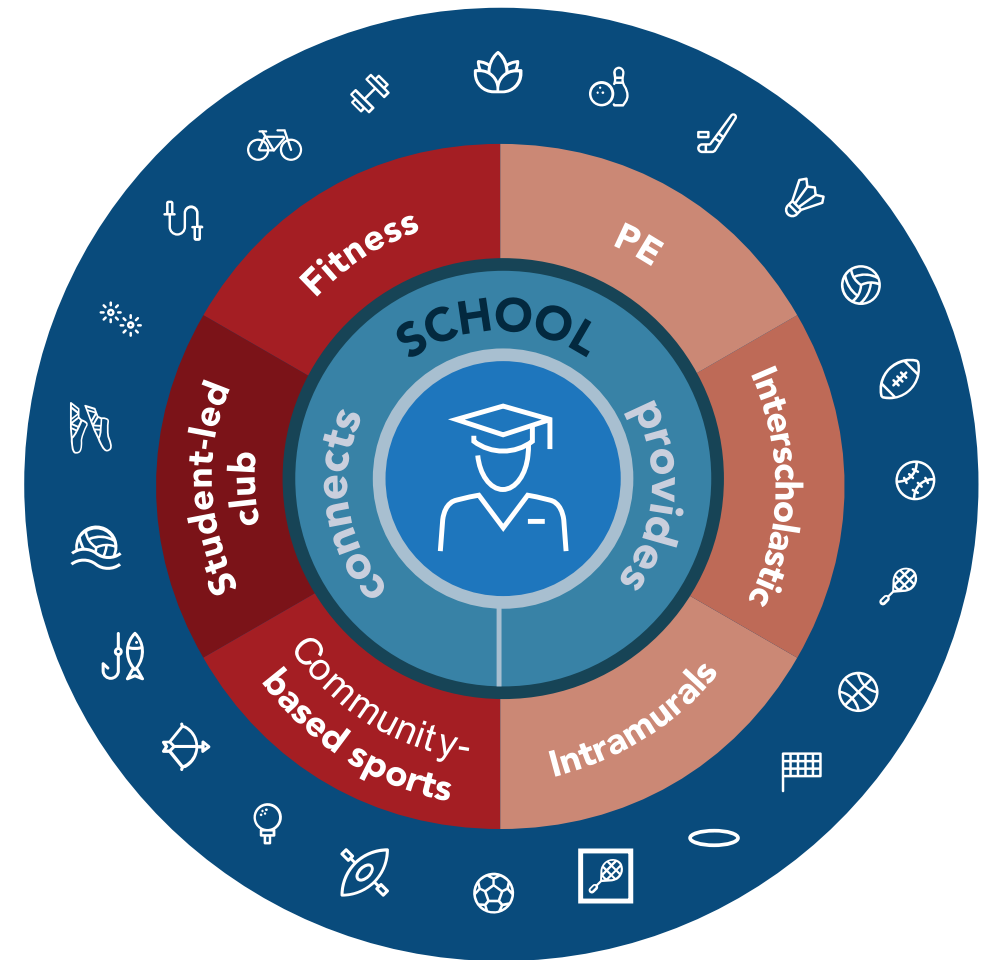
TODAY'S TRADITIONAL MODEL

It's mostly about competing for your school



STUDENT-CENTERED MODEL

Starts with health needs and offers more options



Play 1

Challenge: The Purpose of Athletics
Isn't Always Clear

The Play:
Align School Sports
with School Mission





Play 2

Challenge: The Underrepresented Lack Voice

The Play:
Understand Your Student
Population



Play 3

Challenge: Every Student Has Unique Needs

The Play: Create Personal Activity Plans

Play 4

Challenge: It's Interscholastic Competition – or Bust

The Play:
Introduce Other
Forms of Play





Play 5

Challenge: Schools Can't Do It All

The Play:
Develop Community Partnerships

Play 6

Challenge: Not All Coaches
Understand their Role

The Play:
Bolster Coaching
Education



Play 7

Challenge: Sports Injuries Can Last a Lifetime

The Play:
Prioritize Health and Safety





Play 8

Challenge: Lack of Funding

The Play:
Measure and Evaluate Programs



What's Next

Develop capacity of school leaders
to implement strategies

In partnership with NFHS and leading organizations,
Aspen will create resources and opportunities

School Sports Equity Toolkit

- Toolkit to create more sports teams and opportunities in low-income school districts
- Catalyst: New York City settlement with Fair Play Coalition that will create 200 new teams in schools that serve mostly racial minorities
- Lessons from historic settlement distilled, translated for advocates in our cities, states
- To be published later in 2022

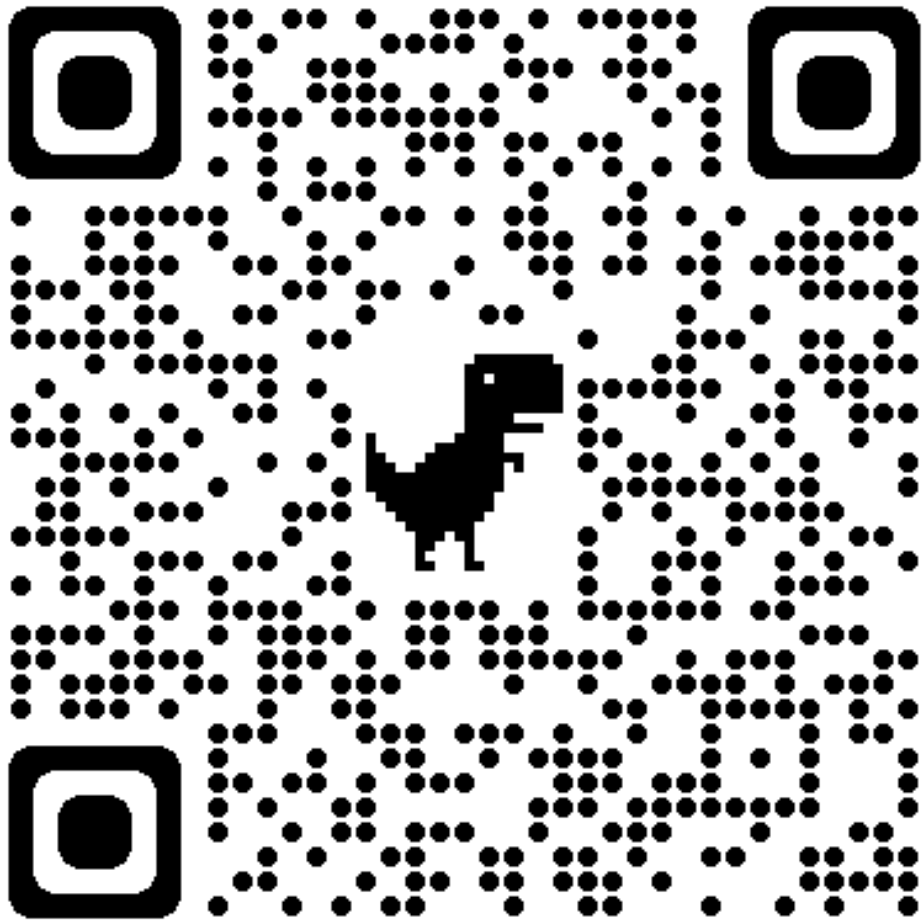
ACL Injury Reduction Project

- Call to action to significantly reduce ACL injuries, with Hospital for Special Surgery
- Aspen to convene leading groups from public health, coaching, schools, other sectors to identify strategies
- Consensus meeting in 2023, with multi-year plan to implement strategies
- Includes dissemination of tools (e.g. apps, screening, education initiatives for students, parents, coaches, health clinicians, others)



Learn More:
**[https://www.aspenproject
play.org/school-sports/](https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/school-sports/)**

Want to Help?
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**Read the report online at
as.pn/playbook**

THANK YOU TO NFHS AND OUR PROJECT SPONSORS



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