



Soccer star Mia Hamm (L) testifies before the Congressional Women's Caucus on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

# Title IX and Its Effect on Sports Programs in High School and Collegiate Athletics

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**T**itle IX has made a colossal impact on school sport. It has forever changed budgeting and participation numbers between males and females and opened up many opportunities for women.

After an intensive investigation of the schools on the high school and NAIA (college) levels, I believe I can speak with authority on how they have adapted to meet the mandates of Title IX: What changes they have

made, the overall impact of Title IX, and the variances and similarities in the legal decisions.

What exactly is Title IX? Representative Edith Green of Oregon introduced the beginning of the sex bias issue in education and the hearing, which led to the first legislative step of passing Title IX.

In 1971, five different bills were introduced in the House, Senate, and White House proposing to end sex discrimination in education. Their

general sentiment was that sex discrimination should cease, but the legislatures could not come to an agreement on the best way to do it.

It took several months for the House-Senate Conference Committee to settle on the differences in all the House and Senate education bills, 11 of which addressed sex discrimination. Title IX was adopted by the House-Senate Conference Committee and then sent to the Full Senate. The Senate approved it on May 22, 1972. From the Senate, it went to the House, where it was passed on June 8.

On June 23, it was signed by President Nixon and it went into effect on July 1. The final regulations were issued on July 20, 1974, and on May 27, 1975 President Gerald Ford signed them. They were then presented to Congress for review ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)).

How has Title IX impacted sports? Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is a federal law that states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" ([www.Ncaa.org](http://www.Ncaa.org)).

Title IX is applied to athletics in several ways. First, separate teams for boys and girls must be provided; otherwise, students of both sexes must be allowed to try out for the same team. Secondly, equal opportunities must be provided for both sexes in the educational institution in terms of competitive training facilities, equipment and supplies, facilities for practice and games, medical and training services, coaching and academic tutoring, travel allowances, housing and dining facilities, compensation of coaches, and publicity.

In addition, Title IX guidelines provide that expenditures on men's and women's sports be proportional

to the number of men and women participating. This guideline is applied to athletic scholarships, recruitment, as well as equipment, supplies, travel, recruiting, and publicity. Finally, Title IX requires colleges and universities to take specific steps to provide additional competitive sport opportunities for women (Bucher & Krotee).

According to the U.S. Department of Education and its publication "Title IX: 25 Years of Progress," there has been a dramatic increase in the number of girls and women who participate in athletics. In 1971, less than 300,000 high school girls played interscholastic sports; in 1997 that number had risen to 2.4 million.

Two years after Title IX was enacted (1971), approximately 50,000 men and less than 80 women received athletic scholarships to colleges and universities.

By 1997, one-third of all the scholarship money was going to women ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)).

To further check the current impact of Title IX, I conducted interviews with current athletic directors at both small and large high schools as well as from NAIA colleges. I asked 10 questions on the effect that Title IX has had on their school and athletic programs and also asked the AD's what types of changes they have made in order to comply with Title IX. I interviewed athletic directors in order to grasp the similarities and differences in the way they dealt with Title IX and the similarities and differences between small and large high schools and colleges.

The answers were characteristically broad. There was little difference in the impact of Title IX among high school athletic programs. Most schools stated that they provided female athletes with the same opportunities as male athletes, although one large high school stated that Title IX did come into play when adding a new sport.

The colleges said Title IX gave

them a platform to stand on when requesting more money for women's athletics and they seemed to emphasize the importance of budgeting for women's athletics.

One NAIA college reported that Title IX impacted them very little because they were already offering equal opportunities to their athletes, prior to Title IX.

Important decisions have to be made when schools have to equalize the number of men and women's athletics. One of the questions asked was what types of decisions had to be made in terms of cutting and adding sports.

It was surprising that none of the high schools or colleges I surveyed had cut a single men's sport to equalize the gender of the teams. Every high school and NAIA college that I talked to had added one or more female athletic teams in order to make it fair.

One strategy that came from a large high school was to look for programs that had both a girl's and a boy's team in the same sport. When forced to cut athletic teams because of budget, this strategy enabled them to be fair to both genders.

Athletic directors seem to have a variety of policies that determine what sports to cut and what sports to add. One small high school policy is to add or cut sports based on the equality of participation. If one sport is cut or added, it is done by both sexes.

Larger high schools determined adding or cutting based on conference affiliation, cost, revenue, facilities, number of schools in the area that field teams in that sport, and if it meets the needs of their community.

One college AD stated that he would add or cut sports based solely on student interest. Another used an Athletic Committee consisting of school faculty to help reach a decision, and then passed it on for the approval of the administration.

Relationship between participation

and Title IX: Nearly all of the AD's said that Title IX had made no changes in the number of female athletes in recent years. Since the AD's had been at their respective schools for approximately the last 10 years, this meant that Title IX has been successful at those high schools and NAIA colleges; and that male and female athletic participation numbers have stabilized over the past ten years.

One might have expected a sharp increase in female participation that put them near equal to male participation numbers in recent years. But it appears that the numbers stabilized somewhat.

Of the schools surveyed, only one monitored participation numbers. It required each head coach to make an end-of-the-season report, which included participation numbers. The schools used the report to monitor the stability of each sport, not for Title IX compliance.

All the schools questioned, however, make sure to offer equal opportunities for male and females. Title IX does not order schools to have the same number of male and female athletes; but it does mandate that all have equal opportunities.

How has Title IX affected budgeting? High schools have a different approach to the financial effect of Title IX. Some schools claim that Title IX has had no financial effect on them at all. Other schools state that when they add sports, they take money away from other activities, so that each sport gets a smaller piece of the pie.

No AD's mentioned that fundraising was an option they used to make money for their program. High schools do not have scholarship money, so their biggest concern is reducing the money given to other sports and use the saving to finance equal sport offerings.

The colleges viewed Title IX as a way to recruit student athletes with the charisma to put people in seats.

One way high schools and colleges may save money is by changing their game schedule. For example: Scheduling games closer to home.

One small high school and one large high school are in the process of cutting their schedules. The small high school cut back 10% on scheduling and eliminated some long trips.

It seems that most schools will just find the money for their athletic programs rather than reduce the number of games and trips or cut the other athletic programs.

None of the colleges questioned have changed their scheduling in order to save money, and none of the NAIA colleges surveyed cut men's athletic scholarships.

The survey also asked whether men's athletic teams have the same number of scholarships as female athletic teams. Once again, the NAIA colleges were in agreement with their

responses. They offer an equal number of scholarships for the same men and women's athletic team. For example, the men's baseball team has the same number of scholarships as the women's softball team.

Finally, all of the schools that responded, both high school and college, offer the same number of men's and women's sports in order to maintain an equal playing field. Most of the AD's strive to make sure that all their athletes are given equal opportunities to participate in the athletic program and be successful at it. And they also make sure that the athletic teams are getting all that they are entitled to (locker rooms, equipment and supplies, practice facilities). One NAIA college actually has more women's athletic teams than men's teams.

Summing up, it is apparent that even though Title IX went into effect over 30 years ago, our schools are still

continuously striving to broaden and equalize their athletic programs. The problems remain. But one thing has to be conceded:

Though our schools may have different routes to the promised land, they are all on the right path when it comes to carrying out the requirements of Title IX. ■

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