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Title IX: Development of the Total Person 1972-2002

Prior to 1972, opportunities for girls and women to compete in sports were very limited. Within the last 30 years, there has been a dramatic increase in girls and women's participation in interscholastic athletics ranging from 0.3 million participants in 1972 to 2.6 million participants in 2002. This increase in participation can be attributed to several factors including federal legislation, the women's movement, the fitness

movement, and increased public awareness of female athletes. More importantly, the rise in participation contributes to the objectives and focus of sports over the course of history, which has been to develop the total person. The goals of ancient philosophers who stressed the adage of "mind and body going hand in hand" were to seek ways of developing that total person. How then do we continue emphasizing the importance of women's participation in interscholastic sports for that very purpose?

This study compares the data based academic and non-academic performance of interscholastic female athletes with female non-athletes in North Carolina high schools to determine which group, if either, has reached and developed higher standards of achievement. An athlete was defined as one whose name appeared on any athletic roster, for any sport, which was sent to the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. The measured criteria used to compare the two groups were: (1) grade point average; (2) attendance rate; (3) discipline referrals; (4) dropout rate; and (5) graduation rate. Quantitative data was gathered and analyzed on 62,000 female students in grades 9 through 12. One-hundred and thirty-one schools from across the state for the 1999-2000 school year were evaluated to determine if the non-academic performance of athletes was significantly better, worse, or no different than non-athletes. The data was collected by means of a computer program, which was distributed to the high schools of North Carolina. The data was analyzed using paired t-tests to determine if there were any statistical differences between the numerical values recorded for athletes and non-athletes in the various categories.

The results of this study indicate the educational and non-educational performance of female athletes is better than that of female non-athletes. This finding also held true when analyses were conducted along both racial and gender lines. The comparisons were made within and not between ethnic groups, which included: (1) African Americans; (2) Whites; (3) Native Americans; (4) Asian Americans; and (5) Hispanics in all seven categories. The analyses of the data for the different subgroups showed that nearly all of the female athlete subgroups outperformed the female non-athlete subgroups by a significant margin.
