



As CWLC advances the rights of California's women and girls to play sports, we remain committed to examining the intersection between race and gender – advocating for females of color to ensure gender equity for all.

Passed in 1972 to prohibit sex discrimination in schools, Title IX has resulted in the tremendous increase of females playing sports. But have athletic opportunities increased for women of color at the same rates as for other women? According to a recent report by the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF), the answer is a resounding "no."

WSF's "Title IX and Race in Intercollegiate Sport" Report found that there was a "cost" to being both female and a student of color:

- Compared with the percentage of women of color enrolled at NCAA institutions (24.9% of females), female athletes of color were underrepresented (14.8% of females). Moreover, if female athletes of color were denied sports opportunities based upon their sex alone, their participation rates would be at 19.2%.
- Female athletes of color were over-represented among college scholarship recipients compared to their representation in the total athlete population, but colleges adding additional sports teams for women added teams in which women of color were under-represented as participants. Seventy-seven percent of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletes and NCAA women's teams added between 1981 and 1998 were in sports in which female athletes of color are moderately or severely underrepresented.

Title IX's detractors have erroneously claimed that Title IX has been detrimental for students of color. Contrary to these claims, the WSF Report found that increases in participation opportunities for female athletes generally resulted in a 95% increase in participation opportunities from 1971 to 2000 for female college athletes of color. Moreover, when it comes to male athletes of color, their representation in NCAA varsity sports compared to their presence in the student body is proportional. As schools have reduced men's sport opportunities to increase opportunities for females, more than 85% of the male teams schools have discontinued are in sports in which males of color are moderately or severely underrepresented.

But when it comes to sports, color-blind gender equity is incomplete justice. CWLC calls upon:

- Schools to add female teams for sports in which women of color participate at higher rates. Athletic administrators should educate themselves about which sports girls of color at feeder schools and local sports programs predominately play.
- Local Recreation and Parks boards should develop gender equity policies and vigorously them in their sports programs, as these programs are often the only sports opportunities for girls of color due to economic disparities that disproportionately affect communities of color and urban students.
- Researchers examining female sports trends must examine the interrelationship between race and gender. Without such an additional layer of inquiry, study results as to gender discrimination in sports are meaningless to affect all women and girls.

### **CALL TO ACTION!**

Contact your state and local representatives to educate them about racial disparities in sports opportunities for females and tell them that you want greater enforcement of Title IX's protections against discrimination in sports!

To contact your state representatives, visit [www.state.ca.us](http://www.state.ca.us)

Also, California Assemblymember Jenny Oropeza will soon release a report on female sports opportunities in California. This report is supposed to also examine sports opportunities for girls and women of color. Let Assemblymember Oropeza know that you support her work and encourage her to work to implement the report's recommendations!

Assemblymember Jenny Oropeza may be reached at: (916) 319-2055