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100 W. Broadway, Frankfort KY

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) educates and engages the public through Kentucky's history in order to confront the challenges of the future.

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Federal Legislation Opens Door for Girls' Return



Title IX made it possible for Kentucky girls to play basketball again as a sanctioned sport. *(Photo courtesy of the Herald-Leader, KYphotoArchive.com.)*

It took federal legislation to open high school basketball to girls again.

Title IX is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex in any federally funded education program or activity. President Richard Nixon signed the law in 1972. Although it applies to more than sports, it opened sports to women and girls at all levels.

Since its passage, the number of girls playing high school sports has grown from 294,000 (in 1971) to 3.4 million (in school year 2016-17). Of the 47,000 girls who played sports in the 2016-17 school year in Kentucky, 5,452 played basketball.*

*Statistics from the National Federation of State High School Associations.