



Written by [James Murphy](#) on June 6, 2023

School District Must Pay Family Who Complained About Male Dressing in Girls' Locker Room

The Orange Southwest School District in Vermont must pay a middle-school soccer coach and his daughter for infringing upon their First Amendment right to speak freely. The district will pay Travis Allen and his daughter, Blake Allen, \$125,000 plus their attorney fees after they objected to having a biological male dress in a locker room intended for females.

In addition to the monetary award, the district must remove any documentation of disciplinary action against the Allens. The school district must remove any online comments that the school has made regarding the locker-room incident, including bulletin boards at the school that displayed messages of “love and support” for the young male who sought to dress in the female locker room.



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The Alliance Defending Freedom, who represented the Allens, [hailed the settlement](#) as a “resounding victory for freedom of speech.”

“The settlement of Blake and Travis Allen’s case is a resounding victory for freedom of speech,” said Phil Sechler, an attorney for the Alliance Defending Freedom. “Calling a male a male shouldn’t have cost Travis his job and gotten Blake kicked out of school.”

“We are very glad that the school agreed to do the right thing by giving Travis his coaching job back and dropping the discipline against Blake. Everyone has the right to speak freely, and we are grateful that this settlement further protects that right.”

The lawsuit alleges that the school’s superintendent, Layne Millington, along with co-principals Lisa Floyd and Caty Sutton and the district’s board, violated the Allens’ First Amendment rights by attempting to dictate “what may be said on matters of public concern.”

In a [video](#) about their situation, the Allens described a school district more worried about woke values than protecting female students.

“Growing up, my parents have taught me to respect my body, to protect my privacy, and to speak up if I felt unsafe or if something made me feel uncomfortable,” Blake said. “Now that I’m 14, I’ve been shocked to learn not all adults feel the same way. In fact, they may even punish you for speaking out.”

“I told my friends that I didn’t think a teenage male should be allowed in the girls’ locker room where my volleyball teammates and I undress and change,” Blake explained. “For that, I was suspended by the



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adults who were in charge of my school.”

The younger Allen then hit the school district with what used to be known as common sense, although it’s becoming increasingly uncommon among public school administrators.

“It’s wrong to force girls to change in front of boys,” Blake said. “And it’s wrong to punish girls like me, who aren’t afraid to say so.”

According to Travis Allen, he and Blake were not alone in objecting to the situation.

“Multiple parents called administrators. Their goal was simple: to protect the privacy of our daughters while they changed on a public school campus,” Travis said. “Not only did school officials make no attempt to provide the girls with any support or a workable solution, they tried to put the blame on Blake and the other girls.”

Indeed, instead of listening to the complaints of the girls and their parents, school administrators doubled down and insisted that the young man be allowed to use the female locker room whether the girls were comfortable or not. Administrators suggested that if the girls were not comfortable, they should retreat to a single-stall restroom outside of the locker room.

Besides the loss in this lawsuit, district superintendent Layne Millington is facing other troubles — a [petition](#) asking that his contract with the district not be renewed is gaining signatures. Among the reasons cited for Millington not being renewed is his apparent allegiance to “woke” causes.

“We have seen controversy within our district over the last several years surrounding our mascot, Black Lives Matter flags and transgender equality,” the petition states. “Mr. Millington’s handling and communication around these manners [sic] has been negative, [he] places blame and sometimes goes as far as calling names to those who fall on one side of an issue.”

What should not be lost in the Allens’ victory is the fact that Vermont, along with several other states, is allowing biological males to compete as females, which is potentially dangerous for young women, even without the locker-room charade.



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