



Representative  
Scott Dyk  
HB 1522

# My High School Punished Me for Saying a Male Shouldn't Be Allowed to Watch Me Undress

I was taught girls should speak up when something makes them feel uncomfortable, but the school didn't care.



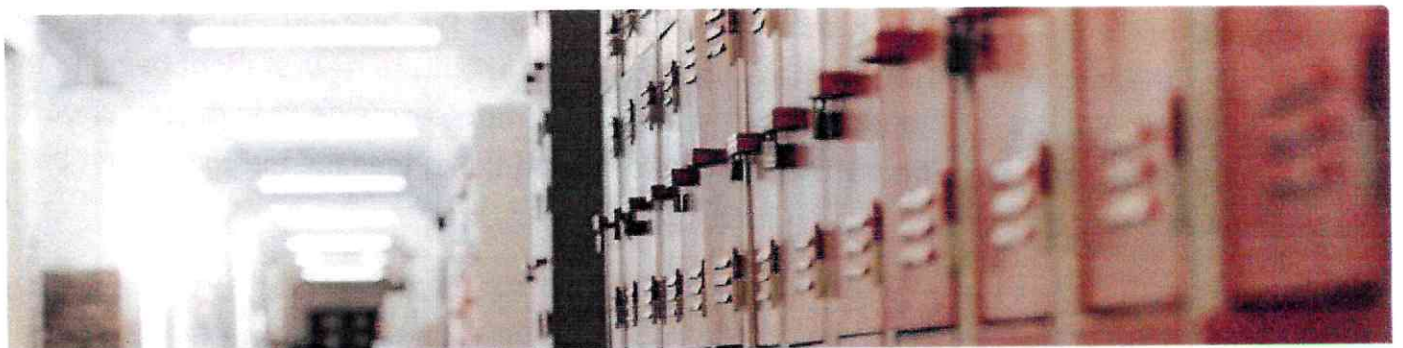
Written by *Alliance Defending Freedom*

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*Editor's note: The following piece, written by Alliance Defending Freedom client Blake Allen, originally appeared at [Fox News](#).*





As a girl, I was taught to respect the privacy of my body, and to speak up if I felt unsafe or if something made me feel uncomfortable. Now I'm 14 and shocked to learn not all adults take you seriously when you say you don't feel safe or comfortable. In fact, they may even punish you for speaking out.

That's what happened to me when I said I didn't think a teenage male should be [allowed in the girls' locker room](#) where my teammates and I undress and change. I'm a private person when it comes to my body, even in the safety and comfort of home. But at school, apparently there's no problem with a male student freely watching us girls change our clothes.

It was a conversation I had with some peers in French class that landed me in trouble with the officials at [Randolph Union High School in Vermont](#). Someone overheard me telling my friends that a dude doesn't belong in the girls' locker room, and they reported me to the co-principals, even though the male student didn't hear me and wasn't in the class.

The controversy didn't start in French class, though; it started when the school allowed a male who identifies as a girl to compete on our girls' volleyball team. When the male student entered our locker room, we were changing. Some of us didn't have a shirt on; others of us were only in our underwear. Naturally, some of us were uncomfortable and asked the student to leave, but we were ignored.

I was upset after the incident and called my mom to tell her about it. She and several other parents called the school administrators to express concerns about the male student being in the girls' locker room. Not only did school officials make no attempt to provide us with any support or a workable solution, they made *me* the bad guy for saying that a teenage male shouldn't be allowed to watch us girls undress.



Shouldn't every girl be taught to speak out to protect herself from situations where she hasn't given consent — and be listened to by those in a position to help? If something feels off, trust your gut? Not at my high school. If you don't comply with the [school's preferred gender identity policy](#), *you're* the bad guy. For expressing true, commonsense, biological facts — boys and girls are different and must respect each other's bodily privacy — I was punished.

The school began an investigation into the comments I made in class and banned our entire girls' volleyball team from using the girls' locker room. The co-principals notified me that I was found guilty of harassment and bullying of "a student on the basis of the targeted student's gender identity." As punishment, school officials told me I must take part in a "restorative justice circle" with the equity coordinator, submit a "reflective essay," and serve out-of-school suspension.

So, with the legal assistance of Alliance Defending Freedom, I sued the co-principals and Orange Southwest School District officials. On the [same day that we filed suit](#), the superintendent rescinded the disciplinary actions against me.

But I wasn't the only one to experience retaliation for stating a simple truth and wanting to be safe. My dad, Travis, was suspended from his coaching job for standing up for me. He expressed his views on a Facebook post, calling out the injustice of the male student being allowed to use our locker room and watch my teammates and I undress: "He got a free show, they got violated," my dad wrote. And he was suspended from his position as the middle school girls' soccer coach. So, my dad joined the lawsuit challenging the school's unjust retaliation against us for speaking freely — for speaking truth.

Instead of sticking up for the safety and privacy of girls, the school administrators are sticking to their preferred view of gender identity and will unfairly target anyone who dares to think differently. The school must respect my dad's and my free speech rights to express a commonsense view that this student is male and shouldn't be allowed in the girls' locker room.

It's school officials' job to ensure every student feels safe at school. And it's their job to listen to and respect our views, not silence us for speaking out to defend ourselves.

