

The *Selina Soule* Complaint

Case Type: Title IX Discrimination Complaint

Case Status: On June 17, 2019, Alliance Defending Freedom filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights on behalf of Selina Soule and two anonymous Connecticut female high school athletes.

Significance: Whether the unfair playing field created by allowing male athletes to compete against girls based on gender beliefs violates Title IX.



Background: Selina Soule is a 16-year-old high school student at Glastonbury High School in Connecticut. Like many prep athletes her age, Selina has devoted countless days, nights, and weekends to training, striving to shave mere fractions of a second off her race times. She does so in the hopes of personal satisfaction of victory, an opportunity to participate in state and regional meets, and a chance to earn a college scholarship. Yet, despite her best efforts, Selina has gone into races over the past two years knowing that she has little chance of winning. Neither do her fellow female competitors, including two anonymous co-complainants. That’s because, since 2017, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) has allowed boys to compete without limitation in girls’ athletic competitions if they claim a female gender identity. As a result, two male athletes presenting as female have dominated the field, winning championships in 15 events that were previously held by nine different Connecticut girls. In all, two boys have taken away from girls over 50 chances to advance to next-level races, winning 13 titles previously held by 12 different girls. Not only does CIAC’s policy—and Glastonbury High School’s endorsement of it—create an unfair playing field for female athletes, it reverses nearly 50 years of advances for women.

Key Points

- Girls deserve the same opportunity as boys to excel and chase their dreams. Allowing boys to compete in girls’ sports shatters dreams and steals opportunities.
- Boys will always have physical advantages over girls—that’s the reason we have women’s sports.
- A boy’s belief about his gender doesn’t cancel out his physical advantage over girls.
- Boys are robbing girls who deserve to win—crushing their dreams of competing at the next level.

Key Facts

- In Connecticut, one boy now holds over 10 records in the state that once belonged to ten different girls. These competitions have consequences beyond the race itself, and influence scholarship opportunities and college careers.
- Science and common sense tell us that males are stronger than females. That difference shows up in size, strength, bone density, and even hearts and lungs. No amount of hormone therapy can eliminate all those advantages.
- These girls aren’t losing just the opportunity to win, but to earn college scholarships and launch their own careers in athletics, coaching, and more.

The Bottom Line: Girls deserve to compete on a level playing field. Forcing female athletes to compete against biological males isn’t fair and destroys their athletic opportunities