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Nightmare: Teen Boy Harasses Girls in Their Bathroom, Colo. School Tells Girls They Have No Rights

10/10/2013

Florence, Colo.--Attorneys with Pacific Justice Institute sent a strongly-worded letter this afternoon to school officials at Florence High School, warning them against squelching student privacy and speech rights in order to cater to the wishes of a teenage boy who has been entering girls' bathrooms on campus.

"This is a nightmare scenario for the teenage girls—some of them freshmen—and their parents at this school," noted PJI staff attorney Matthew McReynolds, who sent the letter to Principal Brian Schipper and Superintendent Rhonda Vendetti. "This is exactly the kind of horror story we have been warning would accompany the push for radical transgender rights in schools, and it is the type of situation that LGBT activists have been insisting would not happen."

Parents at the school, located near Colorado Springs, became irate when they learned that a teenage boy was entering girls' bathrooms and, according to some students, even making sexually harassing comments toward girls he was encountering. When the parents confronted school officials, they were stunned to be told that the school's policy trumped their daughters' privacy rights. As the controversy grew, some girls were threatened by school authorities with being kicked off school athletic teams or charged with hate crime. The parents' voice concerns. The parents became aware of PJI's Notice of Reasonable Expectation of Privacy and the school's policy.

The letter sent today by PJI explains that the non-transgender students retain significant privacy rights that are being ignored by the school. The letter also points out that Florence High has not taken minimal precautions such as requiring the student to continuously and exclusively identify with one gender. According to student witnesses, he sometimes uses girls' bathrooms and other times uses boys' facilities.

"We're not going to stand by and let 99.7% of our students lose their privacy and free speech rights just because .3% of the population are gender-confused," stated Brad Dacus, the president of Pacific Justice Institute. "LGBT activists are sacrificing the safety and sanity of our schools to push an extreme political agenda. This battle is no longer confined to California or Colorado; it is spreading to every part of the nation. It is crucial that we act now to prevent a crippling blow to our constitutional freedoms."

PJI is demanding assurances from the school that privacy and expressive rights will be protected and any accommodations will not involve the girls giving up access to most of their restrooms, as has previously been suggested by the school.

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Earlier this year, PJI led the opposition in California to AB 1266, the most sweeping legislation yet to assert transgender rights in schools. That law, which is set to take effect January 1, 2014, is currently being targeted by a citizen referendum drive. Californians who have not yet signed a petition should visit www.privacyforallstudents.com to get involved. PJI's Notice of Reasonable Expectation of Privacy is available in both California and nationwide versions, and can be accessed at www.pji.org.

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