



Florida court upholds school district's same-sex bathroom policy after trans student brought lawsuit

Description

USA: “Because Adams is biologically female and first enrolled in the School District as a female, Adams is identified as a female for purposes of the bathroom policy.”

A Florida court has ruled in favor of a school district's policy that makes students use restrooms that line up with their biological sex, after a transgender-identifying female teen sued to be allowed to use the boy's bathroom.

After a five-year-long legal battle, the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday upheld St. Johns County School Board policy that required Drew Adams, a former student of Nease High School, to use either a gender-neutral single-stall bathroom, or the girls' bathrooms.

In a split 7-4 decision, the court ruled that the district's policy did not violate Title IX, a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in scholastic programs, reported the Tampa Bay Times.

According to [court documents](#), “single-stall, sex-neutral bathrooms are provided to accommodate any student, including the approximately five transgender students at Nease, who prefer not to use the bathrooms that correspond with their biological sex.”

However, that wasn't good enough for Adams, who was a minor when the lawsuit launched in 2017, or mother Erica, who co-filed the suit.

“Because Adams is biologically female and first enrolled in the School District as a female, Adams is identified as a female for purposes of the bathroom policy. For the first few weeks of ninth grade, Adams used the male bathrooms (in violation of the bathroom policy) without incident,” the court's opinion reads.

At some point during the period of Adams using the boy's restroom against policy, two students who were uncomfortable sharing the bathroom with a female notified school officials, who informed Adams that they must use the female or gender-neutral restrooms. The disgruntled student began petitioning the district for a rule change in response.

The court also noted that Adams "began taking birth control to stop menstruation and testosterone to appear more masculine and underwent a 'double-incision mastectomy' to remove breast tissue," while under the age of 18.

Speaking to BBC's Radio 1 Newsbeat, Adams spoke of how after being denied the use of the boy's restroom at age 14, feelings of being "small, nervous and terrified" came over them.

On June 28, 2017, following Adams' failed efforts to change the school board's bathroom policy, the transgender student filed a suit against the board under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, alleging that the policy violated both the Equal Protection Clause and Title IX. The court ruled in Adams's favor, enjoining the school from keeping Adams out of the boy's restroom and granting \$1,000 in compensatory damages.

The school board appealed this order, which the 11th Circuit agreed with.

"The School Board timely appealed the district court's order. Following oral argument, a divided panel of this Court affirmed the district court over a dissent," the decision reads.

by Olivia Rondeau

Category

1. Main
2. Racism-Trans/Gender-LGBTQ+-Sex. crimes

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