



## **Press Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

# **Garden State Rainbow Sports Affirms Support for Transgender Students as Supreme Court Reviews West Virginia School Sports Ban**

**January 5, 2026**

Garden State Rainbow Sports (GSRS) affirms its strong support for the full inclusion of transgender students in school athletics as the Supreme Court of the United States prepares to hear a case challenging West Virginia's ban on transgender girls participating in girls' school sports teams.

At issue is whether states may categorically exclude transgender students from school athletics, despite longstanding civil rights protections and the well-documented educational and social benefits of sports participation.

GSRS believes this case strikes at the heart of what school sports are meant to be: opportunities for young people to build confidence, learn teamwork, and experience belonging. Policies that single out transgender students for exclusion undermine these goals and place already vulnerable youth at greater risk of isolation and harm.

"Transgender students are not threats to fairness or safety," said Tony Settle, Founder of Garden State Rainbow Sports. "They are students who want to run, play, compete, and belong — just like everyone else."

Courts across the country have previously recognized that excluding transgender students from school programs constitutes discrimination on the basis of sex, in violation of federal civil rights law. Those decisions have emphasized that blanket bans are rooted in assumptions rather than evidence, and that schools already have mechanisms to ensure fairness and safety for all athletes.

GSRS rejects the notion that fairness in sports can only be achieved through exclusion. There is no credible evidence that transgender participation in K–12 athletics undermines competition, while there is overwhelming evidence that exclusion causes real and lasting harm.

As this case moves forward, GSRS urges policymakers, educators, and community leaders to center the well-being of students — not fear-driven narratives — and to uphold the fundamental principle that access to education includes access to athletics.

### **An athlete is an athlete.**

Transgender students belong in school sports.

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