

# Texas Student Fights Back After Suspension Over Hair Discrimination

Darryl George, a Black high school student in Texas, is challenging his suspension due to alleged **hair length violations**. The Barbers Hill Independent School District's strict rules led to his isolation, affecting his mental health.

His family argues this is a case of **racial and gender discrimination**, citing ongoing legal battles and the **CROWN Act**, which aims to combat hair discrimination.

While a judge ruled the suspension valid under current law, advocacy groups such as the ACLU are pushing for policy changes. The situation underscores the need for more inclusive school regulations that honor cultural identities, inviting further discussion on students' rights.

## Key Takeaways

- Darryl George, a Black student, was suspended for violating the Barbers Hill ISD hair length policy, sparking concerns over potential racial discrimination.
- His mother is advocating for his rights, alleging that the school enforced discriminatory standards based on race and gender regarding hair.
- The CROWN Act aims to protect students against hair discrimination, yet the school district maintains their policy is based on discipline rather than race.
- Advocacy groups, including the ACLU, are actively pushing for policy changes in Texas schools to eliminate outdated dress codes that discriminate against students' hairstyles.
- Community support has emerged through rallies and petitions, highlighting the broader issue of hair discrimination and promoting inclusive educational environments.

## Case Background and Details

Facing the consequences of a controversial **dress code**, **Darryl George**, a **Black high school student**, was **suspended** by the Barbers Hill Independent School District for not complying with **hair length regulations**.

The district enforces a policy that restricts boys' hair to lengths that can't extend beyond their eyebrows, earlobes, or collars. Darryl wears his hair in tied and twisted locs. Whenever let down, his hair surpasses these limits, which led to his suspension.

For most of the 2023-24 school year, Darryl faced isolation, spending time in in-school suspension or off-site disciplinary programs. This damaging experience affected his **mental health**, leaving him lonely. As highlighted by the ongoing lawsuit, Darryl's case raises questions about the enforcement of [CROWN Act](#) protections against race-based hair discrimination.

Instead of enduring another year of isolation, he chose to leave the district, though he hopes to return as a senior.

In response to his suspension, Darryl filed a federal lawsuit alleging **racial and gender discrimination**. His mother, who moved to the area for the district's **quality education**, advocates for Darryl's right to learn without punishment during the ongoing litigation.

The district claims its policies aren't discriminatory and aim to teach discipline and respect for authority, a viewpoint sparking controversy and debate.

## Legal Proceedings Overview

Following **Darryl George's suspension**, the **legal proceedings** surrounding his case have become pivotal in addressing allegations of discrimination. A state judge recently ruled that his suspension doesn't violate the **Texas CROWN Act**, stating the law covers hair texture and protective styles but not hair length.

The school district argues that its policy, limiting boys' hair length, doesn't discriminate based on race. However, Darryl's family filed a federal lawsuit claiming **racial and gender discrimination** that violates his **constitutional rights**. Rather than August 2024, a federal judge dismissed most claims, leaving only the gender discrimination issue. This raises questions about the harm caused by such policies. Darryl's request for a **temporary restraining order** to return to school faced resistance from the district, which argues jurisdiction issues since he's no longer enrolled.

In December 2024, a multiracial coalition submitted a **friend-of-the-court brief**, advocating against discriminatory practices and supporting Darryl. They argue for the importance of protecting all aspects of hair identity within the CROWN Act's purpose. The case continues, spotlighting the struggle against **systemic discrimination in schools**, while ABC News remains a key source for [breaking news coverage](#) on such significant issues.

## CROWN Act Violations in Texas

While the **CROWN Act** aims to protect students from **hair-related discrimination**, numerous **Texas school districts** remain **noncompliant**, prompting significant concern. The ACLU has identified 51 districts violating the Act due to outdated **dress codes** and **grooming policies**. Schools such as Amigos Por Vida-Friends For Life and Boling ISD have been listed among those failing to uphold these vital protections.

These policies restrict hairstyles that many students wear naturally, creating an environment of exclusion. The CROWN Act, enacted on September 1, 2023, was designed to allow students to express their **cultural identities** without fear of punishment. Yet, some districts continue to enforce discriminatory rules, stifling students' **self-expression**. [Racial biases](#) linked to hair grooming standards further complicate this issue, underscoring the urgency of compliance.

The ACLU has sent letters urging these districts to update their policies for the 2024-25 school year, stressing that noncompliance could lead to **legal consequences**. Some districts, such as Tolar ISD, are already planning updates, showing that change is possible.

It's essential that you, in your role as advocates for change, stay informed and support efforts aimed at achieving full compliance. Hair isn't just hair; it's an expression of identity, and every student deserves the right to embrace theirs without fear of discrimination.

# Impact on Affected Students

The consequences of **hair discrimination** extend far beyond disciplinary actions; they disrupt students’ **educational paths** and undermine their well-being.

Whenever you’re pulled from your classes and stuck in in-school suspension, your learning suffers. This disruption often leads to **falling grades** and challenges your chances of graduating on time. You might even find yourself barred from **extracurricular activities**, such as football, which are essential for your social growth and happiness. The recent ruling regarding George’s case underscores how [hair policies](#) can have a profound impact on these critical aspects of a student’s life.

The **emotional impact** can be just as severe. Stress and discomfort from long hours sitting on a stool can take a toll on your body.

You might feel dehumanized by constant scrutiny, especially when it seems as though others aren’t held to the same standards. It’s tough to feel respected or valued in an environment that disrespects your **cultural identity**.

Additionally, as your situation attracts **public attention**, it adds pressure, amplifying your feelings of isolation.

This isn’t just a personal struggle; it reflects a broader issue many students face. In this moment, it’s vital to recognize how these policies ignore the **diverse identities** of students, ultimately hindering their paths to success and personal authenticity.

It’s about more than just hair; it’s about **respect and equality** in the educational space.

# Ongoing Advocacy and Support

Advocacy efforts are gaining momentum while communities rally together to combat hair discrimination in schools. A powerful multiracial coalition has emerged, supporting the George family in their fight against unjust dress codes. They’ve filed an amicus brief arguing that hair length policies violate the Texas CROWN Act and deny students their cultural identities.

Groups, including the ACLU of Texas and the Texas NAACP, stress how long hairstyles reflect diverse racial and cultural histories. The [Texas CROWN Act](#) is specifically intended to protect cultural expressions through hairstyles and prevent students from facing discrimination based on their hair.

Here’s a look at some essential organizations involved in this fight:

Organization	Role	Focus

American Civil Liberties Union of Texas	Advocating for Darryl George's rights	Protecting civil liberties in schools
IDRA	Legal support and educational advocacy	Cultural significance of hairstyles
Native American Rights Fund	Highlighting Indigenous hair traditions	Rights of Native Americans and their culture
Texas NAACP	Addressing racial discrimination issues	Advocacy for African American families

As protests grow in support of students such as Darryl George, it's clear that community voices matter. Empowered parents and advocates ensure every student can express their identity freely. Together, we can end hair discrimination once and for all.