

Statement Regarding Updated School Committee Policy JJIB – Interscholastic Athletics

At the June 25th, 2024 meeting of the Dighton-Rehoboth School Committee, the full committee voted unanimously to update School Committee Policy [JJIB – Interscholastic Athletics](#) by adding the following additional language:

“No coach of a single-sex team shall be penalized by the District for forfeiting a match against an opposing team because such team includes athletes of the opposite sex. No student athlete on a single-sex team shall be penalized by the District in any manner for refusing to play in a match or any part thereof against an opposing team because that team includes a member of the opposite sex. For the purposes of this paragraph, a ‘penalty’ includes but is not limited to loss of playing time or loss of starting status.”

Note that the School Committee, through its Policy Subcommittee regularly meets to review and update Committee policies as needed. In the case of JJIB, the Committee has serious concerns over the lack of reasonable policy for the safety of female athletes participating in co-op sports through the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). A female member of the DR Regional High School field hockey team was severely injured in a November 2, 2023 playoff match by a male member of the Swampscott field hockey team. Superintendent Runey reached out to the MIAA and other stakeholders, but MIAA refused to make any significant policy changes in order to protect female athletes from males competing in female sports.

As such, the committee has updated its policy granting additional authority to athletes and their coaches to withdraw from co-op matches where the athletes do not feel safe and/or otherwise feel that competing with biological males in a female sport is not a fair or competitive match.

The Committee takes this issue very seriously and until the MIAA adjusts its policies to come into alignment with Title IX of the federal Civil Rights act, the Committee is advocating that other school districts who are part of the MIAA review and make similar adjustments to bring safe and fair competition to our high school female athletes.

Thank You

Christopher Andrade
Chair, Dighton Rehoboth Regional School Committee