

# 'Tension is very high' after boy breaks girl's teeth in field hockey match: superintendent

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Tensions are high in a Massachusetts school district where a [high school female field hockey player suffered](#) "significant facial and dental injuries" after being hit in the face on a shot from a male opponent, an official said Wednesday.

Bill Runey, the Dighton-Rehoboth superintendent of schools, appeared on "OutKick The Morning" with Charly Arnolt and described outrage in the district.

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"It's very hot. The tension is very high," Runey said. "At first, it was a sense of trauma. I went to meet the bus when the girls returned from Swampscott because I wanted to let them know that they had the support of the district.

"That we were gonna have resources available to them the next school day with our counseling staff. And the trauma that I saw in their eyes, the sadness I saw in their eyes and in the eyes of the coaches is something that I will never, ever forget.

"And now, it has turned to an outrage because of the fact that it doesn't seem as if anybody is willing to listen to change."

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Runey's remarks came after [Dighton-Rehoboth field hockey captain Kelsey Bain](#) wrote a letter to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) urging it to make a change to its rules. She wrote that the "MIAA needs to do better."

Bain cited an article from the New Boston Post that said there were 41 boys who played on girls field hockey teams during the 2019-20 school year. Bain suggested the MIAA create a new league.

"There is likely more interest, but the stigma of boys playing on a girl's team is probably a deterrent," Bain wrote. "I am sure school districts can institute co-op teams to create further opportunities for males to play in their own division, which I assume you are already aware of because, under rule 34 of the MIAA handbook, there is a division for boys' field hockey listed under the Fall Sports category."

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Dighton-Rehoboth superintendent of schools Bill Runey described outrage in the district after a high school female field hockey player was injured by a shot from a male opponent.

Swampscott High School

"You have a chance to change the negative publicity the MIAA has been receiving due to the incident that happened on Thursday night by moving forward with the proposal for a seven versus seven boys league."

Bain recalled the horror she and her teammates felt when they

witnessed the incident.

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"The shrieks and screams of fear and pain that projected from her after being hit filled the stadium," Bain wrote.

The looks of horror and shock on the faces of the girls surrounding her were also chilling.

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"Following the injury, my teammates were sobbing not only in fear for their teammate but also in fear that they had to go back out onto the field and continue a game, playing against a male athlete who hospitalized one of our own. The traumatic event sheds light on the rules and regulations of male athletes participating in women's sports."

The MIAA cites the Massachusetts Equal Rights Amendment, adopted in 1976, which was extended to scholastic sports three years later.

The MIAA said it "understands" safety concerns but inclusion has trumped that safety.

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"We respect and understand the complexity and concerns that exist regarding student safety. However, student safety has not been a successful defense to excluding students of one gender from participating on teams of the opposite gender," the MIAA said in a statement. "The arguments generally fail due to the lack of correlation between injuries and mixed-gender teams."

Players reacting on the field after the injury.

Swampscott High School

In response to the MIAA's statement, Bain wrote that the "causation is not addressed."

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"We all witnessed the substantial damage that a male has the ability to cause against a female during a game," Bain wrote. "How much longer does the MIAA plan on using girls as statistical data points before they realize that boys do not belong in girls' sports? Twenty injuries? One hundred? Death?"

Bain added that high school field hockey rules were created for girls to play against girls.

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"Altering the rules and equipment to adapt to gameplay involving boys is not only an inconvenience, but it comes with a physical and emotional cost for players who are forced to change the game they love," she added. "By trying to create equality, you are only creating inequalities.

"Please use this as an opportunity to take a negative incident and turn it into a positive change."