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Athletic association sanctions Florida high school over transgender volleyball player

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Monarch High School in Coconut Creek, Florida, on Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023. (D.A. Varela/Miami Herald/TNS) (D.A. Varela/Miami Herald/TNS)

			
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By Scott Travis

South Florida Sun Sentinel

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Monarch High School in Coconut Creek will face a \$16,500 fine and probation from a state athletic association because a transgender female played on the varsity volleyball team.

The Florida High School Athletic Association also has banned the transgender student at the center of the controversy from playing on any member team in the state through Nov. 20, 2024, according to a letter sent Tuesday to the high school's interim principal, Moira Sweeting-Miller.

The school's regular principal, James Cecil, has been temporarily reassigned while Broward schools conducts its own investigation of the volleyball controversy. The student's mother, Jessica Norton, an information management specialist at the school, and three other school officials have also been reassigned or suspended during the investigation.

The letter says the student's participation is in violation of a state law passed in 2021 that prohibits students who are born male from participating in girls' sports at the school.

The school has received a reprimand and has been placed on probation through Nov. 20, 2024.

It will receive a \$16,500 fine, based on a penalty of \$500 per contest. The student participated in 33 games during the fall of 2022 and the fall of 2023, says the letter, written by Justin Harrison, associate executive director for eligibility and compliance for the association.

The letter also said Monarch High leaders must attend a compliance seminar in 2024 and 2025.

Manny Diaz, commission of education, praised Gov. DeSantis on the social media platform X for championing the law.

“We will not tolerate any school that violates this law,” he wrote. “We applaud the swift action taken by the @FHSAA to ensure there are serious consequences for this illegal behavior.”

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