# Florida School Employee Faces Firing for Allowing Transgender Daughter in Volleyball Team



### Florida School Employee Faces Firing Over Transgender Daughter's Participation in Volleyball

In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a public school employee, Jessica Norton, is facing possible termination for allowing her transgender daughter to play on the girls' high school volleyball team. The situation arose from a tip received by a Broward County school board member in November 2023, alleging that Norton's 16-year-old daughter was playing in violation of the 2021 Fairness in Women’s Sports Act, which restricts students born male from participating in girls' sports.

Following the tip, the school district initiated an investigation. Norton, who is a computer information specialist at Monarch High School, is accused of not changing her daughter's school records from "female" back to "male" as required by district policy. Consequently, she faces potential job loss. Norton's daughter, previously an active student leader and athlete, has since left the school and now attends classes online.

The school board was scheduled to vote on Superintendent Howard Hepburn’s recommendation to fire Norton, but the decision has been postponed. A district committee had suggested a 10-day suspension for Norton, which Hepburn overruled. The board now has options to fire, suspend or take no action against Norton.

During the investigation, Monarch High's administration, including Principal James Cecil, was temporarily reassigned but later reinstated following student protests. The athletic commission fined the school $16,500. The state's education department also participated in the investigation.

Norton’s daughter began transitioning at a young age, starting puberty blockers at 11 and taking estrogen but has not undergone gender-affirming surgery. Norton admitted to marking "female" on a permission form for the volleyball team and allowed her daughter to play despite knowing the state law, citing her child's desire to participate in sports.

The investigation revealed that the team’s players were aware of Norton's daughter's transgender status but reported no issues. Norton and her family are part of a federal lawsuit challenging the Fairness in Women’s Sports Act.

The Broward County school district serves nearly 255,000 students across 327 schools and is located in a politically liberal and diverse community.