

Fairness in Women's Sports Act; SB 160

SB 160 creates the Fairness in Women's Sports Act (Act) and requires interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural, or club athletic teams or sports that are sponsored by public educational institutions to be designated based on biological sex.

Athletic Team Criteria

The bill requires all interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural, and club athletic teams that are sponsored by public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions that compete against teams from other public educational institutions to be expressly designated as one of the following, based on the biological sex of the team members:

- Males, men, or boys;
- Females, women, or girls; or
- Coed or mixed.

The bill states athletic teams or sports designated for females, women, or girls shall not be open to students of the male sex.

[*Note:* The bill does not exclude students of the female sex from participating on athletic teams designated for males, men, or boys.]

Rules and Regulations

The bill requires the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA), the Kansas Board of Regents, and the governing bodies for municipal universities, community colleges, and technical colleges to adopt rules and regulations for the implementation of the designations of their athletic teams.

Prohibition of Complaints

The bill prohibits governmental entities, licensing organizations, accrediting organizations, or athletic associations or organizations from taking the following actions against public educational institutions that maintain separate teams for students of the female sex:

- Entertaining a complaint;
- Opening an investigation; or
- Taking other adverse actions.

Resolving Violations

In the event of a violation of the Act, the bill allows the following individuals and organizations to file civil suit and seek relief in the form of monetary damages, reasonable attorney fees, and other appropriate relief:

- Any student deprived of an athletic opportunity or who suffers direct or indirect harm by a violation of the Act;
- Any student subjected to retaliation or other adverse action by a public educational institution or athletic association for reporting a violation of the Act; or
- Any public education institution that suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a violation of the Act.

The bill requires all civil actions to be initiated no later than two years after the harm occurred.

Severability

The bill declares all sections of the Act to be severable in the event one or more sections are determined to be invalid.

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