



## **DEFENDING ED PRESIDENT, NICOLE NEILY, SPEAKS AT RALLY TO PROTECT WOMEN'S SPORTS AT THE U.S. SUPREME COURT**

January 13, 2026,

Thank you, Alliance Defending Freedom and Do No Harm, for hosting us today.

My name is Nicole Neily, and I'm the president and founder of Defending Education – a national membership association that works to restore schools at all levels from activists imposing harmful agendas.

Nowhere is this fight more visible than in America's schools – not just at the university level, but also at the K-12 level. And while I'm optimistic that the justices will uphold the rights of our girls, it's important to remember that when this decision comes out in June, our fight isn't over. As Winston Churchill said in 1942 following the second battle at El Alamein, "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

Because although millions of Americans are indignant over the idea of men playing in women's sports – taking our daughters' places on the podium, their awards, and their scholarships – and concerned about the safety and privacy of girls in locker rooms and bathrooms, this war is far from over.

Sadly, the journey to the Supreme Court was decades in the making, because a quagmire of laws and policies at the local, state, and federal level normalized the idea that biology is meaningless... and that lie was enforced with the full weight of governmental authority.

The Obama administration actively encouraged schools to sacrifice the First Amendment on the altar of Title IX, providing [guidance](#) that staff should use "preferred pronouns" even if doing so direct contravened an individual's sincerely held beliefs. This language policing had both the purpose – and effect – of changing behavior, and it is still taking place today. Just this past May, Colorado updated its anti-discrimination act to prohibit "deadnaming" and failing to use an individual's chosen pronouns; [we've sued the state in federal court](#), as have our friends at ADF and XX/XY Athletics, in order to bring an end to this unconstitutional law.

Manipulating the meaning of words – as we've seen happen with attempts to hijack the word "sex" and replace it with "gender" – is a calculated attempt to control the public discourse, literally rendering some opinions unspeakable. It is imperative that these efforts be stopped.

Or consider the rise of “parental exclusion policies,” which my organization has been tracking since 2023; [over 1200 school districts and counting](#) have policies on the books that state you as a parent do not have the right to know your child’s newly-adopted gender identity at school or be informed of the support plan and accommodations the school is providing. We, who must sign permission slips for sunscreen and aspirin, are now the enemy; our children are being told that we might not love them if they have another identity or are “born in the wrong body,” and to keep secrets from their parents. It’s difficult to think of a more destabilizing idea to plant in a student’s head – and it is a true betrayal to do that to a family behind their back while using their own tax dollars.

Billions of dollars have been spent in support of “gender inclusive” programming not only in American schools, but also overseas through entities like USAID, the United Nations, and progressive nonprofits. Without a doubt, these funds would be better spent teaching children to master topics like arithmetic, history, and physics, rather than allyship, hormone therapy, and puberty blockers.

These programs – and more – need to be unwound, and the decisionmakers who valued ideology over our children’s welfare must be held accountable.

As we pray today for a favorable decision, we must be mindful that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

Tomorrow, we fight on – but I am confident that together, we will prevail.

Thank you,

Nicole Neily  
Defending Education  
President and Founder