

# Largest School District In Vermont Unanimously Codifies Trans Rights For Students

While school districts grapple with attacks on transgender students, some schools are moving in the other direction. Champlain Valley School District has passed expansive rights for trans students.



ERIN REED

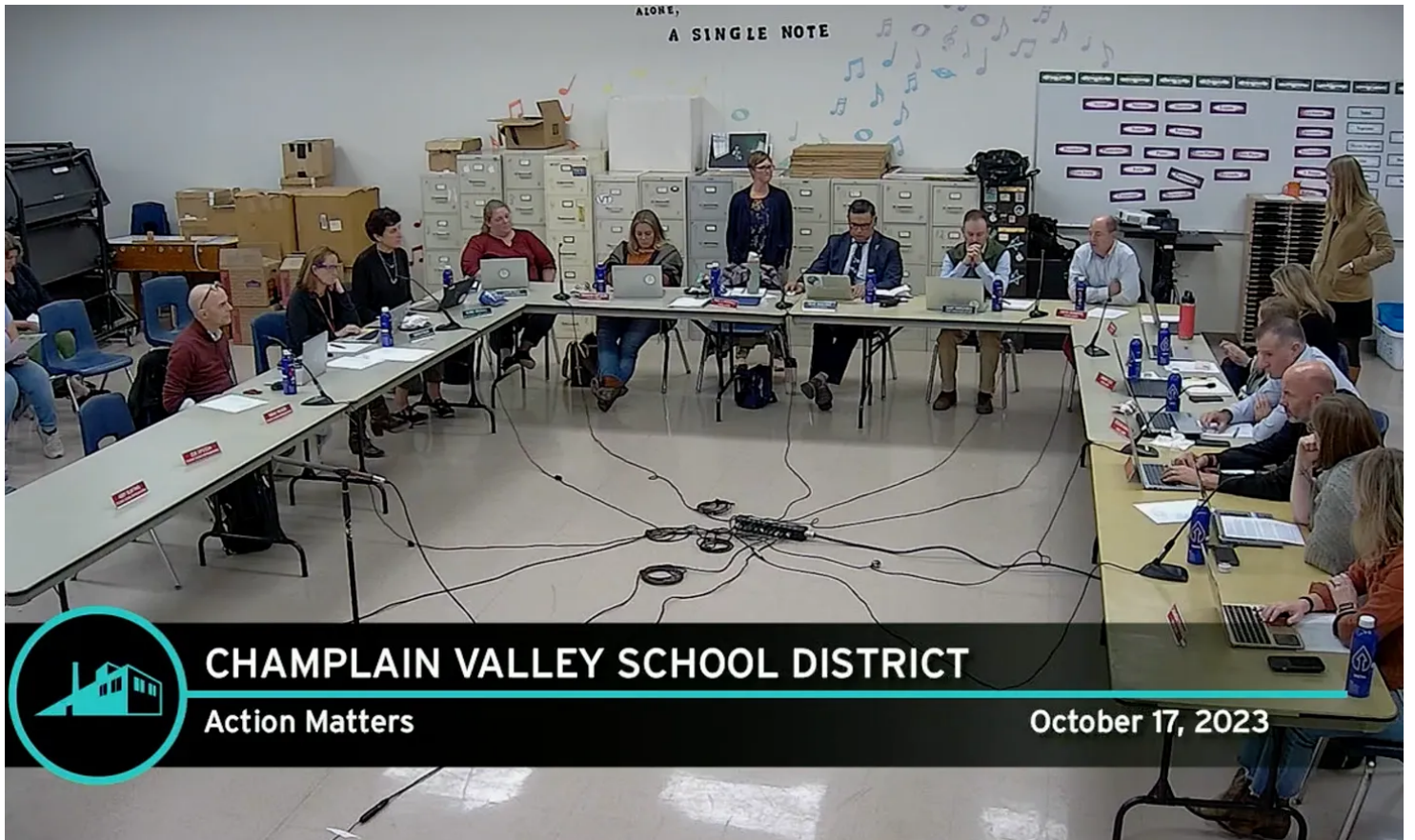
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Transgender students have faced an array of threats in recent years. Several states have **barred them from sports**, restricted their **bathroom access**, **banned books** about them from school libraries, and even mandated **forcibly outing them** to their parents. Surprisingly, some school districts in even the more progressive states have adopted similar policies. The story in Vermont is different, however. Just last week, Champlain Valley School District, the state's largest, explicitly and comprehensively **codified rights** for transgender students within its jurisdiction.

The **new policies** passed **unanimously** and endeavor to go above and beyond even the state level protections that Vermont offers trans students in the state. Although the policies were previously informally practiced, codifying them explicitly allows trans students to know that their school district has their back. It also makes it harder for individual schools in the district to bow to pressure from right-wing groups to discriminate against trans students in the district.

The **three page policy** outlines several explicit protections for transgender students:

- **A right to privacy** that allows trans students to detail exactly how much information they want shared with others.
- **A right to have their name and pronouns used by school staff** without requiring a court order or legal name change.
- **A right for students input on parental notification** and no mandatory outing of students to unaccepting parents.
- **A right to update records** including retroactive changes.

- **A right to access the bathroom of their gender identity** that goes above and beyond the state's guidelines.
- **A right to participation in sports** that allows students to compete in accordance with their gender identity.

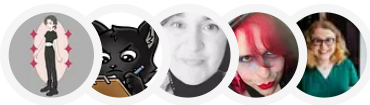
Importantly, these policies use affirmative and mandatory language. For instance, they state that students “must” be allowed to use restrooms according to their gender identity. This goes above and beyond Vermont’s state level protections, which merely state that students “*should not have to* use a locker room or bathroom that conflicts with their gender identity.”

In recent months, students nationwide have encountered discrimination and harassment from school board officials over policies like these. Initially, only the most conservative states adopted such measures. However, suburban districts with a conservative tilt, often influenced by candidates backed by right-wing group Moms For Liberty, have increasingly curtailed transgender rights — even in states generally viewed as supportive of transgender rights. This trend is evident in **several California districts**, where policies on forced outing have led to contentious court fights. Similarly, a number of **conservative school districts in New Jersey** are rejecting the state's inclusive policies.

Similarly, progressive school districts in conservative states are finding themselves at odds with their states' policies. In Virginia, numerous school districts have openly defied Governor Glen Youngkin's **state guidelines on transgender policy**. These guidelines seek to bar trans youth from bathrooms aligning with their gender identity, mandate their forced outing to parents, and exclude them from sports. **Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax** school districts, among several others, have stated that they will not comply with the state policies.

The battle for transgender rights has, in many respects, been rooted in school districts. Some of Moms For Liberty's initial endeavors were over school district policies in Florida. Similarly, in 2021, anti-trans activists mobilized in school districts nationwide, setting their sights on trans students. Yet this year, numerous districts have taken a stand against such targeting. Champlain Valley School District stands as a recent testament to this resistance.

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**Sandra** 7 hrs ago

While this is certainly good news, it's hard to be too uplifted given the nearly simultaneous news re. the speaker election in the House of Representatives - and the near certainty that fiercely bad national anti-trans legislation will be enacted by that legislative body at the earliest possible opportunity. Another guardrail is down in the steadily worsening environment for trans people in the US.

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7 replies



**Valerie** 7 hrs ago

What an important and uplifting report! Thank you sir much for all your hard work, Erin. Especially now while we're all gasping for the air of good news. This news provides so much hope!

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