

February 12, 2020 News

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Lane Powell Wins Transgender Rights Lawsuit Before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

Firm Announcement

On February 12, The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued an [opinion](#) affirming the district court’s dismissal of a lawsuit challenging policies protecting the legal rights of transgender students in Dallas, Oregon public schools. The court found that Dallas High School’s practice of allowing a transgender boy to use the boys’ restrooms and locker rooms does not violate the rights of cisgender students or parents. Darin Sands, Peter Hawkes, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and ACLU of Oregon represented intervenor Basic Rights Oregon in the case to defend the Dallas School District’s practice.

The lawsuit originated in November 2018, when a group of parents known as “Parents for Privacy” filed suit against the Dallas School District for its policy allowing transgender students to use restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their gender identity. Federal District Court Judge Marco A. Hernandez [threw out the suit](#), stating that the school district’s policy did not violate the rights of other students who sought to exclude transgender students from using those facilities. The plaintiffs appealed that ruling and asked the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to revive the lawsuit. In July 2019, Hawkes, Sands and the legal team from the ACLU argued in support of the school district’s policy, seeking to convince the appeals panel to affirm Judge Hernandez’s original ruling. They

argued that precluding transgender students from using the restrooms or locker rooms aligned with their gender identities would be discriminatory.

Almost two years later, lawyers, advocates, parents and students are now celebrating the ruling as a victory for the rights of transgender students. Sands shared, “We are proud of the court’s clear decision. Transgender students deserve to know that the legal system will protect them when their rights are under attack. The ACLU is on the frontline of this defense on a daily basis and it is an honor to stand with them and Basic Rights Oregon.”

Lane Powell is proud to partner with the ACLU and Basic Rights Oregon in defending the rights of transgender students.