

Dear Vermont Principals Association and Vermont State Legislature,

As impacted student athletes from across Vermont, we are writing this letter to request that you take action regarding the fan behavior at our school sporting events. Many schools have had horrific things said to student athletes on the field while they are trying to play a game. The worst of these are targeting student athletes for their identities - for our gender, ethnicity, skin color, and other identities. We believe that no student athlete should be subjected to this abuse. Student athletes should not need to focus on anything else besides winning our game, and playing the sports we love. We should not be distracted by fans saying sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, racist things and taunts.

As student athletes, we believe that the responses of schools and those who make decisions to address these incidents have not done enough to make our games safer for future athletes. We would like to see changes made in how the fans are addressed and how investigations are handled in these situations. A simple “knock it off” does not cut it anymore. We strongly believe there should be universal steps and rules put in place for all school-sponsored youth sporting events so that officials and administrators know what to do and how to respond before anything is even said.

The following are actions steps at a minimum, that we believe should be taken, if unsafe or abusive behavior occurs at sporting events to ensure safer youth sports across Vermont:

- Clearly established, universal protocol for addressing in-game behavior issued to all schools by the Vermont Principals Association or other relevant state-wide group.
- This protocol would include the following measures in the event of a reported incident:
  - Pause the game.
  - Identify individuals and remove them from the game.
  - Resume play if it is safe to do so.
  - If the incident involves language that targets a player or person’s identity such as gender or race, a neutral third party investigation will take place to determine the appropriate course of action.
- Protocol would clearly outline appropriate measures of discipline that can be applied across all schools, including:
  - Suspension from sports, clubs, and school based extracurriculars.
  - Being banned from future sporting events.
  - Forfeiting future games and losing playoff opportunities, after multiple instances.

If all of these action steps and more are taken, we will have better sporting event environments. We will be able to just play the game we love without harassment. Universal protocol and a clear and immediate third party investigation process will make sure that students across the state have equal access to protection.

In previous years, fans were just told to stop and nothing happened after the fact. This is no longer an acceptable response. With clear state-wide responses, protocols, and consequences, fans are more likely to stop the behavior and not repeat it. We would like the opportunity to work with the Legislature to help pass laws that prevent further harassment of student athletes in Vermont.

Sincerely,

Barrett Freeman `23  
Lamoille Union Women's Soccer Captain

We, the following, support the above letter:

Kaylee White (C) `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Emma St. Cyr `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Madison Moulton `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Olivia Demag `22 Lamoille Union High School  
George Sullivan `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Merissa French `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Emma Dubie `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Carly Hitchcock `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Lindsey Bullard `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Noah Burnham `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Adelle MacDowel `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Galen Reese `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Meghan Bezio `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Renny Cota `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Violette Martin `22 Lamoille Union High School  
Emily Hutchins `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Mae Searles `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Kendall MacLeod `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Zuri McLoughlin `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Hannah Delima `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Anna Gale `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Natalie Start `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Bian Leon `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Ella Schroeder `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Brie Dussault `23 Lamoille Union High School  
Emma Engler `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Olivia Alexander `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Marielle Benoit `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Ila Campbell `24 Lamoille Union High School

Essie Loomis `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Evelyn Macadoo `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Gianna Bredice `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Amelia Clark `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Jade Walker `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Lily Walsh `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Natalie Royer `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Emma Larock `24 Lamoille Union High School  
Logan Freeman `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Ada Moore `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Madison Pelletier `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Samantha Snow `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Soma Hickman `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Addison Spanier `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Hailey Fichtner `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Sadie Horner `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Sophie Hunsberger `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Evie Pirie `25 Lamoille Union High School  
Maggie Ryan `22 Colchester High School  
Chole Palmer `22 Colchester High School  
Brinlee Gilfillan `26 Colchester High School  
Fiona Legg `22 Essex High School  
Anna Ganguly `22 Essex High School  
Bria Beckage `25 Essex High School  
Emma Grasso `23 Milton High School  
Brooke Rouse `23 Milton High School  
Anna Grasso `23 Milton High School  
Holley Maclellan `25 Milton High School  
Cianna Tomasi `25 Milton High School  
Hannah Turner `22 Middlebury High School  
Libby Westbrook `22 Burlington High School  
Brooks Deshaw `24 Burlington High School  
Anika Wagner `22 Stowe High School  
Greta Heldman `22 South Burlington High School  
Sydney Sears `22 Mount Mansfield Union High School  
Raven McCray-Fay `24 Mount Mansfield Union High School  
Hallie Chilafoux `22 North Country Union High School  
Tristin Colburn `22 North Country Union High School  
Josie Chitamber `22 North Country Union High School  
Bria Austin `22 North Country Union High School  
Natalie Holmes `23 North Country Union High School  
Opal Beauchesne `23 North Country Union High School  
Maeve Wright `23 North Country Union High School  
Lahna Descheneau `23 North Country Union High School

Kenzie Parenteau `23 North Country Union High School  
Charli Kellaway `24 North Country Union High School  
Lily Bachand `24 North Country Union High School  
Haidin Bathalon `24 North Country Union High School  
Reeve Applegate `24 North Country Union High School  
Camry Wright `25 North Country Union High School  
Grace Roberge `25 North Country Union High School  
Jazmyn Fletcher `25 North Country Union High School  
Emerson Gilson `25 North Country Union High School  
Ava Sandridge `25 North Country Union High School  
Leah Olmsted `25 North Country Union High School  
Abby Bathalon `25 North Country Union High School  
Madison Verdon `25 North Country Union High School  
Sabine Bruek `25 North Country Union High School  
Grace Nostrant (C) `23 Montpelier High School  
Sienna Mills `23 Montpelier High School  
Ava Hollingsworth `23 Montpelier High School  
Bella Wawrzniak `23 Montpelier High School  
Sophia Flora `23 Montpelier High School  
Molly Hutton `23 Montpelier High School  
Maeve Byrne `23 Montpelier High School  
Esther Carlson `24 Montpelier High School  
Amelia Woodard `24 Montpelier High School  
Zoe Colvin `24 Montpelier High School  
Anja Rand `23 Montpelier High School  
Danielle Thomas `23 Montpelier High School  
Pilar Abele `23 Montpelier High School  
Anika Turcotte `24 Montpelier High School  
Anya Carlson `25 Montpelier High School  
Weslie Carlson (C) `22 People Academy  
Hannah Cleary `23 People Academy  
Ariana Keene (C) `23 People Academy  
Emily Kimaball `24 People Academy  
Vivienne Babbott `22 Champlain Valley Union High School  
Kata Gilberston `23 American School of Dhahran  
Lexi Downey `23 American School of Dhahran  
Hannah Meyers `22 Peru High School  
Jillian Bezio `22 Ausable Valley High School