

UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT 06602

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
ARNOLD COLLEGE DIVISION

September 25, 1974

Board of Education
Town of Stratford
Stratford, Connecticut

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It has come to my attention that you have accepted a position forwarded by the Negotiating Team for the teachers of Stratford which is contrary to legal mandate. I am referring to the compensation which is to be given to women who coached in the Stratford System.

For some time the schools of Stratford have been remiss in offering opportunities to the girl students and to the women teachers which are equal to those offered to the boys and to the men coaches in sport participation. Such is not an unusual situation when one views the country in general, but it is a practice which has been against the law since the passing of the TITLE IX ACT. This act specifically states that where athletic opportunities for students of one sex have been previously limited, a recipient (school system) must make affirmative effort to inform students of that sex of the availability of equal opportunities for them, and to provide support and training to enable the girls to participate in those opportunities. Further, the law requires that school systems make affirmative effort to provide athletic opportunities in sports and to equalize the opportunities for members of both sexes to participate in these sports. In addition, the law requires that school systems provide to girls the same aids, benefits, and services, as provided to the opposite sex. School systems must provide support to the girls which is designed to improve and expand their capability and interest to participate in the opportunities which may be available.

I submit to you that the women coaches in the Stratford System have been trying for years to expand their programs and have been denied access to equal opportunity in the use of facilities and the financial assistance which would enable them to develop programs similar in scope to that which boys have. Such practice is, and has been, against the law since 1972. Any legal advice which you would care to seek will confirm my statement.

The law also states that on the basis of sex you may not make distinctions in the rates of pay or other compensations. You may not require any person to perform duties for which compensation is lower than that for performance in a different, but similar, position on the basis of sex. Quite understandably you have been informed that the women should receive less compensation for their duties as their program is not as involved as the men's program. I am certain that the duties and responsibilities of these women in relation to those of the men involved have not been accurately or completely described to you. In any event, should the women's program be of lesser scope, you must now consider as

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your first action remedial steps which will bring the programs of the girls into line with the programs of the boys. In effect, I am saying that you cannot increase the salaries for the men coaches until you have increased the programs for women students and the salaries for the women coaches. As I stated before, I am certain that any legal advice you would care to seek will give you this interpretation. I do not know of any case which has gone to court in which the women have not won in regard to these matters.

Not only am I a concerned professional, but I am also a resident of the town of Stratford. You may be assured that I will not withdraw my attention from this matter until the Board of Education is in full compliance with the letter of the law. I suggest as a first step that you reopen discussion with the Negotiating Team regarding the compensation for women coaches. Incidentally, at least one of the negotiators who thinks that the women's coaching salaries are adequate, happens to be one of the men coaches who will get a fine raise under the proposed salaries.

For years I have been forced to stand by and watch injustices for girls and women in athletics. Such injustices are no longer permitted and I trust you will make immediate adjustments to conform to the law.

Very truly yours,



Helen A. Spencer, Director
ARNOLD COLLEGE DIVISION

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