

Two women coaches win sex discrimination suit

The U.S. District Court in Bridgeport has ruled that two Stratford women coaches must receive back pay and payment of legal fees in settlement of their sex discrimination suit, filed in 1976.

The court ordered that the Stratford Board of Education pay Lea Dickson, a gym teacher at Bunnell High School, \$1,571, and Barbara Hall of Stratford High School, \$1,234, and also pay \$1,700 to the Connecticut Women's Educational and Legal Fund, Inc., which supplied the attorneys.

The two Stratford

coaches brought suit through their attorney, Susan Meredith, executive director of CWEALF, in 1976, because they claimed they were being paid less than half the salary of male counterparts in basketball, swimming and softball.

According to the settlement entered before U.S. District Judge Jon O. Newman, the school board has agreed to pay coaches regardless of their sex, on the same salary scale for comparable girls' and boys' sports.

The school board also agreed to establish equal terms and conditions of

employment for coaches and girls' and boys' sports, including areas such as use of facilities, scheduling, uniforms, use of equipment, and allocation of monies and support services.

The court also ordered coaches to be hired and assigned on the basis of the individual's qualifications and not based on the sex of the coach or the sex of the students to be coached. As a further stipulation, the assistant coaches would be hired on the basis of need for girls' teams on the same basis currently used for the boys'.

According to the CWEALF, the settlement will ensure equal terms and conditions of employment and basis for assigning and hiring of coaches regardless of the group to be coached.

Joining the CWEALF as plaintiffs in the case was the Stratford Education Association.

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