

# Making Waves: ‘Woke’ NCAA Changes Policy on Transgender Athletes; Protests Ensur

The NCAA announced Wednesday that it has changed its policy regarding transgender athletes to one that follows a sport-by-sport model, and female athletes as well as former Olympian Bruce “Caitlyn” Jenner are already speaking out against it.

The NCAA says its new policy “Preserves opportunity for transgender student-athletes while balancing fairness, inclusion and safety for all who compete.” The new policy also aligns the NCAA with recent policy changes from the International Olympic Committee as well as the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committees.

The NCAA announcement reads in part:

*Like the Olympics, the updated NCAA policy calls for transgender participation for each sport to be determined by the policy for the national governing body of that sport, subject to ongoing review and recommendation by the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports to the Board of Governors. If there is no NGB policy for a sport, that sport’s international federation policy would be followed. If there is no international federation policy, previously established IOC policy criteria would be followed.*

*The Board of Governors urged the divisions to provide flexibility to allow for additional eligibility if a transgender student-athlete loses eligibility based on the policy change provided they meet the newly adopted standards.*

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*“We are steadfast in our support of transgender student-*

*athletes and the fostering of fairness across college sports,” said John DeGioia, chair of the board and Georgetown president. “It is important that NCAA member schools, conferences and college athletes compete in an inclusive, fair, safe and respectful environment and can move forward with a clear understanding of the new policy.”*

That caveat for “flexibility” could give hope to transgender athlete Will “Lia” Thomas of Penn State, a biological male who has been competing as a female, drawing the wrath of some teammates. In addition, longtime USA Swimming official Cynthia Millen stepped down Dec. 17 in protest over Thomas’ inclusion on Penn’s women’s team, saying she could “no longer participate in a sport that allows biological men to compete against women.” Since it is unknown whether Thomas could adhere to the required testosterone level, which follows IOC medical criteria, per Swimming World, the announcement’s language could provide the loophole the swimmer may need.

The NCAA’s new policy has already given rise to further concerns and comments from athletes.

“It’s about fairness in women’s sports,” Nancy Hoghead-Makar, a three-time Olympic gold medalist swimmer and women’s sports advocate, told Fox News Digital. “The competitive edge that Lia Thomas has is multiple times over the competitive advantage that the most doped-up East German women had,” she said.

Jenner, a former Olympic decathlon champion, spoke out on Fox News’ America Reports, reemphasizing his position that trans athletes should not compete in sports in the gender to which they have transitioned.

“I’ve said from the beginning, biological boys should not be playing in women’s sports,” Jenner said. “We need to protect women’s sports.”

Jenner also said Thomas' competing in women's sports hurts the transgender community. "She knows when she's swimming she's beating the competition by two laps. She was born a biological boy,. She was raised as a biological boy. Her cardiovascular system is bigger; her respiratory system is bigger; her hands are bigger; she can swim faster. That's a known."

One of President Joe Biden's first executive orders upon taking office last year was one that prioritizes transgender rights by opening public school bathrooms, locker rooms and sports to all students regardless of biological gender. {eo}

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