



# Toolkit for Supporting Transgender & Gender Expansive/ Nonconforming Students



This toolkit is a compilation of resources and best practices for supporting transgender and gender nonconforming students in Poudre School District.

For the purpose of this toolkit, we will be using *gender expansive* and *gender nonconforming* interchangeably. Additionally, we still operate in a *binary* gender system (woman/man), so, while we are doing our best to create an inclusive environment for all of our students, it is not always clear how certain policies apply when a student's gender identity is more fluid or falls outside of the binary. We should address those situations on a case-by-case basis to find the best solution for the student.

## **Included in this Toolkit**

- Glossary of Terms & Visual Aid
- Step-by-step process for supporting transgender and gender expansive students
- Resource Hyperlinks
- Sample Gender Support Plan for schools
- Preferred Name and/or Gender Change Request Form
- Poudre School District Policy

**Questions?**

## **Glossary of Terms from *Gender Spectrum***



*This glossary is a modified version created by the organization Gender Spectrum. On their site, they state that "the vocabulary of gender continues to evolve and there is not universal agreement about the definitions of many terms. We offer them as a starting place for dialogue and understanding, which begins by clarifying how we are using various terms, rather than asserting that they represent the final or only definition of the various terms."*

**Cisgender-** Refers to people whose gender identity aligns with their assigned sex at birth (cis from Latin, meaning, "on this side [of]." In contrast to trans, from the Latin root meaning "across", "beyond", or "on the opposite side [of]").

**Gender binary-** A system that constructs gender according to two discrete and opposite categories: boy/man and girl/woman. It is important to recognize that both cisgender and transgender people can have a gender identity that is binary.

**Gender expression-** This is our "public" gender. How we present our gender in the world and how society, culture, community, and family perceive, interact with, and try to shape our gender. Gender expression is also related to gender roles and how society uses those roles to try to enforce conformity to current gender norms.

**Gender fluid-** People who have a gender or genders that change. Gender fluid people move between genders, experiencing their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than static.

**Gender identity-** A person's innermost core concept of self which can include boy/man, girl/woman, a blend of both, neither, and many more. Gender identity is how each person perceives themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be consistent with, or different than, their sex assigned at birth. The language a person uses to communicate their gender identity can evolve and shift over time, especially as someone gets older and has access to a broader gender vocabulary.

**Gender-expansive/nonconforming-** An umbrella term used for individuals that broaden their own culture's commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender-expansive individuals include those with transgender and non-binary identities, as well as those whose gender in some way is seen to be stretching society's notions of gender.

**Genderqueer-** Is an umbrella term to describe someone who doesn't identify with conventional gender identities, roles, expression and/or expectations. For some, genderqueer is a non-binary identification, and for others it is not.

**Intersex-** Also referred to as Disorders/Differences of Sexual Development. About 1% of children are born with chromosomes, hormones, genitalia and/or other sex characteristics that are not exclusively male or female as defined by the medical establishment in our society. In most cases, these children are at no medical risk, but most are assigned a binary sex identity (male or female) by their doctors and/or families.

**Non-binary-** An umbrella term for gender identities that are not exclusively either boy/man, or girl/woman.

**Sex-** Used to label a person as "male" or "female" at birth, this term refers to a person external genitalia and internal reproductive organs. When a person's sex is assigned a particular sex at birth, it is often mistakenly assumed that this will equate with their gender; it might, but it might not.

**Sexual orientation-** Our sexual orientation and our gender are separate, though related parts of our overall identity. Gender is personal (how we each see ourselves), while sexual orientation is interpersonal (which people we are physically, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to).

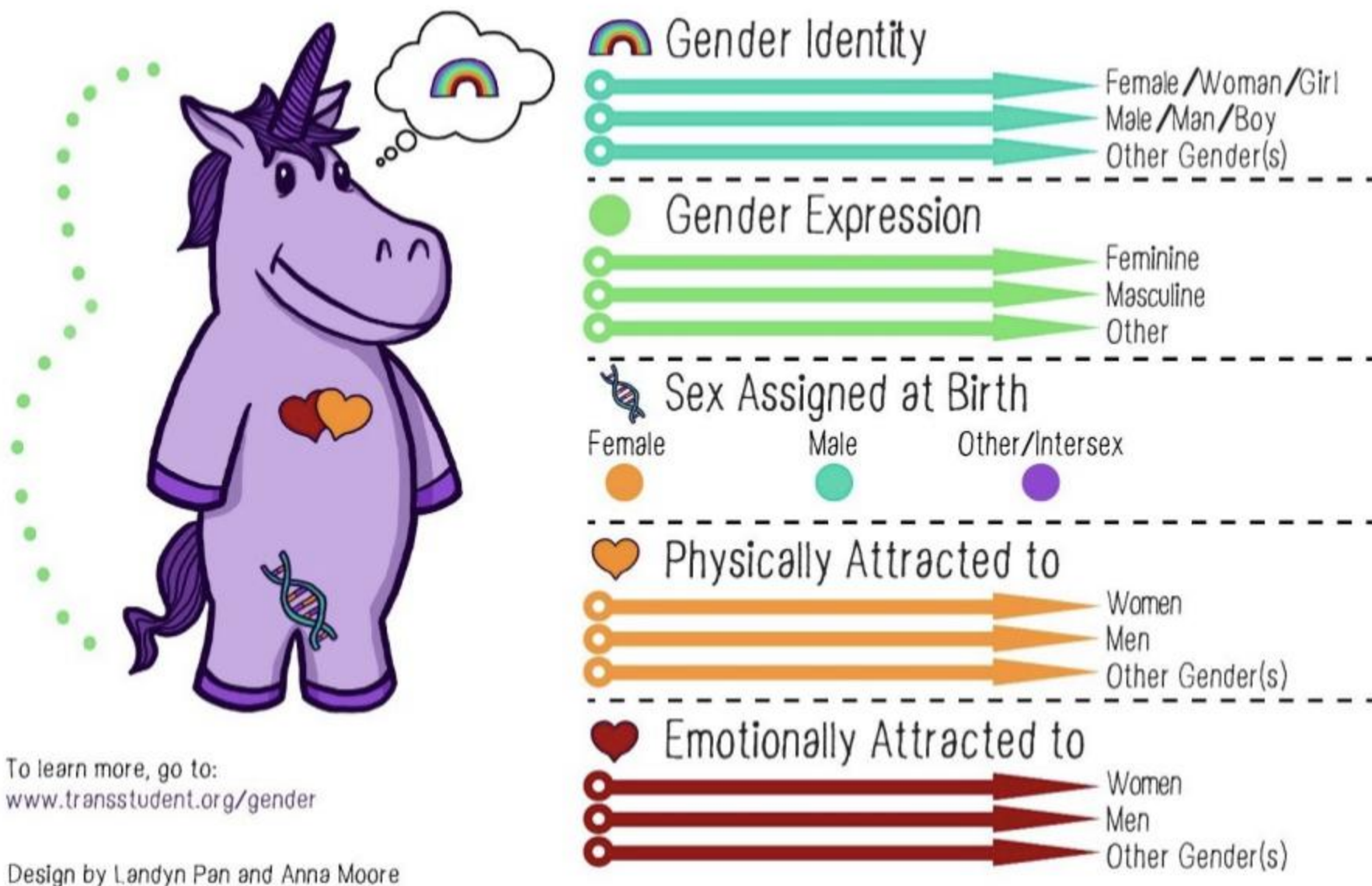


**Transgender-** Sometimes this term is used broadly as an umbrella term to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their assigned birth sex. It is also used more narrowly as a gender identity that reflects a binary gender identity that is “opposite” or “across from” the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Transition-** A term commonly used to include the steps a transgender person takes in order to align aspects of their life to be consistent with their gender identity. This term can be misleading, however, as it implies the person’s gender is changing from one gender to another; in actuality the person’s gender remains relatively stable. It is others’ understanding of that gender that shifts. What people see as a “transition” is actually an alignment in one, or more dimensions of the individual’s gender, as they seek congruence across those dimensions. A transition is taking place, but it is often those associated with the person (parents and other family members, support professionals, employers, etc.) who are transitioning in how they see the individual’s gender, and not the person themselves. Thus we prefer the term seeking congruence or congruence measures. A person can seek congruence in any or all of the following ways: social congruence- through changes of social identifiers such as clothing, hairstyle, gender identity, name and/or pronouns; hormonal congruence- through the use of medicines such as hormone “blockers” or cross hormones to promote gender-based body changes; surgical congruence in which an individual’s body is modified through the addition or removal of gender-related physical traits; and legal congruence through changing identification documents such as one’s birth certificate, driver’s license, and passport.

# The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources



Trans Student Educational Resources, 2015. "The Gender Unicorn." [www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender).



# Process for Supporting Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students

## Student and Family

As we begin working with a student and/or family, it is important that we understand their individual story, experience and needs so that we can provide intentional and purposeful support.

When a student elects to transition during the school year, the school should schedule a meeting with the student and parents/guardians (provided they are involved in the process), to ascertain their desires and concerns. In some cases, notification of the family carries a risk to the student. If this is the case, another trusted adult can participate in the process. The school should discuss a timeline for the transition in order to create the conditions supporting a safe and accepting environment at the school. The principal should discuss with school administrators and any educators that interact directly with the student on the support plan, timelines for transition and relevant legal requirements.

### Elementary

Typically, the parent/guardian or will inform the school of the impending transition. However, it is not unusual for a student's desire to transition to first surface at school. If school staff believe that a gender identity or expression issue is presenting itself and creating difficulty for the child at school, approaching parents/guardians about the issue is appropriate at the elementary level. Together the family and school can then identify appropriate steps to support the student.

### Secondary

In some cases, notifying parents/guardians carries risks for the student, such as being kicked out of the home. Prior to notification of any parent/guardian or guardian regarding the transition process, school staff should work closely with the student to assess the degree, if any, the parent/guardian will be involved in the process and must consider the health, well-being and safety of the student in transition.

## School Community

It is important to keep in mind that each situation, student and school community are unique. There is not one answer for how best to manage the communication with classmates, parents/guardians and staff. It is helpful as you are meeting with the student and parents/guardians to ask them if other students and parents/guardians are aware, if they plan on sharing this information or whether their preference is confidentiality. This is important to consider as you are planning whether there may be a need to develop messaging to the larger school community at some point. Additionally, seek clarity from the student and parent/guardian how they would prefer you respond if other parents/guardians or students have inquiries. Remember to emphasize our responsibilities to keep their student safe and this information confidential (shared on a need to know basis) if that is their preference. For support, please work with your school Counselor, and/or the Student Services Office.

### Things to Remember

- ☐ Familiarize yourself with District Policy.
- ☐ Listen to the student's/ family's story and develop a student support plan.
- ☐ Discuss the following with the student and family:
  - Confidentiality & privacy
  - Names & pronouns
  - Student records
  - Dress code
  - Gender-segregated activities



## Guidelines for discussions before creating a *Support Plan* with the student

Discuss the following with the student and family:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Confidentiality &amp; Privacy</b>                   | <b>Ensure student's right to privacy. This includes the right to keep one's transgender status private at school.</b> Information about a student's transgender status, legal name or gender assigned at birth <b>may</b> also constitute confidential medical information. Disclosing this information to other students, other parents, guardians or third parties <b>may</b> violate privacy laws, such as the federal <a href="#">Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)</a> or <a href="#">Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)</a> .   |
| <b>Names &amp; Pronouns</b>                            | <b>Use the name and gender pronoun with which the student identifies and prefers. When in doubt, ask them.</b> Transgender and gender nonconforming youth use a number of words to describe their lives and gender experiences. Ask which terms the student prefers and avoid terms that make the student uncomfortable.   |
| <b>Student Records and Student Information Systems</b> | <b>Use the name and gender preferred by the student on school records or documents wherever possible (e.g., class lists, seating charts).</b> Students can ask their registrar for a "Preferred Name and/or Gender Change Request Form" to change their name/gender on most school documents. For example, the class roster that a substitute receives should have the student's preferred name and gender listed, not their legal name/gender from their permanent school record. However, the permanent student record should reflect the student's legal name and legal gender.   |
| <b>Dress Codes</b>                                     | <b>Allow student to dress in accordance with the student's gender identity</b> (within the constraints of the dress code adopted by the school, pursuant to <a href="#">District Policy</a> ). School staff should not enforce a school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender expansive students than other students. This includes prom and other school events.  |
| <b>Gender Segregated Activities</b>                    | <b>Reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by gender.</b> In situations where students are segregated by gender, such as for health education classes, students should be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity. In the case of a school activity like say, Girls Chorus, the school should consider regrouping/naming the groups according to voice part (Sopranos & Altos, Tenors & Basses), rather than gender. This may also affect something like the choir dress code and how we might create a more inclusive space for multiple gender expressions. Do girls really need to wear dresses? Do boys really need to wear ties? |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Facilities</b><br><br><b>Restrooms</b><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><b>Locker Rooms</b><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><b>Overnight Trips/<br/>Athletic Trips</b> | <p><b>Allow student access to the restroom that corresponds with the student's gender identity consistently asserted at school.</b> Any student who is transgender and who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided access to a single stall restroom, but no student shall be required to use such a restroom.</p> <p><b>Allow student access to the locker room that corresponds with the student's gender identity consistently asserted at school.</b> The use of locker rooms by students who are transgender and gender nonconforming should be assessed on a case-by-case basis with the goals of maximizing the student's social integration and equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and sports, ensuring the student's safety and comfort and minimizing stigmatization of the student.</p> <p><b>Assign student to share overnight accommodations with other students that share the student's gender identity consistently asserted at school.</b> In the planning of sleeping arrangements during overnight activity and athletic trips, the needs of students who are transgender should be assessed on a case-by-case basis with the goals of maximizing the student's social integration, providing equal opportunity to participate in overnight activity and athletic trips, ensuring the student's safety and comfort and minimizing stigmatization of the student. Under no circumstance should a transgender student be required to share a room with students whose gender identity conflicts with their own. Talking with the student to find out which of their classmates might be good roommates will help with problem-solving.</p> |
| <b>Extra-Curricular Activities</b>   | <p><b>Permit student to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in a manner consistent with his or her gender identity and supported by law.</b> Unless precluded by state interscholastic association policies, students should be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Link to Governing CHSAA Policy: <a href="#"><u>CHSAA Policy Statement and School Recommendations Regarding Transgender Participation</u></a></p>   |

## What does “consistently identifies as” mean in regard to gender?

The analysis should always be both subjective and objective. Subjective: How does the individual self-identify? Objective: How does the person present? This would include behavior and appearance. However, the absence of consistency in these things does not necessarily mean that their *identity* is not consistent.

- What pronouns does the person prefer?
- How does the person dress?
- How does the person style their hair?
- How does the person move among classmates?
- How does the person speak with classmates?
- What bathroom does the person use?

**Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying** To foster an educational environment that is safe and free from discrimination for all students regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, all school faculty and administrators must take incidents of harassment, discrimination or violence against any student with the utmost seriousness and address such situations promptly. It is the responsibility of the District to ensure that transgender and gender nonconforming students have a safe school environment.

### Policy References:

[AC - NONDISCRIMINATION / EQUAL OPPORTUNITY](#)  
[JBB - HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS](#)  
[JICDE – BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION](#)



## Additional Resources

- [GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATORS WORKING WITH TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NONCONFORMING STUDENTS](#) (CASE, CASB, CHSAA, etc.,)
- Preferred Name and/or Gender Change Request Form (Poudre Link)
- [List of exceptions in Synergy w/ preferred vs. legal name/gender](#) (Poudre Link)
- [Gender Spectrum- Educator & Administrator Resources](#)
- [One Colorado- Safe Schools](#)
- [Legal name and gender change process in Colorado](#)

## Confidential Gender Support Plan

*This is a sample support plan adopted from the organization Gender Spectrum. Information gathered with this plan is for general information only and is not meant to provide diagnosis, treatment, medical advice or create a right or obligation upon the district or any staff member.*

School

Today's Date:

Name Student Uses: Student's Gender Identity:

Legal Name:

Assigned Sex at Birth:

Student's "Go to adult" at School:

Age: Names & Grades

of Siblings: Guardian Names:

Meeting Participants:

### Parent/Guardian Involvement

Are guardian(s) of this student aware and supportive of their child's gender status? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If not, what considerations must be accounted for in implementing this plan? \_\_\_\_\_

### Confidentiality & Privacy

How public or private will information about this student's gender be (check all that apply?)

- ☐ Student will not be openly "out" but some students are aware of the student's gender. Specify the students in the lines below.
- ☐ Specific Teachers, Administrators & School Staff will know. Specify these adults in the lines below.
- ☐ Student is open with others (adults and peers) about gender
- ☐ Other. Please describe in the lines below.



How will a teacher/staff member respond to any questions about the student's gender from others students? From staff members? From parents/community? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Student Safety**

Safe2Tell Colorado: <https://safe2tell.org>

Who will be the student's "go-to adult" at school? And if they aren't available, who else can the student contact at school? \_\_\_\_\_

How often will this person check in with student and/or family? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are the expectations in the event the student is feeling unsafe and how will the student signal for help during class, on the yard, in the halls, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Names, Pronouns & Student Records**

Student *Legal* Name & Gender listed in the Information Management System

- \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Pronouns to be used when referring to student:

- \_\_\_\_\_

Has the student completed the *Preferred Name and/or Gender Change Request Form*? \_\_\_\_\_

How will instances be handled in which the incorrect name or pronoun are used? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



- During registration: \_\_\_\_\_
- Completing enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_
- With substitute teachers: \_\_\_\_\_
- Standardized tests: \_\_\_\_\_
- School photos: \_\_\_\_\_
- IEPs/Other Services: \_\_\_\_\_
- Student cumulative file: \_\_\_\_\_
- After-school programs: \_\_\_\_\_
- Lunch lines: \_\_\_\_\_
- Taking attendance: \_\_\_\_\_
- Teacher grade book(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- School-home communications: \_\_\_\_\_
- Outside district personnel or providers: \_\_\_\_\_
- Summons to office: \_\_\_\_\_
- Yearbook: \_\_\_\_\_
- Student ID/library cards: \_\_\_\_\_
- Posted lists: \_\_\_\_\_
- Distribution of texts/school supplies: \_\_\_\_\_
- Assignment of IT accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

What are some other ways the school needs to anticipate the student's privacy being compromised?

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## **Use of Facilities**

Student will use the following restroom(s) at school: \_\_\_\_\_

Students will change clothes in the following place(s): \_\_\_\_\_

If student has concerns about facilities, student should contact: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the expectations for facilities and rooming during class trips and over-night trips? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Extra-Curricular Activities**



*CHSAA Policy Statement and School Recommendations Regarding Transgender Participation*

In what extra-curricular and after-school activities will the student be participating? \_\_\_\_\_

What steps will be necessary for supporting the student there? \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Considerations**

Are there specific social dynamics with other students, siblings, staff or family members that need to be discussed? \_\_\_\_\_

If the school has a dress code, how will this be handled? \_\_\_\_\_

What training will the school engage in to build capacity for working with gender-expansive students? \_\_\_\_\_

**Support Plan Next Steps**

How will this plan be monitored over time? \_\_\_\_\_

List of: Action Items, who is responsible, & anticipated completion dates

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

DATE/TIME OF NEXT MEETING: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_



## Preferred Name and/or Gender Change Request Form

To be responsive to the individual needs of students and families, PSD recognizes that there are circumstances that may occur requiring a modification to our Information Management System to more accurately reflect a name, a gender or both that differ from a student's legal name and/or gender.

This form initiates the process to make such modifications.

### Student's Legal Name/Gender

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name                      First Name                      Middle Name                      Suffix                      Gender

### Student's Preferred Name/Gender

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name                      First Name                      Middle Name                      Suffix                      Gender

The parent/guardian(s) acknowledges that Poudre School District will continue to maintain and release the student's legal name and/or gender in compliance with federal and state laws. Without legal documentation, the use of a preferred name may create errors in processing, locating, and retrieving records legally requested by other entities, such as educational institutions, employment verification services, and government entities, and that information provided by the District regarding the student may not be accurate as a result of the use of the preferred name and/or gender.

Poudre School District will make every effort to minimize these errors. However, the possibility of record errors increases when a student's preferred name/gender used in PSD's student information systems does not match their legal name and/or gender.

The registrar will notify [statereporting@psdschools.org](mailto:statereporting@psdschools.org) and cc [rchacon@psdschools.org](mailto:rchacon@psdschools.org). The staff member responsible for this is \_\_\_\_\_

IT will check for other integrations that need to be addressed and will work with the school registrar as needed. However, counselors or other staff member may need to meet with teachers regarding other integrations/technology programs that the teachers might be utilizing that display names. **Student IDs may need to be updated also.**

Please allow three (3) school days to process the preferred name and/or gender request.

Would you like PSD to remove the current picture from Infinite Campus?    Yes\_\_\_\_    No\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### SCHOOL OFFICIAL USE ONLY:

Data will be entered by ???. Please sign and date, and email to [statereporting@psdschools.org](mailto:statereporting@psdschools.org), provide a copy to the requestor, and place the original document in the student's cumulative folder for archival.

School Name:

School official:

Date:

Student ID:

Student DOB:

Student SASID:





## **Administrative Guidelines for Addressing Matters that Concern Transgender Students and Providing Appropriate Supports**

Colorado law and District policies prohibit discrimination against and harassment of individuals based on their “sexual orientation,” which is defined under C.R.S. § 24-34-301(7) as “an individual’s orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgender status or another individual’s perception thereof.” In order to help ensure legal and policy compliance when addressing matters that concern transgender students and to provide appropriate supports, District officials must gather and understand the relevant facts in a timely fashion and then promptly take the required actions that recognize and balance the individual circumstances and rights of all parties involved. Procedures to facilitate this process are outlined below.

- I. When a student individually, through a parent, or through a relative or another person acting as the student’s advocate expresses concerns or raises questions related to transgender issues, identifies as transgender and/or requests accommodations, the school Principal or Principal’s designee should contact the District’s Director of Student Services (“Director”) or the Director’s designee.
  - A. Note that matters concerning transgender students that require District attention may be raised by or on behalf of transgender students and/or students who are not transgender.
  - B. The first order of business in working with the student and parents/advocate is to understand their current situation and their hopes, goals, fears and concerns regarding the future by listening carefully to what they have to say and following up as needed with clarifying questions.
    1. The support a student may need from the District will vary depending on such factors as the student’s cultural background, personality, age, health, family perspective, family and peer relationships, and desires regarding enrollment in classes and participation in extracurricular activities.
    2. It is important to have a good understanding of each student’s individual circumstances in order to develop a support plan that meets their unique needs in accordance with governing law and District policies.
- II. Upon being contacted, the Director or Director’s designee should get as much information as possible on the matter from the Principal or Principal’s designee. The information obtained will dictate the Director’s or designee’s next steps, which may include:
  - A. Further investigation of the relevant facts through document review and discussions with school staff, other District officials and/or students.



- B. Contacting the Superintendent, one or more Assistant Superintendents and/or one or more Executive Directors to discuss issues that cannot be resolved by the Director, Director's designee and/or school Principal alone.



- C. Contacting Legal and Policy Counsel for advice on legal issues currently affecting the situation, or that may affect the situation in the future.
  - D. Contacting the student and/or parents/advocate individually (with or without the involvement of a school official, as deemed appropriate in each case) to establish or strengthen the District's relationship and lines of communication with them, better understand their point of view and/or develop a plan to address their immediate concerns.
  - E. Working with school staff in meeting with the student and/or the student's parents/advocate to develop a support plan for the student and ensure that it is properly implemented. School staff generally involved in such meetings include the Principal and a Counselor.
- III. The Director and/or Director's designee, school staff and other District officials (if necessary) should work collaboratively with students and their parents/advocates in each case to develop individualized plans to accommodate and support the students in accordance with governing law and District policies. Matters that may need to be addressed include but are not limited to:
- A. The name and pronouns used for a transgender student in person, on documents and in District records and reports.
  - B. Use of restrooms, locker rooms and dressing rooms, and overnight fieldtrip accommodations.
  - C. Transgender student participation in CHSAA-sanctioned activities and athletic competitions.
  - D. What should and should not be communicated to school staff and to other students regarding a student's gender identity and related matters.
  - E. How to proceed if parents disagree with each other or with the student regarding the support plan.
  - F. Recognizing and addressing the concerns and religious beliefs of students who are not transgender and/or the parents/advocates of those students.
- IV. In order to help ensure that students' individualized plans are effectively implemented, the Director and/or Director's designee may work with Principals to schedule inservices to educate school staff, volunteers and/or students.
- V. In the event of disagreement between the Director/Director's designee and the Principal on how matters that concern transgender students should be addressed at a particular school, a meeting should be scheduled with the appropriate Assistant Superintendent as soon as reasonably possible to address the disagreement. If significant legal or political issues remain unresolved, the Superintendent should be involved. The advice of Legal and Policy Counsel may be requested at any time.