




Meeting the Needs of Our Gender Non-conforming and Transgender Students: Creating Equity through Policy Change and Professional Development

Shelly Beech
KCK Director, Professional Workforce Development
shelly.beech@kckps.org

Deb Woodard
UMKC School Counseling Coordinator
and
Associate Teaching Professor
woodardd@umkc.edu




Introductions and Disclaimers

- 
- Who are we?
 - What do we know?
 - What do we not know?
 - Why are we here?
 - What is your role in today's work?
 - What about the future?
 - What do we hope to accomplish?
 - Feedback Forms



Learning Outcomes for Today

- 
- Become informed regarding law, and district policy, and guidelines
 - Become informed regarding the recent legal actions impacting transgender and gender non-conforming students nationally and in the State of Kansas.
 - Review some of the salient definitions and statistics involved when working with gender non-conforming and transgender youth and their families
 - Consider the impact of gender non-conformity on our students and their families
 - Receive or view examples of the experiences of some transgender kids through videos
 - Ask questions for clarification
 - Receive guidelines for supporting transgender and gender non-conforming students.



Our Roles as Educators


See that...

- Education is provided for all...FAPE
- We are aware of the particular needs of gender non-conforming and transgender students and their families.
- Safety and security are provided for all students
- We are guided by the principles of dignity, affirmation and inclusion
- Referrals are made to counselors, who will contact Lisa Garcia-Stewart and Shelly Beech when needed.





Title IX – The Law



No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972



The Rationale for Policy

- March 2016 Student Physical Privacy Act introduced into Kansas legislature. Recommends a \$2,500 per complaint be paid to the complainant
- March 2016 – Parent of transgender student requests parent training for middle school staff in KCK school.
- April 2016 – Student Physical Privacy Act receives no action in the Kansas legislature.
- May 2016 – Obama administration issued guidance on transgender students in schools. Depts. of Justice and Education issued a letter outlining guidelines for transgender students and their rights in schools to all school districts in the U.S.



The Rationale for Policy

- June 2016 – Kansas State Board of Education announced that the state will continue to apply its own gender policies on school bathroom use instead of following the Obama administration's directive to allow students to use bathrooms associated with their gender identification.
- August 2016 – Texas Supreme Court judge rules the guidelines issued by Department of Justice are unconstitutional.
- September 2016 – KCK Board of Education approved changes to Board policy regarding transgender and gender non-conforming students and employees.
- January 2017 – Trump administration rescinds guidelines from Depts. Of Education and Justice issued in May 2016



USD 500 Board Policy

JGEC Sexual Harassment


- The board of education is committed to providing a positive and productive learning and working environment, free from discrimination on the basis of sex/gender, including sexual harassment. Harassment based on gender identity or gender expression is expressly prohibited as outlined in this policy. Sexual harassment shall not be tolerated in the school district.

JCE Discrimination (Complaints)

- The district is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment free from discrimination, insult, intimidation, or harassment due to race, color, religion, sex/gender (to include orientation, identity, or expression), age, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law.



Focus on Safety for All Students

- 
- Regardless of our own personal beliefs and feelings about a person who is transgender or gender non-conforming, we are required as educators to keep **ALL** students safe.
 - **OUR FOCUS IS ON THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS ALL THE TIME.**



What gender is often identified with each of the following?



Talk to the person(s) next to you (shoulder partner or triad).

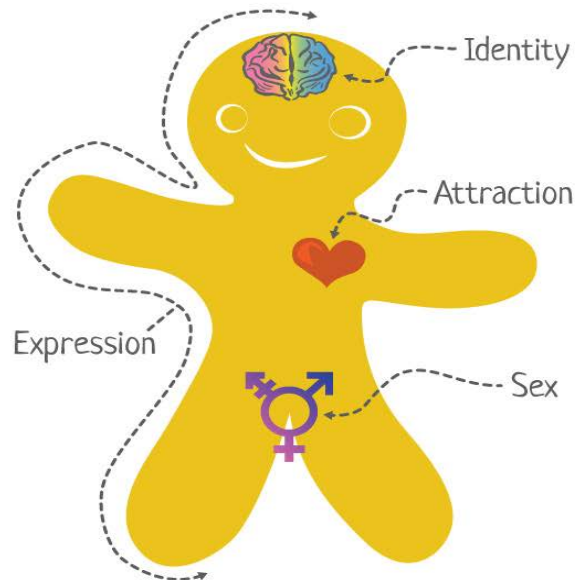
- How have these stereotypical gender identifications changed in your lifetime?
- How do our gender expectations/stereotypes of girls and boys affect our initial or immediate view of who they will be?
- Assuming the need for safety of all kids, how might we change our school climate to support that?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyZPIId4VVnM> Sam's Story

Focus on

Understanding the Importance of Terminology



The Genderbread Person v3.3 by its pronounced METROsexual



 **Gender Identity**
 {  Woman-ness
 Man-ness

 **Gender Expression**
 {  Feminine
 Masculine

 **Biological Sex**
 {  Female-ness
 Male-ness

 **Sexually Attracted to**
 {  (Women/Females/Femininity)
 (Men/Males/Masculinity)

 **Romantically Attracted to**
 {  (Women/Females/Femininity)
 (Men/Males/Masculinity)

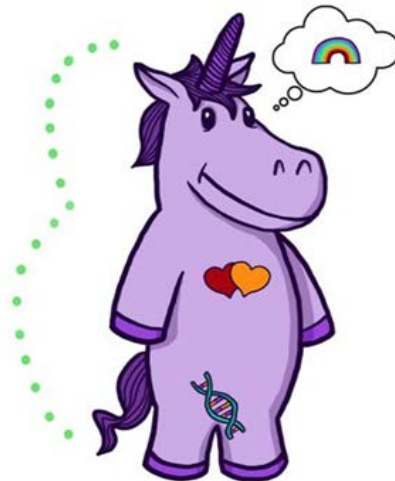
Focus on

Understanding the Importance of Terminology

Continuum of Identity

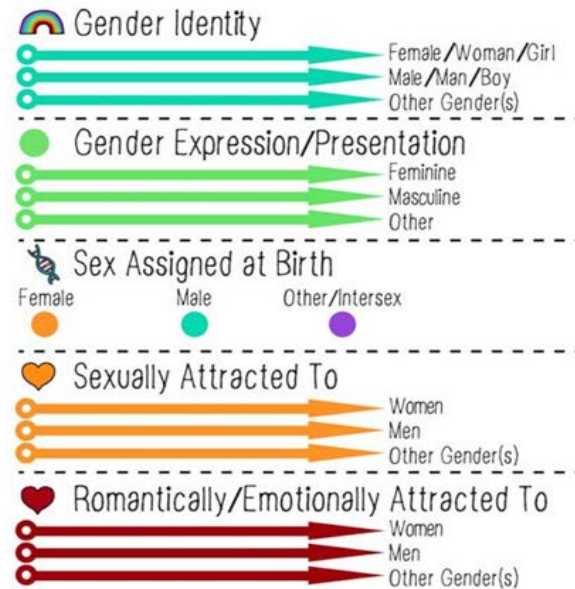
The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan






Gender Identity/Transgender Terminology

What do we absolutely need to know?

Sexual orientation




Term that describes a person's *romantic or sexual attraction* to people of a specific gender or genders. “Lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual” and “straight” are examples of sexual orientations. **Our sexual orientation and our gender identity are separate, distinct parts of our overall identities.**



Terminology: What else do we need to know??

Gender identity



One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – *how individuals perceive themselves* and what they call themselves. **One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.**



Terminology: What else do we need to know??

Gender expression

External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.





Terminology: What else do we need to know??

Gender non-conformity

Describes a person whose behaviors or gender expression falls outside what is generally considered typical for their assigned sex at birth.


This does not define them as transgender.





Terminology: What do we absolutely need to know??

Transgender



An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

A child/young person who is transgender will assert firmly, over time that their gender identity is the not that which was assigned at birth. They will insist that they are in the wrong body. Not all gender nonconforming individuals consider themselves transgender.



Terminology: What do we need to know??

Gender transition

The process by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of gender with its outward appearance. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns and/or be socially recognized as another gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions.

For our young people, this will most likely be *primarily social*, followed by some medical interventions that would relate to changes in hormones through puberty.

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/father-daughter-transition-mother-son-46265450>



Terminology: What do we need to know??

Gender dysphoria

Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify. According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), the term – *which replaces Gender Identity Disorder* – "is intended to better characterize the experiences of affected children, adolescents, and adults."

All of the feelings associated with being in the wrong body, with being accepted and belonging are a part of gender dysphoria. **It is not a disease or disorder**; it is distress or trauma caused by all of the experiences around being transgender.



Terminology: What do we need to know??

Gender dysphoria

An intense and persistent discomfort with the primary and secondary sex characteristics of one's assigned birth sex.

Affirming and supporting a person's gender identity can help to significantly decrease their dysphoria.

Conversely, rejecting or requiring a person to conceal their gender identity will exacerbate their level of dysphoria (toxic stress – trauma)

-From "Schools in Transition" <http://www.hrc.org/resources/schools-in-transition-a-guide-for-supporting-transgender-students-in-k-12-s>



References and Related Resources

<http://www.welcomingschools.org/pages/a-few-definitions-for-educators-and-parents-guardians>

and

<http://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>

Human Rights Campaign

<http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary.html>

UC Davis

©2011 Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org/education

GLSEN, www.glsen.org

<https://www.glsen.org/unheardvoices.html>





Focus on Data: Transgender Youth National Statistics – “Injustice at Every Turn Report”

Academic Challenge to Success

- Decrease in academic success
- Increase in absenteeism
- High dropout rate – 20% report having to drop out of school due to harassment

Social/Emotional Challenges to Success

- Bullying/Harassment
65% feel unsafe in school



http://www.thetaskforce.org/static_html/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_full.pdf



Focus on Data:

Transgender Youth National Statistics – “Injustice at Every Turn Report”

Social/Emotional Challenges to Success (Cont.)

- Homelessness
19% experience homelessness
- Suicide Rate
41% attempt suicide

Overall Emotional Scars/Trauma

Toxic (continuous) stress can lead to many more mental health and/or physical issues (trauma)





Focus on Data: GLSEN

<http://www.glsen.org/>

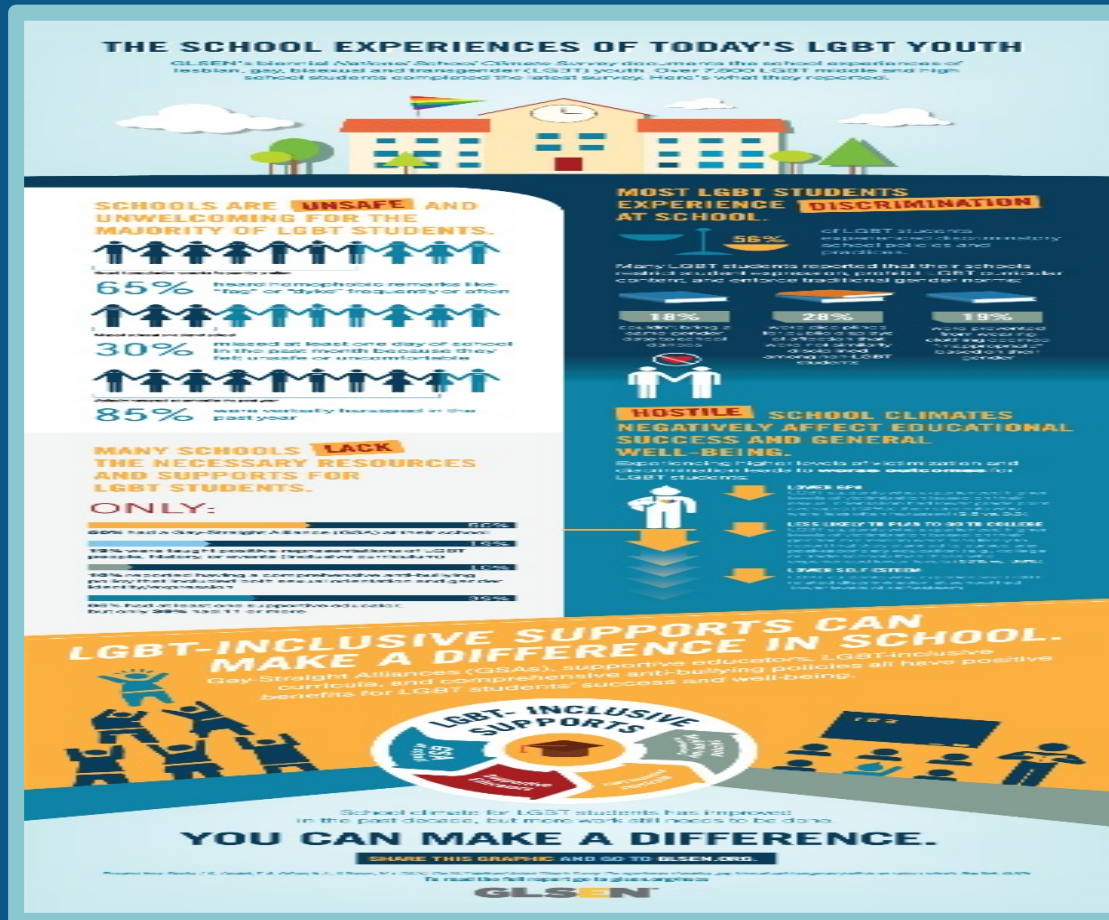
<https://www.glsen.org/article/2015-national-school-climate-survey>

We will give you a list of statistics

1. Individually, read the information silently
2. Individually, consider one word you best believe describes what you have read.
3. Then, select a statistic that stood out for you.
4. Share that **word** with someone beside you and why you selected it.
5. Now, share the **statistic**
6. Let's share a few of both.



What this all looks like



Do we need a break?

If so, see you in 5 minutes!



Focus on Reality
What it feels like -
Jazz Jennings: One Child's Story



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt_wLU_EB2w

Mom, I'm Not a Girl: Raising a Transgender Child

A Case of Female to Male Gender Identity and Transition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Si5kAnLyKeg&feature=youtu.be>





Raising Ryland

Another Case of Female to Male Gender Identity and Transition

<https://youtu.be/fcD5NOlalQo>



“Hir” A Poem by and for Teens

<https://youtu.be/IRLSgPQG0c4>

This is a poem by Alysia Harris & Aysha El Shamayleh, it is about the dual identities of a transgender person.

Melissa sits in the back of the classroom afraid to speak up,
She pulls awkwardly at her extra loose khaki cargo pants,
She doesn't want the boys to notice her.

James finds himself at the back of a classroom,
His baseball cap casts a shadow on his pimple stained forehead,
A wide shirt hangs from his broad shoulders,
But no one ever noticed him.

Melissa
The teacher asks,
And she says nothing because she is not here,
And Melissa has never been here,
Because Melissa is just some abstract jumble of syllables that doesn't fit her position,
She is not what she seems,
She doesn't want to have to explain to her mother for the 232nd time why she doesn't want to wear a dress to prom,
Doesn't paint her face it's cause her whole body is painted on.

Melissa, Melissa

“Hir” A Poem by and for Teens

James doesn't want to have to explain where he came from,
Cause with the exception of Melissa he has been deemed an abstract reality by everyone,
All he wishes for is to get to wear a tuxedo to prom.

And Melissa has been tucking in breasts that will be growing for three years now,
Been using duct tape to press them down and mold them more into pecs,
She just wishes that people would understand that at birth her genitals didn't know which way to grow,
Mad at God who couldn't relay a message directly to her hormones that they should produce more testosterone,
The only person who understands her is James,
And they have been playmates since the age of four,
Around the time girls notice boys and boys notice girls,
See James' family wanted daughters instead of sons,
And Melissa was always like that male beetle that everyone called a ladybug,


Melissa, Melissa where is she?
Sometimes she wishes she could rip the skin of her back,
Every moment of everyday feels trapped in the flesh of a stranger,
Melissa,
As she stands to her feet wanting to say
"I'm here, I've been here since I was born, so quit asking me if I'm a him or a her, Cause when you combine the two
pronouns you get H.I.R,
Hir,
And God combined the two genders and put me in this body transgendered,
I'm here so quit talking about me like I'm not here."

James falls back into Melissa's skin,
And the two comfort each other in a syncopated heartbeats,
Waiting for the day when Melissa can finally scrub off this made up genetic make up,
When the teacher asks for James and he can say "I'm here."






3 - 2 - 1 Process

- 
- **3 things you have learned so far that you did not know**
 - **2 things that you would like to learn more about**
 - **1 action step for you or 1 feeling you may be experiencing**


Parental Support: A Mother Stands Up


- https://youtu.be/mkHx_2dpEbw





Suggestions from a Parent of a Gender Non-Conforming Child

- 
- **Don't assume that a child is a certain gender based on their presentation**
 - **Don't put them in an uncomfortable position even if they have identified as transgender (assumptions about buses, etc.)**
 - **Don't "out" them without the permission of the student and/or parent/guardian/family (dependent upon development)**
 - **Be accepting and understanding of children who say their gender is not what you are expecting it to be (don't be surprised by a revelation by a child/adolescent).**



Suggestions from a Parent of a Gender Non-Conforming Child

For all of us:

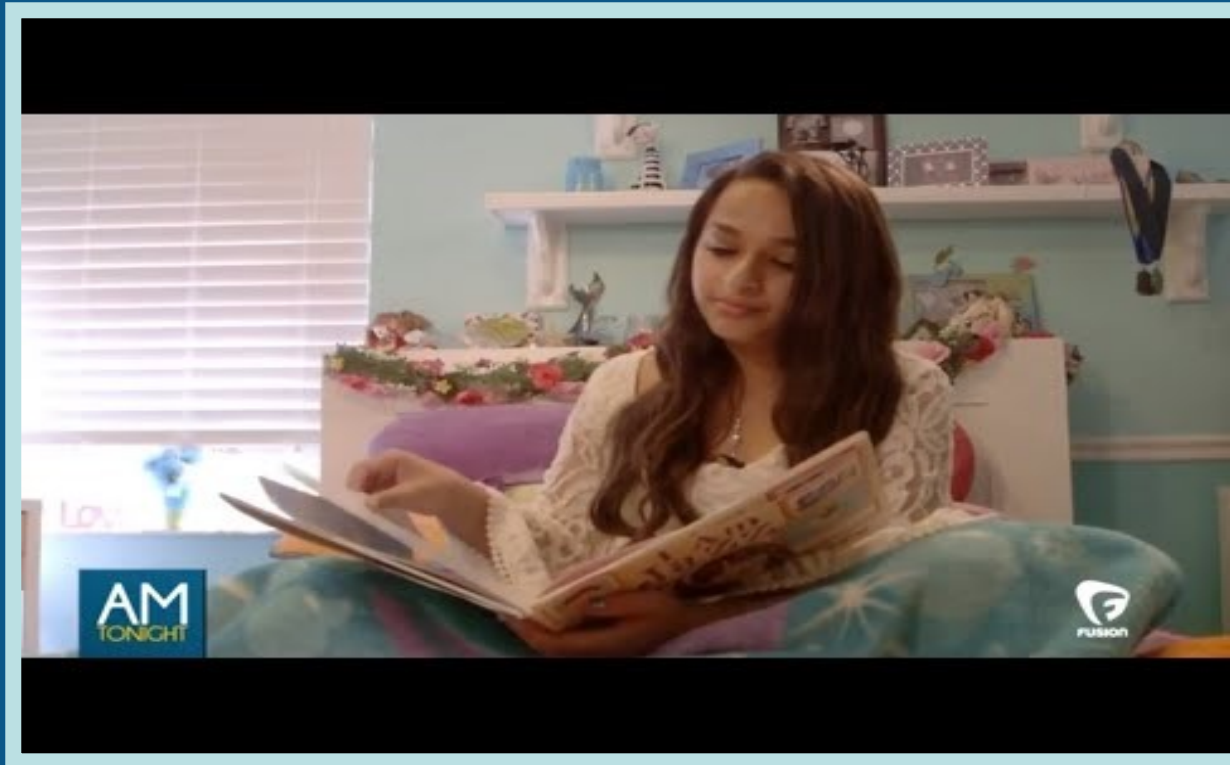
- **Be knowledgeable about non-binary gender identities since young people are more frequently identifying that way (agender, genderfluid, genderqueer, etc.)**

For schools:

- **Allow children to use the locker rooms and restrooms that match their gender identity or change in a gender-neutral location (an office, unisex bathroom) if they request it...but don't require trans kids use gender neutral bathrooms or spaces if they do identify as a trans boy or trans girl.**
- **Never make a child confront a bully or "talk it out" if another child is bothering them about their gender**




Jazz Jennings at 14



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2JdPNAsaTs>



Suggestions for Acknowledging a Student Disclosure of Gender Non-conformity

- 
- Offer support but don't assume a student needs any help.
 - Be a role model of acceptance and appreciate the student's courage.
 - Listen, listen, listen.
 - Assure and respect confidentiality.
 - Ask questions that demonstrate understanding, acceptance and compassion.




More Suggestions for Acknowledging a Student Disclosure of Gender Non-conformity

For all of us:

- Remember that the student has not changed.
- Validate the person's gender identity and expression.
- Remember that gender identity is separate from sexual orientation.
- Be prepared to contact your ***school counselor***. It is important to remember that the student's family may not be aware or accepting and may need help with this. **Don't try to handle it on your own.**





Focus on School Climate

What can we as adults do to keep our transgender and gender non-conforming students safe?

- **How might we provide a safe environment that supports dignity, affirmation and inclusion?**
- **What might that look like?**
- **What are we already doing?**
 - Your ideas?
 - Safe space, education of ourselves and others
- **How do we avoid “outing” a student/family?**
- **Why is it so important not to contact a family who may not be aware?**
- **What else might we do?**





Focus on the Rationale for Policy and Guidelines for the District

As need is evident in a district

Professional Development sessions we have created and presented in KCK since April 2016

- District Administrators - 2 PDs
- School Counselors – 4 PDs
- School Social Worker and Psychs – 2 PDs
- High Schools – 3 PDs; 2 more waiting to be scheduled
- Middle Schools – 3 PDs
- CCCs
- Student Services Staff
- ELL and Migrant Services

Also scheduled:

- School Police Officers
- School Board Members
- Nurses
- Transportation
- Possibly school secretaries (especially in elementary schools)



What can we as adults do to keep our transgender and gender non-conforming students safe?

USD 500 has established guidelines for supporting our transgender and gender non-conforming in order to keep them safe and provide school administrators with action steps for providing a safe, caring and inclusive school culture.





More Specifics about KCK Guidelines

- **Privacy**

All persons, including students, have a right to privacy. This includes the right to keep private one's transgender or gender non-conforming presentation at school.

School personnel will not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status or gender non-conforming presentation to others, including parents and other school personnel, unless legally required to do so.





More Specifics about KCK Guidelines

- **Privacy (continued)**

Transgender and gender non-conforming students have the right to express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information.

****IMPORTANT:*** When contacting the parent or guardian of transgender or gender non-conforming student, school personnel should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the gender assigned at birth.





More Specifics about KCK Guidelines

Official Record

The district is required to maintain a mandatory permanent pupil record (“official record”) that includes a student’s legal name and legal gender. The district will change a student’s official record to reflect a change in legal name or legal gender when made pursuant to a court order.

Take steps to avoid disclosure of confidential information when using the legal name is required by law (i.e. standardized testing)



More Specifics about KCK Guidelines

- **Official Record (continued)**

School records that are not permanent official records may be amended to reflect the student's preferred name and gender identity.

Student Information Systems

The record of a student in the student information system (SILK) should be modified to prevent disclosure of confidential information and ensure that school personnel use a student's preferred name and pronouns.





More Specifics about KCK Guidelines

Names /Pronouns

Student has the right to be address by the name and pronoun that corresponds with the student's gender identity. The intentional and persistent refusal to respect a student's gender identity is a violation of these guidelines.

Restroom Accessibility, Locker Room Accessibility, P.E. Classes, Interscholastic Competitive Sports Teams

These accommodations will be outlined in the student's individual transition or support plan





More Specifics about KCK Guidelines

- **Gender Non-Conforming and Transgender students should have a Gender Transition & Gender Support Plan**

Who should be involved in developing this plan?

student

parent (if possible)

school counselor

administrator


**(There may be other personnel involved
depending on the student's situation)**





Focus on Professional Development of Others Outside of the District

Professional Development sessions we have created and presented in conference s and university setting since April 2016:

- 
- Woodard, D.J. & Beech, S (2016, October) *Meeting the needs of our transgender and gender nonconforming students*. Presentation delivered to a group of UMKC administrators in training; their supervisors; their instructors; and school counseling interns, UMKC, Kansas City, MO
 - Woodard, DJ & Beech, S. (2016, November) *Creating equity for transgender and gender non-conforming youth through policy change and professional development*. Presentation delivered at the Missouri School Counselor Association Convention. Osage Beach, MO.
 - Woodard, DJ & Beech, S. (2017, March) *Creating equity for transgender and gender non-conforming youth through policy change and professional development*. Presentation delivered at the Kansas Counseling Association Convention, Manhattan, KS.
 - Woodard, DJ & Beech, S. (2017, June) *Working with Gender Non-Conforming and Transgender Youth: Training and Policy Development* Presentation delivered at the Kansas School Counseling Camp, Manhattan, KS.
 - Woodard, D.J. & Beech, S. (July, 2017). *Creating equity for transgender and gender non-conforming youth through policy change and professional development*. Presentation delivered at the ASCA National Conference, Denver, CO.



Focus on Professional Development of Others Outside of the District

Professional Development sessions we have created and will be presenting at conference settings and other school districts:

Woodard, DJ & Beech, S. (2017, October) *Creating equity for transgender and gender non-conforming youth through policy change and professional development: One year later..* Presentation to be delivered at the Missouri School Counselor Association convention. Osage Beach, MO.

Local District PD: Missouri



Question and Feedback Form


Please complete the feedback form at your table.

We appreciate your feedback!





Thanks for being here!




We are grateful for the time that you have taken time to learn more about this very important topic! Our students and families appreciate you!



Focus on Resources

NBSA



2016 Transgender Students in Schools:
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers
for Public School Boards and Staff

Version 7.0/Updated 11.18.16

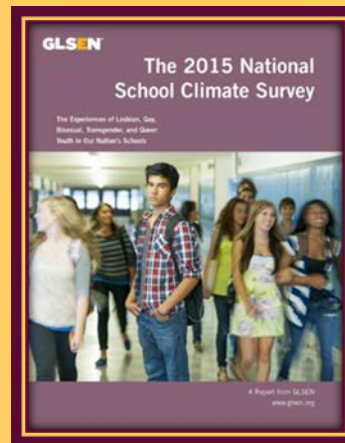
© National School Boards Association, 2016. All rights reserved.

<https://www.nsba.org/nsba-faqs-transgender-students-schools>

Focus on Resources

GLSEN

<http://www.glsen.org/article/2015-national-school-climate-survey>



[GLSEN\GLSEN 2015 National School Climate Survey \(NSCS\) - Full Report.pdf](#)

[GLSEN\Kansas State Snapshot - NSCS.pdf](#)



References & Resources

2011 Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org/education

GLSEN, www.glsen.org; StoryCorps.

GLSEN, *“Harsh Realities: The Experiences of Transgender Youth in Our Nation’s Schools,”* 2009,

<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Harsh%20Realities.pdf>

GLSEN, *2013 National Climate Survey*, retrieved from www.glsen.org, 2013.

GLSEN, *2015 National Climate Survey*, retrieved from www.glsen.org, 2015.

Kosciw, J. G., Greytak, E. A., Giga, N. M., Villenas, C. & Danischewski, D. J. (2016). *The 2015 National School Climate Survey: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth in our nation’s schools.* New York: GLSEN.

Human Rights Campaign, *Glossary of terms*, retrieved from

<http://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>



More References & Resources

Human Rights Campaign, “*Schools in Transition*,” retrieved from <http://www.hrc.org/resources/schools-in-transition-a-guide-for-supporting-transgender-students-in-k-12-s>

Human Rights Campaign, <http://www.welcomingschools.org/>

National Center for Transgender Equality, “*Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey, Executive Summary*,” 2011.

http://www.thetaskforce.org/static_html/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_full.pdf

2016 Transgender Students in Schools, “Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for Public School Boards and Staff”. Version 7.0/Updated 11.18.16. © National School Boards Association, 2016. All rights reserved. Retrieved from <https://www.nsba.org/nsba-faqs-transgender-students-schools>



More References & Resources

GLSEN, *"Harsh Realities: The Experiences of Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools,"* 2009,
<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Harsh%20Realities.pdf>

GLSEN, *2013 National Climate Survey*, retrieved from
www.glsen.org, 2013.

Human Rights Campaign, *Glossary of terms*, retrieved from
<http://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>



More References & Resources

You Tube Videos

Jazz Jennings

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt_wLU_EB2w,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2JdPNAsaTs>,

Mom, I'm Not a Girl: Raising a Transgender Child

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Si5kAnLyKeg&feature=youtu.be>

“Hir”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRLSgPQG0c4>





More References & Resources

You Tube Videos

A Mother Stands Up for Her Child, And All Transgender Children

https://youtu.be/mkHx_2dpEbw

Raising Ryland

<https://youtu.be/fcD5NOlalQo>

Eric Maison and his daughter Corey

<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/father-daughter-transition-mother-son-46265450>

Sam's Story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyZPI4VVnM>

If I were a Toy: Smythes Toys

<https://www.facebook.com/smythstoyssuperstores/videos/10154282132718964>

