



Practices and Procedures

A student discloses they are transgender and have a preferred pronoun they would like to use.

Or a student discloses they are non-binary and prefer to use the pronoun they.

***Non-Binary: a term people use to describe genders that don't fall into the binary (male or female gender roles)**



The Goal?

To support the student and family (parents).

The short answer ...

Do I have to disclose this to parents?
Legally... NO.

UNLESS you can articulate that the student is in danger. (i.e. suicidal/hurting themselves)

A student's disclosure of their preferred pronoun alone does not rise to the level of a student being in danger.

But remember our goal. So how do we move through this process?

Disclosing Preferred Name and Pronoun

- **Q:** If a student tells me to please use the student's preferred name and/or pronoun, do I have to have parent *consent* before doing so?
- **A:** No. Nothing in the law requires a school official to obtain consent from a parent prior to using a preferred name or pronoun when addressing a student. **HOWEVER, as an administrator, you should always encourage students to involve their parents. See next slide for suggested verbiage.**
- **Q:** If student tells me to please use the student's preferred name and/or pronoun, do I have to *disclose** to parents? (*Separate and apart from getting consent, this question is about disclosure)
- **A:** No. Nothing in the law requires a school official to disclose to parents that a student has requested a preferred name and/or pronoun at school. **HOWEVER, as an administrator, you should make sure students understand that if parents are not aware of the student's transgender status, it is likely that they will find out eventually--sometimes by accident--if all school staff and friends are using a preferred name. Also, students need to understand that a request for teachers and staff to use the preferred name/pronoun is going to need to be made to all teachers and staff, as the student's records will continue to show the legal name unless and until the preferred name is added to MyStudent.**

Try These Responses

- ❖ “Do your parents know?”
- ❖ (If no) “Is there a reason you haven’t told them?”
- ❖ (If “I’m scared” “I don’t think they’ll support me” “They’re super religious and they don’t really believe transgender is a thing” “I’m pretty sure they’ll hate me...”), try:
 - “I’ve found it’s always best when parents are on board, and we can work as a team to support you at school.”
 - “I’ve found that transgender students have a lot to figure out at school, like a different name, pronoun, use of facilities, and it’s always helpful to have a parent support you and the school through these questions.”
 - “Either I or another faculty member you trust can sit with you as you call your parents if you’d like.”

Preferred Name and Pronoun in MyStudent

- **Q:** If a student requests that the student's preferred name and identified gender be changed in MyStudent, do I need parental consent?
- **A:** Yes. But please help students understand the reason: A change in MyStudent will be accessible to parents through the Parent Portal and could "out" a student. Also, class rolls will show the preferred name, not the legal name, so if a teacher or a substitute--unaware of the student's legal name--communicates with parents using the student's preferred name, it would also result in inadvertently "outing" the student. **If a student is not prepared to disclose to parents his/her/their gender identity, MyStudent cannot be changed.**

Parents' Directives v. Student's Directives

- **Q:** If a student asks to be called by a preferred name and pronoun, but the parent contacts me and directs me NOT to use any name other than the student's legal name and legal pronoun, what do I do?
- **A: Unless the student is 18, comply with the parent's wishes. But please explain (gently) to the student that because the student is a minor, the school has to comply with the explicitly stated wishes of the parents.**
- **Q:** What if one parent is supportive of the student's preferred name and the other parent is not, and telling me to use only the legal name?
- **A: If parents are still together, let the parents know that in the best interest of the student, you will default to the wishes of the parent who supports the student's gender identity and that this is a family matter that needs to be worked out between them. If parents are divorced, refer to court documents first to determine which parent, if any, has educational decision-making authority. If not specified, do the same as you would with married parents.**

If Parents Ask...

- **Q:** If a parent asks directly if the parent's student has said anything about his/her/their gender identity, and I know the student does not want parents to know yet, what do I say?
- **A:** You do not lie. Suggested responses could include: You know, you should really talk to your student about all this. These are complicated issues for kids.

Supportive Parents

- **Q:** What do I say when a parent is the one to tell me the student is transgender and would like to be called by a preferred name/pronoun?
- **A: Invite the parent to come in and sit down to go over a host of issues that will likely come up for the student.** Begin with an explanation of the preferred name field in MyStudent, and how that preferred name will appear on class roles, but the legal name will still be visible to all staff who have access to the demographics page in MyStudent. Explain who those staff are. Explain what documents will maintain the student's legal name, including state tests. Discuss a plan for state testing. Explain that you will have to manually change all non-legal documents, such as yearbook, honor roll, student ID to reflect the preferred name and then be sure to do that. If requests from parents are complicated or unusual, PAUSE, call Jamie, and then get back to the parent.

Locker Rooms/Bathrooms/Overnight Trips

- Q: If a student wants to use the facilities consistent with the student's gender identity and/or sleep in rooms with other students consistent with the student's gender identity, what do I do?
- A: **Pause, get as much information as you can about the student and the situation**, the privacy of the facilities, whether the student has friends that will be going on the overnight trip, and tell the parent/student you will get back to them. **CALL Jamie!**

DO NOT SAY "NO, NEVER!" OR "YES, ALWAYS!"

- A district team will come and conduct a survey of the facility to create a plan for locker room use.
- These are sensitive and highly fact-specific situations and our district handles these requests on a case-by-case basis, taking in consideration all the facts and circumstances.

Remember!

Slow down!

Get the facts! Know the request.

Never say, Yes! Always! Or No! Never!