

Brunswick County Schools

Guidance for Preferred Name/Preferred Pronouns

PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

SENATE BILL 49

Update 9/8/23-Guidance will be modified as updates are available.

Background

Brunswick County Schools strives to create an equitable learning environment for all students using a comprehensive system of support for academic and character-focused teaching. The district acknowledges the unique needs of every learner as our schools work to provide educational programming based on the needs of all of our students. Through student support services, parent engagement and community partnerships, the district fosters an inclusive learning environment that recognizes the value of all students in our community of learners. Brunswick County Schools utilizes student names and pronouns that align with the gender at birth. When a student is requesting acknowledgement by a name and pronoun that differs from the birth gender and the educational record, parent consent in writing must be obtained by school personnel prior to honoring the student's request. *If parent/guardian consent is not on record at the school, staff must use the child's birth given name and gender identification.*

Legislation

"§ 115C-76.45. Notifications of student physical and mental health.

- (a) The governing body of a public school unit shall adopt procedures to notify a parent of the following:
- (1) At the beginning of each school year, notice of each health care service offered at his or her child's school and the means for the parent to provide consent for any specific service. A parent's consent to a health care service does not waive the parent's right to access his or her child's educational records or health records or to be notified of changes in his or her child's services or monitoring.
 - (2) At the beginning of each school year, procedures to exercise the parental remedies provided by G.S. 115C-76.60.
 - (3) Prior to administration to students in kindergarten through third grade, a copy of any student well-being questionnaire or health screening form and the means for the parent to consent to the use of the questionnaire or form for his or her child.
 - (4) Prior to or contemporaneous with changes, notice of changes in services or monitoring related to his or her child's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for that child.
 - (5) Prior to any changes in the name or pronoun used for a student in school records or by school personnel, notice to the parent of the change. **[This is part of current BCS procedures. Changes to names and/or pronouns are NOT implemented without the formal/signed consent of the legal parent/guardian.]**
- (b) In accordance with the right of parents provided in Chapter 114A of the General Statutes, the procedures shall include a requirement that school personnel do one or both of the following: **[These are both current BCS procedures.]**
- (1) Encourage a child to discuss issues related to the child's well-being with his or her parent.
 - (2) Facilitate discussion of the issue with the child's parents.
- (c) The procedures shall not prohibit parents from accessing any of their child's education and health records created, maintained, or used by the public school unit, except as follows:
- (1) As limited by G.S. 114A-10(6)a.
 - (2) When a reasonably prudent person would believe that disclosure would result in the child becoming an abused juvenile or neglected juvenile, as those terms are defined in G.S. 7B-101.

District Process

Step 1: When a student is requesting acknowledgement by a name and pronoun that differs from the birth gender and the educational record, contact the School Counselor.

Step 2: The School Counselor will conference with the student and gather required information related to the request/referral from the teacher or other school staff. The School Counselor will confirm if the parent is aware of the student's request.

If the parent **IS** aware:

- The School Counselor will contact the parent and initiate the preferred name procedure using the [Student Preferred Name Authorization Form](#).
- The procedure requires parent permission to make a change to the educational record.

If the parent **IS NOT** aware:

- The School Counselor will encourage the student to speak with his/her parent(s) regarding the preferred name/preferred pronoun.
- The School Counselor will offer to schedule a meeting with the student and parent to discuss the preferred name request.
- If the student opts out, staff must utilize the birth name and gender. The student should be informed of this requirement.

Step 3: The School Counselor will notify administration and teachers of the amendment to the student's educational record.

Legal Requirement

If parent consent is not on record at the school, staff must use the student name and pronoun that aligns with the gender at birth.

School and District Contacts for Assistance

School Level Support: [BCS Student Services Staff](#)

- School Counselors
- School Psychologists
- Behavior Specialists
- Social Workers

District Level Support:

- Melissa Quinlan, Executive Director Student Services/Exceptional Children
 - mquinlan@bcswan.net
- Meredith Lloyd, Student Services Supervisor
 - meredith_lloyd@bcswan.net