



TEN Guiding Principles

What is the purpose of these Guiding Principles? This document is meant primarily to provide a guiding framework for our organization. It can also be used to guide efforts toward institutional change in educational environments. Although the primary focus of this organization is to provide mutual aid among and support for trans educators and staff, we aim to work in solidarity with trans students in PK-12.

A note on language: Throughout this document, we use the word “trans” as an imperfect and incomplete word to broadly describe all those who do not fit neatly into genders that are defined by the law and/or medicine. In the way we think about “trans,” we include people who think of themselves as trans, transgender, transsexual, non-binary, genderqueer, muxe, bakla, winkte, and/or other words to describe gender outside of male/female in languages that do not translate easily into English.

I. We believe in our complex experience and

knowledge as trans people and as professionals in the field of education.

We demand that our professional colleagues work to educate themselves about trans knowledge and experience, with meaningful attention to the knowledge of trans people of color. We believe all trans people of all ages and experiences can and should be treated with respect, within and beyond schools, as valuable members of our communities.

II. We believe in active solidarity that prioritizes the emotional and physical wellbeing of trans people in educational environments.

We seek meaningful, supportive, and sustained relationships with our colleagues who do not identify as trans, and organizations who want to be connected to our

communities. These relationships must not exploit our or our students' emotional or intellectual work, but treat it with a sense of reciprocity, respect, and care.

III. We believe in comprehensive access to resources that support trans educators as workers.

We demand full-spectrum, comprehensive, trans-competent health care and strategic, high-leverage legal protections that enable all trans workers in schools to practice full self-determination of all gender identities and expressions.

IV. We believe in building educational communities that support self-determination and resist rigid and unchanging categories of personhood.

We demand recognition and intellectual engagement with the roles of history, culture, language, and power in shaping mainstream understandings of trans lives. We demand an end to ways that institutions restrict access to trans-specific support and care based on institutional definitions of transness. Rather, we believe that trans-specific supports should be provided to anyone who sees themselves as trans. Where possible, we commit to working in active solidarity with other marginalized communities fighting for self-determination.

V. We believe in the meaningful inclusion of trans people in teacher education programs as a prerequisite to transforming the broader field of PK-12 education.

We demand that teacher education and development programs actively recruit, hire, and continually support qualified trans faculty for tenure-track positions, particularly those that are multiply marginalized. These efforts will inform program-wide curricula and instruction. We additionally demand that teacher education programs

actively recruit, enroll, and continually support trans students.

VI. We believe in creative pedagogy across all subject areas, drawing on powerful legacies of trans cultural contributions.

We demand an end to scripted curricula so that children and youth will have time and resources to play and create from their own imaginations. We support rigorous education in all subject areas, including science and mathematics. We especially encourage opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, including explorations of art, literature, poetry, music, theater, and fashion, and knowledge of the histories of these art forms wherever possible. These histories will pay careful attention to local and diverse artists across race, age, profession, and more. We demand that art and imagination be treated as central to self-determination and the necessary work of imagining more curious and creative worlds.

VII. We believe that ending white supremacy,

anti-Blackness, and settler colonialism is necessary for trans freedom.

We demand education and professional development for all teachers that engage with the ways that binary gender, Eurocentric thought, anti-Blackness, settler colonialism, and racism are all interconnected. We demand that trans educators of color be fully supported in sharing their understandings of gender, trans life, and leadership, in order to promote new practices of learning and community. The TEN Core Collective is committed to maintaining a people of color majority in leadership.

VIII. We believe in transformative justice.

Simply having trans-inclusive policies and curricula - without changing the gendered and racialized structures of schooling -- is not enough. We demand that efforts to improve conditions for trans people in schools do not reinforce or expand the school-to-prison pipeline. Suspension, expulsion, and other punitive measures are not acceptable solutions to bullying and harassment. We demand relational and reparative approaches to addressing conflict, such as skillful mediation and therapeutic support.

IX. We believe in public education as a right and a responsibility.

We resist the privatization of education that reduces human learning to a commodity with a price tag. We also resist placing the primary responsibility of social justice education on non-profit and private organizations. We believe that as trans justice is a public responsibility, public schools bear responsibility for trans justice in education. We demand generous funding for public schools and for trans-competent curricula that directly benefit trans communities. We demand opportunities to step into our roles as community leaders and elders with responsibilities to pass on our knowledge to colleagues and students.

© 2019 TRANS EDUCATORS
NETWORK

Founded in California, with
members from around the
world.

info@transeducators.com

INFO

[Home](#)

[Mission](#)

[Resources](#)

[Core Collective](#)

ACTION

[Join Us](#)

