

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the components of a school accommodation plan for transgender and gender non-conforming students in the Coventry Public Schools. This policy is adopted to comply with regulations of the Commissioner of the RI Department of Education (200-RICR-30-10-1).

Philosophy

All students are entitled to participate in Coventry Public Schools' programs in a safe, supportive, and non-discriminatory environment.

Glossary

Gender Non-Conforming is a term that describes a person whose gender expression differs from stereotypic expectations. This includes individuals who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both genders. Other terms that can have similar meanings include "gender variant", "gender expansive", or "gender atypical".

Transgender is a term that describes a person whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with their assigned sex at birth.

Policy

Coordination of School Accommodations

1. The school and staff shall accept a student's statement regarding gender identity when the assertion is consistent and uniform. There may be times when a student requests an accommodation even though the student's behavior does not consistently and uniformly assert a gender identify because the student fears discrimination or violence.
2. When there is a request for accommodations from a gender non-conforming or transgender student or their parent(s)/guardian(s) if the student is under the age of eighteen, the principal shall convene a team, which shall include the student, parent(s)/guardian(s) if the student is under the age of eighteen, other qualified staff or other individuals selected by the principal with input by the student. Where inclusion of the parent/guardian may carry a risk for the student, the principal may seek the Superintendent's authorization to exclude the parent/guardian from this team.
3. The team shall issue a signed and dated written accommodations plan, with a date for review, which address one or more of the area listed below. The plan shall be reviewed annually. The Principal shall maintain the plan and contact the appropriate staff when a student is transitioning from one grade to another and/or a school. Nothing prohibits the team, with the Superintendent's permission, from addressing matters other than those listed below to promote the goal of establishing a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory school environment for all students.
 - A. Use of Name and Gender in School and on School Records: The student's official record shall reflect a change in legal name or gender when there is documentation that such a change has been made pursuant to a court order or through amendment of state or federally issued identification documents. The team may decide that the school may use the name and gender preferred by the student on other school documents and records. The team may also decide that the student may be addressed by the name and gender pronoun preferred by the student.
 - B. Confidentiality and Privacy: Under the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), only those school personnel with a legitimate educational need may have access to a student's records or the information contained within those records. In situations where school personnel are required to use or to report a student's legal name or gender (e.g., standardized

testing), the team may adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information. The team may develop a plan to address the confidentiality of the student's transgender or gender non-conforming status that works for both the student and the school.

- C. Discipline and Exclusion: Transgender and gender non-conforming students shall not be disciplined or excluded from school activities for appearing or behaving in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity or that does not conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity. The team may not adjust the Standards for Student Behavior.
- D. Dress Code Policy: Coventry Public Schools has a Dress Code Policy that shall be followed. The accommodations team shall not adjust the dress code policy, but shall reinforce, if necessary, that the Dress Code Policy shall be enforced in an equitable manner for all students.
- E. School Facilities: All students are entitled to have access to restrooms and locker rooms so that they may comfortably and fully engage in their school programs and activities. As such, all students shall have access to both a private restroom (where available) and changing areas (where available) and sex-segregated group restrooms (where available) and changing areas (where available). The team shall consider all ramifications of allowing access to restrooms and locker rooms, with the understanding that transgender and gender non-conforming students may be allowed to use facilities aligned to their gender identity.
- F. Participation in School Programs: The team shall make accommodations regarding participation in school programs with the understanding that transgender and gender non-conforming students may be allowed to participate in school programs and events in a manner consistent with their gender identity. The only exception to participation is in regard to participation in interscholastic sports, where the policy of the RI Interscholastic League shall prevail. The team may make accommodations to protect the privacy of students.
- G. School Resources: The team shall make available necessary resources to students, including, but not limited to, mental health services, medical services, academic support, educational materials, and safety plans.
- H. Education and Training: To further the goals of this policy, developmentally-appropriate education and training regarding transgender and gender non-conforming students shall be delivered as necessary through one or more components of the health curriculum, anti-bullying curriculum, student leadership training, staff professional development, and/or other similar natural opportunities.

References

- Coventry Public Schools Policy Manual
- Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students, RI Department of Education, June 2016.
- 200-RICR-30-10-1 (Title 200, RI Board of Education, Chapter 30, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Subchapter 10, Civil Rights)

First Reading: May 16, 2018

Second Reading: May 24, 2018

Approved: May 24, 2018