



Students

7:10-API1 Administrative Procedure – Student Gender Support

This Administrative Procedure implements Board Policy 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities) and Board Policy 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment). The School District is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all students, in a manner which allows them to progress academically, socially and developmentally. The purpose of this guidance is to support transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming students and to address common questions and concerns. This guidance should be interpreted consistent with the goals of reducing stigmatization that may arise and ensuring the integration of and equal access for transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming students in educational programs and activities. It should be stressed that the needs of all students must be assessed on a case-by-case basis and that this guidance cannot anticipate every situation that might occur. Questions and concerns that arise should be brought immediately to the attention of the building Principal or other administrator.

When a student or parent/guardian contacts a school staff member concerning administration of these procedures, an administrator will meet with the student and his/her parents to complete a gender support plan (7:10 AP1-E1 *Exhibit-Student Gender Support Plan*). This plan creates shared understandings about ways in which the student's authentic gender will be accounted for and supported at school. A Support Team will be designated for the student, which shall include the student and his/her parents. The Support Team will meet and communicate periodically as the need arises.

Definitions

"Gender-based discrimination" is a form of sex discrimination, refers to differential treatment or harassment of a student based on the student's sex, including gender identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes, that results in the denial or limitation of education services, benefits, or opportunities. Conduct may constitute gender-based discrimination regardless of the actual or perceived sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of the persons experiencing or engaging in the conduct.

"Sex assigned at birth" and "assigned sex" refer to the gender designation listed on a student's original birth certificate.

"Gender expression" refers to external cues that a student uses to represent or communicate his/her gender to others, such as behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms, or body characteristics.

"Gender identity" refers to a student's internal sense of gender, which may be different from his/her assigned sex, and which is consistently and uniformly asserted, or for which there is other evidence that the gender identity is sincerely held as part of the student's core identity.

"Gender Support Team" or "Support Team" refers to a team of School District personnel who are designated to support students who are transgender, in the process of gender transition or are otherwise gender non-conforming. This team shall also include the student and the student's parents/guardians.



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“Non-binary” describes an individual whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female, including those who identify as a gender other than male or female, as more than one gender, or as no gender.

“Transgender” describes an individual whose gender identity is different from the individual’s sex assigned at birth. An individual can express or assert a transgender gender identity in a variety of ways. Medical treatments or procedures are not considered a prerequisite for one’s recognition as transgender. For purposes of this procedure, a transgender student is a student who consistently and uniformly asserts a gender identity different from the student’s sex assigned at birth, or for which there is documented legal or medical evidence that the student’s gender identity is sincerely held as part of the student’s core identity.

“Intersex” is a term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive and/or sexual anatomy that does not seem to fit the typical, binary definitions of female or male. Intersex conditions are not always discernable at birth or the awareness of internal anatomy present at birth may not be known to the person until puberty, if it is known at all. A derogatory term previously used for intersex individuals is hermaphrodite.

“LGBTQ+” is a commonly used acronym referring to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer community. The plus acknowledges that there are additional identities within the community. Other iterations include LGBTQQA (adding Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic).

“Misgendering” is when a person intentionally or accidentally uses the incorrect name or pronouns to refer to a person. Intentional and/or persistent misgendering is a form of bullying and harassment.

“Gender transition” is the process whereby people may change their gender expression, bodies, and/or identity documents to match their gender identity. Transition can be **social** (changing gender expression, using facilities, using a different name/pronouns), **medical** (hormones and/or surgeries), and/or **legal** (changing name/gender marker on identity documents), and is different for every individual. It is common for gender transition to be an ongoing process and is unique to each person.

“Gender stereotypes” are stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity, including expectations of how boys or girls represent or communicate one’s gender to others, such as behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, mannerisms, or body characteristics.

“Gender nonconforming or gender expansive” are one’s gender expression or gender identity that does not conform to traditional, societal, or stereotyped expectations based on the sex assigned at birth. Gender expansive individuals may identify as male, female, some combination of both, or neither.

“Gender pronouns” are the set of words used to refer to someone without using their name. Common examples include, but are not limited to, “she/her/hers,” “he/him/his,” “they/them/theirs,” and “ze/zir/zirs.”

“Gender support plan” is a document that may be used to create a shared understanding about the way in which a student’s gender identity will be accounted for and supported at school.



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“Facilities” refers to facilities and accommodations used by students at school or during school-sponsored activities and trips, and include, but are not limited to, restrooms, locker rooms, and overnight facilities.

Common Needs for Transgender, Non-binary, or Gender Non-conforming Students; Accommodations and Supports

The goal of an accommodation is to allow a transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming student to equally participate in educational and extracurricular opportunities. Determining appropriate accommodations must be made on a case-by-case basis depending upon the needs expressed by the student.

The gender support team that will identify accommodations for a specific student. Those accommodations may be documented in a gender support plan or other written document.

This following list of possible accommodation considerations is not exhaustive, and each student’s request must be managed on a case-by-case basis. A particular student may not be interested in an accommodation for each item listed.

1. Gender transition
2. Names and gender pronouns.
3. School student records
4. Student privacy and confidentiality
5. Access to gender-segregated areas, e.g., locker rooms and restrooms
6. Sports and physical education classes
7. Dress codes
8. Gender segregation in other activities, e.g., class discussions and field trips (including any overnight school trips)
9. Communication with a new school about gender-specific accommodations upon transfer or graduation

Confidentiality and School Records

The School District will accept a written request from a parent/guardian or student age 18 or older to change a student’s name and gender designation on student records prepared and maintained by the School District unless the School District is otherwise required by law to use the student’s assigned sex and legal name. Records that shall be amended include the student’s transcript and diploma. The School District will maintain the student’s original birth certificate in unaltered form consistent with the *Illinois Missing Children Records Act*. School personnel shall address the student by a name and pronoun that correspond to the student’s gender identity.

A student’s transgender status will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to any District employees, students, or others unless allowed by state and federal laws governing the release of student record information. School personnel can be informed of a student’s transgender status on a ‘need to know’ basis in the sole discretion of school personnel. Students have the right to openly discuss and express their gender identity and expression, and to decide when, with whom and how much information to share.



Students**Restrooms**

Students shall have access to restrooms consistent with their gender identity. If a student desires increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, a school administrator shall make every effort to provide the student with reasonable access to an alternative restroom such as a single stall restroom or the nurse's office restroom.

Locker Room and Changing Facilities

The use of locker rooms by transgender students will be assessed on a case-by-case basis with input from the student, the student's family, school personnel and other members of the student's Support Team. The goal is to maximize the student's social integration and equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and athletic events, ensuring the student's safety and comfort, and minimizing the stigmatization of the student. In most cases, transgender students will have access to the locker room that corresponds to their gender identity consistently asserted at school and any measures for privacy will be arranged with the student, the student's parent and school personnel. Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided with a reasonable alternative changing area, such as the use of a private area (*e.g.*, a nearby restroom stall with a door), or a separate changing schedule. Any alternative arrangement will be provided in a way that protects the student's ability to keep his/her transgender status private. No student will be required to use a locker room that conflicts with his/her gender identity.

Dress Codes/Attire

All students shall be permitted to wear gender-affirming clothing to school, including at school-sponsored functions such as dances and graduation.

Extracurricular and Course Accessibility

Transgender students are allowed to participate with their gender-identified peers in all School District sponsored extracurricular, club, and athletic activities and educational courses.

Illinois High School Association Activities

Participation in competitive sports or activities governed by the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) will be determined in accordance with IHSA rules and bylaws.

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