

Policy Title: Gender Support and Inclusion Policy for Transgender, Gender-Diverse, and Transitioning Students
Barrington Public Schools

I. Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that the Barrington School Department complies with state and federal regulations and provides a safe and supportive learning environment for all students, including transgender, gender-diverse, and transitioning students. This policy aims to:

- Foster an inclusive and discrimination-free educational environment for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- Ensure compliance with state and federal laws regarding bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
- Promote the integration of transgender and gender-diverse students into the educational community while respecting their privacy.
- Enhance communication between educators and parents/guardians to support students' educational development and well-being.
- Provide processes and structures to support student communication with families. It is in the best interest of students and families to work together around gender identity. Students who have strong working relationships with their families are at decreased risk for self-harm. The school will make every effort to support students in engaging in communication with their parents or guardians.

Protocols

II. Definitions

Bullying: Any form of harassment or discrimination, including physical or emotional harm, based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or any other distinguishing characteristic.

Gender Expression: How a person represents gender to others, including behavior, clothing, hairstyles, and mannerisms.

Gender Identity: A person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their gender may or may not align with their assigned sex at birth.

Gender Diverse: Individuals whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, including those who identify outside traditional gender categories.

Risk: A licensed school mental health provider will work with the school team to determine risk. School staff should work closely with the student to assess the degree to which, if any, the family will be involved in the process and must consider the health, well-being, and safety of the transitioning student. Safety risks include threats to a student's physical and mental health or well-being, including but not limited to threats of homelessness, suicidal ideation resulting from potential rejection from family, physical abuse, verbal abuse, etc. <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/pep14-lgbtkids.pdf>.

Sexual Orientation: A person's romantic or sexual attraction to people of the same or opposite gender or multiple genders.

Secondary Team: student, school counselor, social worker or psychologist, administrator, and the parent or guardian when the student is ready

Elementary Team: student, parent or guardian , social worker or school counselor, and administrator

Transgender: An umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity or expression differs from their assigned sex at birth.

Transition: The process through which an individual changes their gender presentation or identification.

III. Protocols for Students Who Identify as Transitioning, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse Acceptance of Gender Identity:

- The school shall accept a student's assertion of their gender identity based on a consistent assertion or other evidence that it is sincerely held. Note: Sometimes, a student may opt to not assert consistently and uniformly their gender identity because of the threat of discrimination or violence, or for other reasons.
- Elementary and secondary schools shall work with transitioning students and their families to create a supportive environment.

A. Elementary School Students: If school staff believe that a gender identity issue is presenting itself and creating challenges for a student at school, or if a student or parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student indicates an intention on behalf of the student, the school should make every effort to work with the student and the child's parents. Where the student has expressed an intention to transition, the school should meet with the family to prepare for a formal gender transition at school and put in place measures for supporting the child and creating a sensitive, supportive environment.

B. Secondary School Students: If school staff believe that a gender identity issue is presenting itself and creating challenges for a student at school, or if the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student indicates an intention, the school should make every effort to work with the student. Generally, notification to a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) about their gender identity, expression, or transition is unnecessary, as they are already aware and supportive. However, some transgender students do not want their parents to know about their transgender status. These situations must be addressed on a case-by-case basis and require schools to balance the goal of supporting the student with the desire that parents be informed about their children. In these circumstances, the school administration will inform the superintendent. If the superintendent believes additional steps may be needed, the superintendent will guide the team. If the school licensed mental health provider determines that notifying the family carries risks for the student, it should work closely with the student to assess the degree to which, if any, the family will be involved in the process and must consider the age, health, well-being, and safety of the student.

Name and Pronouns:

- Official school records shall reflect the student's chosen name even if they have yet to change it legally.
- Students shall be addressed by school staff using the name and pronouns corresponding to their gender identity.
- Students are not required to obtain a legal name or gender change for this recognition.

Official School Records:

- If not legally required, the school shall use the name and affirmed gender of the student on official records and documents.
- Legal name and gender changes are required only on records following applicable law.
- Practices shall be adopted to prevent inadvertent disclosure of confidential information when legally required to use a student's legal name or gender.

Dress Codes:

- Students have the right to dress according to their gender identity within the parameters of the dress code.
- Dress codes shall be enforced equally for all students, regardless of gender identity.

Restroom, Locker Room, and Changing Facilities:

- Transgender and gender-diverse students shall have access to facilities aligning with their gender identity.
- No student shall be required to use facilities conflicting with their gender identity.
- Reasonable alternative arrangements must be provided for any students seeking increased privacy.

Physical Education and Athletics:

- Students may participate in sex-segregated physical education and athletic activities consistent with their gender identity following the Rhode Island Interscholastic League Guidelines.
- Guidance from the Rhode Island Interscholastic League regarding gender identity participation shall be provided.

Other Gender-Based Activities:

- Students shall be permitted to participate in activities according to their gender identity.
- Voluntary requests for single-occupancy accommodations shall be honored to protect the privacy of any student who requires it.

Discipline:

- Students shall not be disciplined or excluded for expressing their gender identity or deviating from gender stereotypes.

Safety Plan:

- Bullying or harassment claims shall be documented and addressed according to the district's Harassment Policy.
- Effective measures shall be taken to end harassment based on gender identity, gender diversity, or gender transition.

IV. Other Issues

A. School Records of Former Students:

- Former students' names and gender changes on records shall be handled similarly to current students.

B. Education and Training:

- Education and training about gender diversity shall be incorporated into the curriculum at developmentally appropriate levels and staff development.

C. Communication with the School Community:

- School policies and materials shall include gender identity/expression.
- The school community shall be informed about state and federal laws regarding transgender and gender-diverse students.

V. Support Plan

- A support plan will be developed with the child and the support team
- If the student is elementary-aged, the parents will be immediately involved
- At the secondary level, the support team will determine if there are safety concerns in reporting to parents. The ultimate goal is to include the families in the process. This may take several meetings. If safety cannot be guaranteed, the student's decision will not be revealed to the family.
- When there are safety concerns, the Superintendent will be notified through receipt of the safety plan.
- For students over 18, the student decides who is notified, including their family members. Their confidentiality will be respected.
- The plan shall be monitored, and follow-up actions will be taken to ensure effectiveness.
- The plan will not include any medical or physical transition support outside school. The school will not advise on medical or surgical transition.

VI. Timeline

This policy shall be implemented according to the following timeline:

- Initial Planning Meeting
- Training for School Staff
- Follow-up Meeting

This policy aims to promote inclusion, respect, and equal treatment for all students, regardless of gender identity or expression. The Barrington School Department is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for every student.

[Signature lines for relevant school personnel and date]

VII. References

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (1974).
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.
- Dear Colleague Letter: Transgender Students (May 13, 2016).
- Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students, Rhode Island Department of Education (March 2016).

BARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 GENDER SUPPORT PLAN
 CONFIDENTIAL

This document aims to create a shared understanding of how the student’s authentic gender will be accounted for and supported at school. School staff, caregivers, and the student should work together to complete this document.

Barrington Public Schools Today’s Date _____
 Student Chosen Name _____ Legal Name _____
 Student’s Gender _____ Assigned Sex at Birth _____ Grade Level _____
 Date of Birth _____ Sibling(s)/Grade(s) _____
 Meeting Participants:

PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Are parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the student aware and supportive of their child’s gender status?
 ___ Yes ___ No

If not, what considerations must be accounted for in implementing this plan? What strategies will be taken to involve the parents over time?

CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY AND DISCLOSURE

How public or private will information about this student’s gender be (check all that apply)?
 ___ District staff will be aware (Superintendent, Student Support Services, etc.)

Specify the adult staff members:

____ Site level administration will be aware (Principal, Assistant Principal)

Specify the adult staff members:

____ Teachers and/or other school staff will be aware

Specify the adult staff members:

____ Some students are aware of the student's gender

Specify the students:

____ Student is open with others (Adults and peers) about gender

____ Other

(describe): _____

If the student has asserted a degree of privacy, how will a teacher/staff member respond to questions about the student's gender identity?

STUDENT SAFETY

Who will be the student's "go to" adult on campus?

If this person is not available, what should the student do?

What will be the process for periodically checking in with the student and/or family?

What are the expectations if the student feels unsafe and how will the student access help?
During class

In the halls

Other safety concerns

NAMES, PRONOUNS AND STUDENT RECORDS

Chosen Name/gender marker entered into the Student Information System

Chosen Name to be used when referring to the student

Affirmed Pronoun _____

The student's chosen name and gender marker will be reflected in the SIS? _____ Notify
Principal and District Director of Technology.

What adjustments can be made to protect the student's privacy if not?

Who will be the point person for ensuring these adjustments are made and communicated as
needed?

How will the student's privacy be accounted for and maintained in the following situations or
contexts:

During registration

Completing enrollment

With substitute teachers

Standardized tests/College Board

School photos

IEPs/Support plans

Student cumulative file/transcript/College applications_

After-school programs

Taking attendance

Grade Books

Official school-home communication

Unofficial school-home
communication

Outside district personnel or
providers

PA announcements

Yearbook

Student ID/library

If the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are not aware and supportive of the child's gender status, how will school-home communications be handled?

USE OF FACILITIES

Students will use the following restroom(s) on campus.

The student will change clothes in the following place(s)

What are the expectations regarding the use of facilities for any class trips?

What are the expectations regarding rooming for any overnight trips?

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Does the student participate in an after-school program?

What steps are necessary for supporting the student at this program?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Does the student have any siblings at school?

Factors to be considered regarding sibling(s) needs?

SUPPORT PLAN REVIEW

How will this plan be monitored?

What are the specific follow-up or action items emerging from this meeting and who is responsible for them?

Action Item Who? When?

Date/Time of next meeting or check-in

Location _____

TIMELINE

Activity Date Person responsible

Initial Planning Meeting

Training for School Staff

Follow-up Meeting

Superintendent Signature

Student and Team Signatures

Adopted from Gender Spectrum May 2017

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