



To Whom It May Concern,

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago's Gender & Sex Development Program has long been a national leader in supporting schools and transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming youth. Lurie Children's issued a [position statement](#) in support of transgender and gender expansive youth. In addition, in collaboration with others, Lurie Children's issued the attached Model Policy and Administrative Procedure to guide schools as they navigate how to support gender inclusion, something that is important for *all* students. These model procedures do not reflect the official policy or position of any other agency, organization, employer or company.

The intent of the Model Policy and Administrative Procedure is to provide guidance on best practices for school districts on inclusion of transgender, gender nonconforming, and gender nonbinary students that are based on current research. As a hospital focused on serving the needs of children and teens, Lurie Children's goal was to ensure that school is a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space for all students.

The Model Policy does not constitute legal advice, create legal requirements, nor form legal obligations. School districts should consult with their attorney and review the applicable laws to make their own determination of the requirements under applicable law.

If you are interested in using the text from this document for district or school policies, guidelines, or procedures, please contact Jennifer Leininger at JLeininger@luriechildrens.org or 773-303-6056, for permission and support. The Model Policy and Administrative Procedure may only be utilized with the express, written permission of Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago and such permission shall be granted solely for non-commercial purposes.

Sincerely,

The Gender & Sex Development Program
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

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Administrative Procedures for Transgender, Nonbinary, and Gender Nonconforming Students

This Administrative Procedure sets forth the District's protocol for schools to expeditiously address the needs of transgender students, gender expansive students, nonbinary, gender nonconforming students, and students questioning their gender to ensure a safe, affirming, and healthy school environment where every student can learn effectively.

This Administrative Procedure applies to all school activities, school-provided transportation, and school-sponsored events regardless of where they occur.

Definitions

**These alphabetized terms are to provide a shared language and context for the concepts of these Administrative Procedures. Identity is individual and these definitions may vary/may be used differently by each person.

Affirming: Acknowledging and supporting the identity of an individual.

Ally: A person who is not LGBTQ+ but shows support for LGBTQ+ people and promotes equality.

Cisgender/Cis: Term used to describe people whose gender identity corresponds solely with their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Diversity: Refers to the wide range of gender identities, gender roles, and/or gender expressions that exist.

Gender Expression: An individual's characteristics and behaviors such as appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions that are perceived as masculine, feminine, both, or neither.

Gender Identity: A person's internal, deeply-felt sense of being male, female, something in between, or something else. Gender identity is not determined by body parts or sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expansive (Nonconforming/Creative): Gender expressions that fall outside of societal expectations for either male or female.

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Gender Support Coordinators: District staff authorized to coordinate supports for individual transgender students, gender nonconforming students, or students questioning their gender

Gender Support Plan: A document that may be used to create a shared understanding about the ways in which a student's gender identity will be accounted for and supported at school.

Gender Support Team: A team of people, not all of whom must be District staff, convened to support individual transgender students, gender nonconforming students, or students questioning their gender.

Intersex: A general term used for the many ways in which a person can be born with chromosomes, reproductive anatomy, and/or genitalia that do not fit the typical binary expectations of female or male.

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

Misgendering: When a person intentionally or accidentally uses the incorrect name or pronouns to refer to a person. Repeated or intentional misgendering is a form of bullying and harassment.

Non-Binary Gender: A term that reflects gender identities that do not fit within the binary of male and female. Individuals may identify as both genders, neither, or some mixture thereof. Some terms under this umbrella: genderqueer, gender fluid, agender, bigender, etc. Some non-binary folks may use they/them/theirs or other neutral pronouns

Outing: When someone discloses information about another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without that person's knowledge and/or consent. Outing by school officials without a student's consent can violate that student's privacy rights.

Pronouns: A word used to refer to someone without using their name. Common pronouns include, but are not limited to: they/them, she/her, he/him.

Sex Assigned at Birth: Typically, the assignment of "male" or "female" at birth by a medical professional based on visible body parts. This binary assignment does not reflect the natural diversity of bodies or experiences.

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Sexual Orientation: The term for someone's romantic, emotional, physical, and/or sexual attraction to the same or different gender(s). Sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity.

Transgender/Trans: Individuals with a gender identity different than their sex-assigned at birth. Transgender can be used as an umbrella term that encompasses diversity of gender identities and expressions. Being transgender is not dependent on appearance, body parts, or medical procedures.

Transition: The process whereby people may change their gender expression, bodies, and/or identity documents to match their gender identity. Transition can be social, medical, and/or legal and is different for every individual. In children, adolescents, and adults, it is increasingly common for gender transition to be an ongoing process.

Establishment of Gender Support Coordinators and Coordination of Supports

The District Superintendent shall designate Gender Support Coordinators in each of the District's school buildings to coordinate support for transgender students, gender nonconforming students, and students who are questioning their gender. At least one of the Gender Support Coordinators at each school shall be a school social worker or counselor.

Any student, regardless of how they identify, may request to meet with a Gender Support Coordinator to receive support from school or may seek the support of other District staff to implement a Gender Support Plan.

When a student and/or a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) contacts District's staff about support at school, the staff shall notify at least one of the Gender Support Coordinators. Two Gender Support Coordinators will hold a meeting with the student within ten (10) school days of being notified about a request for supports. The two Gender Support Coordinators will ascertain the student's requests and discuss the formation of a Gender Support Team, which may include individuals such as additional support staff, teacher(s), or non-District counselor(s)/therapist(s). A Gender Support Team should only be formed with the participation and agreement of the student, and the student should agree with who is part of their Gender Support Team, including whether their parent(s)/guardian(s) participate.

At the student's request, the Gender Support Coordinators and, if convened, the Gender Support Team will work with the student to complete a Gender Support Plan. The Plan will be maintained in the student's temporary records, not the student's permanent records.

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The District is committed to supporting all transgender students, gender nonconforming students, and students who are questioning their gender. Neither the Gender Support Plan nor a Gender Support Team are required for a student to receive support at school. In instances where there is not a Gender Support Plan or Gender Support Team, the Gender Support Coordinators shall work with the student to identify and coordinate supports. The support available through a Gender Support Plan or otherwise can include steps appropriate to also support siblings and family members of transgender students, gender nonconforming students, and students who are questioning their gender

The Gender Support Coordinator and the Gender Support Team (if one is convened) shall review the support being provided for transgender, gender nonconforming students, and students who are questioning their gender on an annual basis or sooner, if necessary.

Confidentiality

All students have a right to privacy. To ensure the safety and well-being of transgender and gender nonconforming students, District staff shall not disclose a student's transgender identity. Before contacting the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who is transgender or gender nonconforming, District staff should ask the student what name and pronouns they would like school officials to use in communications with their parents. District staff shall not disclose a student's transgender identity, birth name, or sex assigned at birth, including other students or parent(s)/guardian(s) of other students, unless legally required to do so (such as national standardized testing, drivers permit etc.) or if such a disclosure has been authorized by the student. If such a disclosure is necessary, the student shall agree in advance.

A student's disclosure of their transgender identity to District staff and/or other students does not authorize District staff to disclose the student's transgender identity to others, including the student's parents/guardians, except as required by law. However, all students under 18 years old should be aware that their parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to review their student's official records.

Names, Pronouns, and Gender Markers

District staff shall address a student by the name and pronouns that correspond to the student's gender identity. At the beginning of each semester teachers may ask all students how they want to be addressed in class and in communication with their parent/guardian.

Within ten (10) school days of receiving a request from a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) (with the student's consent) or a student who is 18 years or older, the District shall change a student's

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name and/or gender marker in its electronic database and shall communicate the changes to District staff (including updating information provided to substitute teachers).

Within ten (10) school days of receiving a request from a student, regardless of age, or a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) (with the student's consent), the District shall change a student's name and/or gender marker in student technology logins, email systems, student identification cards, non-legal documents such as diplomas and awards, yearbooks, and at events such as graduation. A student may make this request on the Roster Change Form or via a student's Gender Support Plan, if the student has requested one. A student is not required to obtain a court-ordered name change and/or submit medical or psychological documentation as a prerequisite to making this change. In situations where District staff are required by law to use or to report a student's legal name and/or gender marker, such as for purposes of standardized testing, District staff shall adopt practices to avoid inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information.

An intentional and/or persistent refusal by District staff or students to respect a student's gender identity is a violation of Board Policies (ENTER RELEVANT DISTRICT POLICIES).

Restroom and Locker Room Usage

Students shall be allowed use of restrooms and locker rooms that correspond with their gender identity in the same manner that cisgender students are provided with such access. No student shall be required to use an all-gender or secure-access restroom, a nurse's restroom, a privacy partition or curtain, and/or an all-gender locker room because they are transgender, gender non-conforming, or questioning their gender.

Access to restrooms and locker rooms for nonbinary students and students questioning their gender will be determined on a case-by-case basis while providing students with the options that allow for them to feel safest and most included.

Regardless of gender identity, any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy should be provided with reasonable alternative arrangements when requested by a student and/or a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). This may include use of a privacy partition or curtain, provision to use a nearby all-gender or secure-access restroom, and/or a nurse's restroom.

Physical Education, IHSA [or IESA] Sports, Intramural Sports, Clubs, and School Events

All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes, intramural sports, clubs, and school events in a manner that corresponds with their gender identity.

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Students may enroll in physical education classes that correspond with their gender identity, physical education classes that correspond with their sex assigned at birth, or physical education classes that are not gender-specific.

The student's Gender Support Coordinators and, if convened, Gender Support Team shall work with the student to determine the student's placement. With the agreement of the student, they may engage the physical education staff.

As a member of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA), the District will follow the **IHSA Policy and School Recommendations for Transgender Participation** for all IHSA sports.

[As a member of the Illinois Elementary Association (IESA), the District will follow the **IESA Policy and School Recommendations for Transgender Participation** for all IESA sports.]

Overnight School Trips

No student shall be denied the right to participate in an overnight field trip because the student is transgender, gender nonconforming, or questioning their gender. Students shall be allowed to room with other students who share their gender identity or where they feel safest and most included. Accommodations on overnight trips for nonbinary students and students questioning their gender will be determined on a case-by-case basis with an emphasis on providing students with the options that allow for them to feel safest and most included. No student should be forced to room by themselves because they are transgender, gender nonconforming, or questioning their gender.

The Gender Support Coordinators and, if convened, Gender Support Team shall work with the student to determine the accommodations that will be provided based on the particular circumstances of the trip and shall notify the student of such accommodations in advance of the trip. With the agreement of the student, the Gender Support Coordinators may engage the District staff supervising the trip. Overnight accommodations shall be arranged and provided in a manner that respects the student's desired level of confidentiality. Schools shall not notify parents of other students about a trans or gender nonconforming student's housing accommodations.

District staff shall work with any student, regardless of gender identity, to address concerns regarding inclusion or safety and develop a plan for participation that addresses the student's concerns.

Dress Code

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A student whose gender expression is different from societal expectations based on the student's sex assigned at birth shall not be considered disruptive of the educational process or in interference with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate. All students shall be permitted to wear gender-affirming clothing to school, including at school events such as dances and graduation.

The District may not adopt a dress code that restricts students' clothing or appearance on the basis of gender, including dress codes for regular school days as well as school events.

Records

All written records related to a student's meetings concerning their gender identity with any Gender Support Coordinator or Gender Support Team will be kept in a temporary file that shall be maintained by their Gender Support Coordinators. The file will only be accessible to District staff that the student has authorized to review the file; the student will provide this authorization in advance. All written records related to a student's gender transition shall be maintained in a temporary file, not as part of their permanent record.

Discrimination & Harassment

No student shall be denied equal access to education on the basis of their gender identity or gender expression. Allegations involving violations of this Administrative Procedure shall be reported in the manner consistent with all applicable board policies. Policies prohibiting harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex include harassment based on gender identity and expression.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

The District is dedicated to representing and celebrating diverse gender identities throughout the school culture and curriculum. All District staff shall use a gender-affirming approach, which is a framework used to create environments in which all students are able to identify and express their gender and achieve healthy development, as well as social, emotional, and academic success. This approach includes affirming students' gender identities, being flexible during gender transition processes, and being conscious of using gendered-language.

District staff shall create inclusive lessons so that all students see themselves reflected in the curriculum. District staff are encouraged to develop age-appropriate lessons for students about gender diversity and acceptance whether or not they are aware of transgender or gender nonconforming students in their classes. However, an individual student's gender transition or personal gender history should never be the subject of a class lesson unless specifically requested by the student.

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Health and sex education shall be inclusive of diverse gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations.

School libraries shall also include accurate information on gender diversity, as well as gender-affirming children's books, young adult fiction, fiction, non-fiction, and multimedia.

As a general matter, District staff are discouraged from separating students by gender and shall evaluate all practices that divide students on the basis of gender. Whenever students are separated by gender in school activities or are subject to otherwise lawful gender-specific practices, students shall be permitted to participate in such activities in accordance with their gender identity and/or in ways that make them feel safest and most included. A clear strategy to support the student will be developed in partnership with the student in advance of the activities and may be included in a student's Gender Support Plan.

Training

The District shall provide in-person and in-depth training on this Administrative Procedure and the social, emotional, and academic support of transgender and gender nonconforming students as follows:

- To all staff at the beginning of the school year following the adoption of this Administrative Procedure;
- To all new District employees within 180 days of their hire; and
- To Gender Support Coordinators on an annual basis.

The content of all such trainings shall be medically accurate, evidence-based, and reflect current best practices.

Online Accessibility/Publication

The District shall make this Administrative Procedure and the names and contact information for the Gender Support Coordinators available on its website and provide this information to all District staff at least once each school year via email or otherwise. The District shall include a reference to the Procedure in the student and staff handbooks.

Additional resources and examples of school policies and gender support plans may be found on the Lurie Children's Hospital website:

www.luriechildrens.org/genderresources

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