

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE MENOMONIE AREA

411.2-Rule

GENDER SUPPORT PLAN FOR STUDENTS

PURPOSE:

The School District of the Menomonie Area purpose is to foster inclusive and welcoming learning environments that are free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression (including transgender and gender nonconforming students). Additionally, to facilitate compliance with district policy, and local, state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination, harassment and bullying; to provide professional development to school staff regarding gender identity issues; and to create safe and supportive learning and working environments.

For purposes of these guidelines, a transgender individual is an individual who consistently asserts a gender identity or gender expression at school that is different from the gender assigned at birth. This involves more than a casual declaration of gender identity or expression but does not require proof of a formal evaluation and diagnosis. Since individual circumstances, needs, programs, facilities and resources may differ, administrators and school staff are expected to consider the needs of the individual on a case-by-case basis.

These guidelines are intended to be a resource that is compliant with district policies, local, state and federal laws. They are not intended to anticipate every possible situation that may occur.

PROCESS:

The following process should be used on a case-by-case basis to address the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming students:

A transgender or gender nonconforming student is encouraged to contact a member of the Student Services team to address any concerns, needs, or requests. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of transgender or gender nonconforming students may also initiate contact with the school counselor, principal, or other administrator.

The member of the Student Services team will schedule a meeting to discuss the student's needs and, with the consent of the student, develop a specific Student Support Plan to address these needs.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and others (those individuals determined to have a need to know by District Administration, such as counselor, nurse, and teachers) shall be included in this meeting dependent upon the needs of the individual, if possible, and when the student's safety is not jeopardized.

Some transgender and gender nonconforming students are not "open" at home for reasons that may include safety concerns or lack of acceptance. School personnel should speak with the student first to obtain the student's consent to discuss a student's gender nonconformity or transgender status with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). To the fullest extent appropriate under applicable law, the District will take the following approach in cases in which the student does not consent to discussion of their transgender status with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s): the student will be advised that the District highly encourages the participation of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) in the development of a Student Support Plan.

In a case where a student is not yet able to self-advocate, the request to respect and affirm a student's identity likely will come from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

At least annually (or more often as reasonably requested by the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s)), the Support Team should review the student's circumstances to determine whether existing arrangements related to the student's gender identity, gender transition, or transgender status are meeting his/her educational needs and ensuring that the student has access and opportunity to participate in the District's education programs and activities.

Administrators and staff shall respect the right of an individual to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity. A court ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student need not change the student's official records.

If the student has an IEP or 504 Plan, the provisions in these plans should be taken into consideration in developing a plan for addressing transgender issues. Additionally, If the parties are uncertain or disagree regarding elements to be included in the plan, the principal/designee shall consult with the District Title IX Compliance Officer before making a final decision regarding the implementation of the provision(s) in question.

A copy of the final plan should be maintained in the school guidance office.

OFFICIAL RECORDS:

Mandatory permanent student records will include the legal/birth name and legal/birth gender when required by law. However, to the extent that the district is not legally required to use a student's legal/birth name and gender on other school records or documents, the school will use the name and gender preferred by the student.

For example, Student ID cards may reflect the student's preferred name.

A student's preferred name can be entered in the student information system using the "Other Name" field.

Upon receipt of a court order or other legal documentation, and/or consistent with any other applicable legal procedures recognized by law, the school/district will change a student's or official record to reflect a change in legal/birth name or gender.

The district recognizes the importance in Student Records and State Law. The district will assist all families and students in their transition, and will follow administrative guidelines when dealing with permanent records. Students wishing to use a preferred name should notify a school counselor and update the correct field on the Student Gender Support Plan. The school counselor will notify appropriate personnel in order to update the necessary information.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS:

Every student has the right to be addressed by a name that corresponds to their gender identification. This concept should also be applied to their preferred pronoun usage. Regardless of an official name change.

The district understands that some students may choose a different name than their "birth" name. In these situations the district **WILL** use that "preferred name" as often as possible. The Student Gender Support Plan will be a guiding document that will assist the counselor(s) in dictating what name should be used in various settings throughout the school day. If a student elects to use a different name and elects to use different

pronouns, communication will be made with the appropriate staff in order to effectively support the student with the desired outcome.

Additional areas of support may include, but are not limited to: Substitute Teachers, School Photos, After School Programming, Lunch Lines, Attendance, Grade Books, Home Communication (Official and Unofficial), Outside District Personnel, Yearbook, Student ID, Official Calls, Posted Lists, School Accounts, and Announcements.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION:

When questions are received from the media or community about issues related to gender identity, including District policy and procedures/guidelines, school staff shall direct parent(s)/guardian(s) and the media to the Title IX Compliance Officer, Director of Student Services, or superintendent.

Protecting the privacy of transgender and gender nonconforming students and employees must be a top priority for the spokesperson and all staff. All student and personnel information shall be kept strictly confidential as required by district policy and applicable privacy laws.

Additionally, the district values its relationships with students, staff, families, and throughout the community. Assisting our students with gender related transitions is vital to the success of our district. Below is list of potentially affected individuals and how the district will individually address each relationship.

Parents - It is vital to the success of a child's transition to have parental support. Creating a positive relationship between district and parents is of the utmost importance. As primary caregivers and guardians, parents will be included in a student's transition as often as possible. When students are not "openly out" to their parents, staff **WILL** work with the student to provide them opportunities and support for talking through that topic with their family. Parents who do not support their child's transition will still be encouraged to assist in the transitional process by counseling staff, but their participation is not required.

Staff - Teachers value diversity and are supportive of student transitions. However, it may be confusing to have students with a "Legal Birth Name" and a "Preferred Name". We encourage our staff to use a student's preferred name as often as possible. Staff are versed in various ways to help aid students who are transitioning and are encouraged to ask students which pronouns they prefer and how they can best be supported in their classroom. Student Advocacy is important in this part of the process.

Students - Any student can expect to be supported and treated safely, fairly, and with care. We will work with all transitioning students and their family to create a Student Gender Support Plan to use as a guiding document throughout the process. All students are encouraged to be kind and to be supportive of one another.

Siblings - Brothers and sisters of students who transition may have a difficult time at school. Student Services Personnel will be available to support these students and their family as needed.

FACILITIES:

Schools may maintain separate restrooms, locker rooms, or changing facilities for male and female students. Access should be allowed based on the gender identity consistently expressed by the student. Any student who is uncomfortable using a shared restroom or locker room regardless of the reason, shall, upon request, be provided with a safe alternative. This may include, for example, addition of a privacy partition or curtain, use of a nearby private restroom or office, or a separate changing schedule. However, staff shall not require or pressure any student/employee to use a separate, nonintegrated space.

The district will work individually with each student to determine which bathroom and/or locker room facility is most appropriate for their gender identification. Some buildings do have gender neutral bathrooms that are available upon request. This will be identified in the student's gender support plan.

STUDENT INTRAMURAL AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Students will be permitted to participate in intramural sports/extracurricular activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity consistently expressed at school; transgender students may be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics consistent with the requirements and policies of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletics Association (WIAA). The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association determines its own rules for interscholastic competitions.

Pursuant to the WIAA Transgender Participation Policy, in order to initiate a request to participate in a sport or on a team which corresponds with the student's gender identity or gender expression and not the sex assigned to the student at birth, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) must notify the building administrator or school counselor in writing that the student is transgender and has a consistent gender identity different from the sex assigned to the student at birth and listed on the student's birth certificate. The written notification must also list the WIAA sport in which the student would like to participate.

The district views extracurricular participation as an integral component to the overall success of a child. Students who are transitioning will be provided every opportunity that non-transitioning students are offered. The district offers a number of sports, clubs, activities, and intramurals and any student who is transitioning is welcome to join any activity of their choice. A list of activities can be found on the website.

DRESS CODES:

Schools may enforce dress codes pursuant school handbooks. For purposes of dress code enforcement, students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity.

STUDENT TRIPS AND OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS:

When a school sponsors an activity that requires overnight accommodations, transgender and gender nonconforming students shall not be denied the right to participate. The District shall consider the goals of maximizing a transgender student's social integration and equal opportunity to participate in overnight activities and athletic trips, ensuring the student's safety and comfort, and minimizing stigmatization of the student. Accommodations will be made on an individual and as needed basis.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

The district will ensure that all personally identifiable and medical information relating to transgender and gender nonconforming students shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable state, local, and

federal privacy laws. Staff will not disclose any information that may reveal a student's transgender status to others, unless legally required to do so or noted in their Student Gender Support Plan.

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL SPECIAL COURSE CONSIDERATIONS:

There may be some courses at Menomonie Middle and High School that may create sensitivity to those students who are transitioning. Students who are transitioning are encouraged to self-advocate and be empowered to face all challenges. However, due to the sensitivity of these courses, transitioning students may be allowed course modifications at the discretion of the school counselor. Consideration among courses will be discussed in the Student Gender Support Plan.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION:

Discrimination, bullying, and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression is prohibited within the district. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all students, including transgender and gender nonconforming students have safe school environments.

The district has a responsibility to all students to ensure their safety and well-being. Therefore, any incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying will be given immediate attention, including investigating the incident, taking appropriate action, and providing students and staff with adequate resources and supports in accordance with School Board Policy 411- Equal Educational Opportunities. Students who are transitioning will be offered the same rights as their non-transitioning peers.

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES:

Students generally should not be grouped on the basis of gender for the purpose of instruction or study but rather on bases such as student proficiency in the area of study, student interests, or educational needs for support, acceleration, or enrichment.

CROSS REF.: 411, [Equal Educational Opportunities](#)

ADOPTED: August 24, 2018