

Walla Walla Public Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

No. P-3211

Page 1 of 4

GENDER-INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

The district nurse or building administrator designee is encouraged to request a meeting with a transgender or gender-expansive student upon the student's enrollment in the district, or in response to a currently enrolled student's change of gender expression or identity. Before contacting a student's parents, the school will consult with the student about the student's preferences regarding family involvement and make every effort to honor those preferences.

The goals of the meeting with the nurse/designee are to:

- develop understanding of that student's individual needs with respect to their gender expression or identity, including any accommodations that the student is requesting or that the district will provide according to Policy 3211 and this procedure and under state and federal law; and
- develop a shared understanding of the student's day-to-day routine within the school so as to foster a relationship and help alleviate any apprehensions the student may have with regard to their attendance at school.

Key Definitions/Terms

- **Assigned sex at birth:** The sex a person was given at birth, usually based on anatomy or chromosomes (e.g., male, female, intersex, etc.).
- **Cisgender:** A term used to describe people whose assigned sex matches their gender identity and/or gender expression (e.g., someone who was assigned female at birth and whose gender identity and/or gender expression is also female).
- **Gender Expansive:** A wider, more flexible range of gender identities or expressions than those typically associated with the binary gender system.
- **Gender Expression:** The external ways in which a person expresses their gender to the world, such as through their behavior, emotions, mannerisms, dress, grooming habits, interests, and activities.
- **Gender Identity:** A person's internal and deeply-felt sense of being female, male, both, non-binary, gender-expansive, or other - regardless of the gender assigned at birth.
- **Transgender:** A term often used to describe a person whose gender identity or expression, or both, are different from those traditionally associated with their sex assigned at birth.
- **Transitioning:** The process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.

Communication and Use of Names and Pronouns

The district nurse/building administrator designee will privately ask any known transgender or gender-expansive student how they would like to be addressed in class, in correspondences to the home, and at conferences with the student's parent/guardian. That information will be included in the electronic student record system along with the student's legal name in order to inform teachers and staff of the name and pronoun by which to address the student.

Walla Walla Public Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

No. P-3211

Page 2 of 4

When appropriate or necessary, this information will be communicated by the district nurse directly with staff who have access to the student to facilitate the use of proper names and pronouns. A student is not required to change their official records or obtain a court-ordered name and/or gender change as a prerequisite to being addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity.

Before communicating with parents of transgender or gender expansive students, it's important to ask the student how school employees should refer to the student when talking with their parents and guardians. The district will not condone the intentional or persistent refusal to respect a student's gender identity or gender expression, or inappropriate release of information regarding a student's transgender or gender-expansive status.

Official Records

The standardized high school transcript is the only official record that requires a student's legal name. School staff should adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of the student's transgender or gender-expansive status. Information listed within official records should maintain the strictest confidentiality. The District will change a student's official records to reflect a change in legal name upon receipt of:

1. Documentation that the student's legal name or gender has been changed pursuant to a court order or through amendment of state or federally-issued identification; or
2. A written, signed statement explaining that the student has exercised a common-law name change and has changed their name for all intents and purposes and that the change has not been made for fraudulent reasons.

Schools may change a student's official gender designation upon parent or student request pursuant to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI's) process found at <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/cedars/pubdocs/2018-19cedarsreportingguidance.pdf>

The school must use the name and gender by which the student identifies on all other records, including but not limited to school identification cards, classroom seating charts, athletic rosters, yearbook entries, diplomas, directory information.

Confidential Health or Educational Information

Information about a student's gender identity, legal name, or assigned sex at birth may constitute confidential medical or educational information. Disclosing this information to other students, their parents, or other third parties may violate privacy laws, such as the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. §1232; 34 C.F.R. Part 99). Therefore, to ensure the safety and well-being of the student, school employees should not disclose a student's transgender or gender-expansive status to others, including the student's parents and/or other school personnel, unless the school is (1) legally required to do so or (2) the student has authorized such disclosure. The district nurse will provide guidance for who receives information related to the student's gender designation.

Walla Walla Public Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

No. P-3211

Page 3 of 4

Restroom Accessibility

Restroom access, as reviewed between the student and nurse/designee, will support student requests that include; the use of a restroom that corresponds to the gender identity they assert at school, a gender neutral facility when available, or other accommodation as identified during the consult.

Locker Room Accessibility

Use of locker rooms by transgender or gender-expansive students will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with the goal of maximizing transgender or gender-expansive student social integration, providing an equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and athletic opportunities and ensuring the student's safety. Reasonable alternatives to locker room conditions for any student who wants additional privacy include, but are not limited to:

- Use of a private area (e.g., nearby restroom stall with a door, an area separated by a curtain, an office in the locker room, or a nearby health office restroom);
- A separate changing schedule (i.e., utilizing the locker room before or after the other students).

When feasible, the school will provide accommodations needed to allow the student to keep their transgender or gender-expansive status private. No student will be required to use a locker room that conflicts with his or her gender identity.

Sports and Physical Education Classes

The District will provide all students, including transgender and gender-expansive students, the opportunity to participate in physical education and athletic programs/opportunities in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity and in accordance with Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) guidelines.

A student may seek review of his or her eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics by working through the Gender Identity Participation procedure set forth by the WIAA.

Dress Codes

The District will allow students to dress in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity and/or gender expression within the parameters of the dress codes adopted at their school site and within the constraints of the District guidelines for dress as they relate to health and safety issues. School dress codes will be gender-neutral and will not restrict a student's clothing choices on the basis of gender.

Other School Activities

In any school activity or other circumstance involving separation by gender (i.e., class discussions, field trips, and overnight trips), on a case-by-case approach, students will be permitted to participate in accordance with the gender identity they assert at school.

Training and Professional Development

The district will designate one person, as noted below, to be the primary contact regarding this policy and procedure relating to transgender or gender expansive students.

Walla Walla Public Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

No. P-3211
Page 4 of 4

District Contact:
Dr. Julie Perron
Director of Equity and Dual Programs
509-526-6789
jperron@wwps.org

The primary contact must participate in at least one mandatory training opportunity offered by OSPI. When possible, the District will conduct staff training and ongoing professional development in an effort to build the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify and respond to harassment and discrimination. The content of such professional development should include, but not be limited to:

- Terms and concepts related to gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity in children and adolescents;
- Appropriate strategies for communicating with students and parents about issues related to gender identity and gender expression, while protecting student privacy;
- Strategies for preventing and intervening in incidents of harassment and discrimination, including bullying and cyber-bullying;
- District and staff responsibilities under applicable laws and district policies regarding harassment, discrimination, gender identity, gender expression issues.

Discrimination and Harassment Complaints

Discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, gender identity, or gender expression are prohibited within the district. It is the responsibility of each school, the District, and all staff to ensure that all students, including transgender and gender-expansive students, have a safe school environment. The scope of this responsibility includes ensuring that any incident of discrimination or harassment is given immediate attention and/or reported to the person designated as the primary contact relating to transgender or gender expansive students. The primary contact will communicate with the district's Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator.

Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on a person's actual or perceived gender identity or expression are to be taken seriously and handled in the same manner as other discrimination and harassment complaints. This includes investigating the incident and taking age and developmentally-appropriate corrective action. Anyone may file a complaint alleging a violation of this policy using the complaint process outlined in the district's Nondiscrimination Procedure 3210P.

The district will share this policy and procedure with students, parents/guardians, employees, and volunteers.

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