



# Guidelines for Supporting Transgender and Non-Binary Students

The Guidelines use “transgender” as an adjective to refer to individuals with a gender identity that differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The Guidelines use “non-binary” as an umbrella adjective to refer to individuals with gender identities outside of the male-female gender binary system, and this encompasses identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, and gender-fluid. The adjectives “transgender” and “non-binary” relate to an individual’s gender identity, which is separate from sex and sexual orientation, and therefore the Guidelines use the term “gender identity” to refer to an individual’s innate sense of their gender. However, some of the policies and laws referenced in these Guidelines define the terms “sex” and/or “sexual orientation” to include an individual’s gender identity, gender expression, and/or transgender status. Therefore, these Guidelines will use the term(s) “sex” and “sexual orientation” when referencing a policy or law that defines the term(s) in this manner, as the policy or law would be applicable to transgender and non-binary students.

Definitions of select terms related to gender identity and gender expression, including those used in these Guidelines, can be found in the Terminology and Definitions section at the end of these Guidelines.

## Purpose

Poudre School District (PSD) strives to fulfill its mission to educate every child, every day in connection with the District vision to support and inspire every child to think, to learn, to care, and to graduate prepared to be successful in a changing world. PSD staff members work to create and sustain welcoming, affirming, inclusive, and supportive educational environments for all students, while recognizing that students holding certain identities have historically been discriminated against in places of public accommodation.

As an educational institution, PSD is considered a place of public accommodation and is prohibited by Colorado law from engaging in discrimination. Discrimination occurs in a place of public accommodation when people are treated differently based on or because of a person’s protected class and when the enforcement or application of a rule, policy, or procedure disproportionately adversely impacts a particular protected class. Protected classes in Colorado include disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, and ancestry.

In addition to this law, PSD is committed to the District policy that no otherwise qualified individual shall be denied access to, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination under, any District program or activity on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, veteran status, age, or disability. Additionally, harassment based on the foregoing protected classifications is a form of unlawful discrimination. District policies [AC](#), [GBAA](#), and [JBB](#) address discrimination in further detail.

These Guidelines were created to clarify how anti-discrimination laws and District policies apply to our transgender and non-binary students based on their gender identity and/or gender expression. To protect students’ legal rights and safety, these Guidelines set out protocols for school and district staff to address the needs of our transgender and non-binary students in various situations. However, these Guidelines do not



anticipate every situation that might occur for our transgender and non-binary students, and the needs of individual students should be assessed on an individual basis.

These Guidelines should be interpreted consistent with the goals of reducing the stigmatization of and improving the educational experiences and outcomes of transgender and non-binary students, maintaining the privacy of all students, and fostering cultural competence and professional development for school staff. Furthermore, these Guidelines support healthy communication between educators and parents/guardians to further the successful educational outcomes and well-being of every student.

## Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Gender Identity and Expression

It is the responsibility of each school and the district to ensure that our transgender and non-binary students have access to an educational environment that is free from discrimination based on their gender identity and/or gender expression. This includes students having access to participate in educational activities, course offerings, athletics, counseling, employment assistance, and extracurricular activities regardless of their gender identity or gender expression.

District Policy [AC](#), Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, states that harassment based on gender identity or gender expression is a form of unlawful discrimination. District Policy [JBB](#), Harassment of Students, defines harassment based on gender identity or gender expression to include unwelcome, hostile, or offensive verbal, written, or physical conduct based on or directed at the characteristics of a student's actual or perceived gender identity or gender expression, such as name-calling and imitating mannerism, and deliberately misusing a transgender student's preferred name, form of address, or gender-related pronoun. Harassment also includes the use of hate speech or drawing, displaying, or posting images or symbols of hate on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event or activity that are reasonably expected to be divisive or demeaning and that express animus against a particular group or individual on the basis of gender identity or gender expression. Policy [JBB](#) specifies that harassment based on gender identity or gender expression is a violation of the policy when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions affecting the student; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of adversely affecting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from District program(s), or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Policy [AC](#) directs all District employees who witness such harassment to take prompt and effective action to stop it and to then report it. The Policy outlines remedial and/or disciplinary actions against those who engage in harassment.

This is in compliance with C.R.S. 24-34-601, which states that, "it is a discriminatory practice and unlawful for a person, directly or indirectly, to refuse, withhold from, or deny to an individual or a group, because of...sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, [or] gender expression... the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of a place of public accommodation." Colorado law defines unlawful harassment as "severe or pervasive conduct that creates an environment that is subjectively and objectively hostile, intimidating, or offensive on the basis of sexual orientation." For use in this context, within 3 C.C.R. 708-1, the definition of "sexual orientation" includes one's transgender status.



This is also in compliance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, which guarantees that, “no person in the U.S. shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The U.S. Department of Education clarified their enforcement authority over discrimination based on gender identity under Title IX as of June 2021. Additionally, Title IX prohibits gender-based harassment, which is defined as unwelcome conduct based on an individual’s actual or perceived gender identity or nonconformity with sex stereotypes.

## Confidentiality and Privacy

Students have a general right to keep their transgender or non-binary status private from other students, parents, or third parties. Information about a student’s transgender status, legal name, or sex assigned at birth may constitute personally identifiable information. Disclosing this information to other students, parents, or third parties may violate privacy laws, such as the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). School personnel should not disclose information that may reveal a student’s transgender or non-binary status to others, including students, parents, or community members, unless legally required to do so or unless the student has authorized such disclosure. Such information existing within a student’s education record may be shared with other school personnel to the extent the school personnel have a legitimate educational interest in knowing the information.

Transgender and non-binary students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how to share private information. PSD supports our students in having autonomy over when and how they come out and to whom. When discussing an individual student’s gender identity at school, school staff will respect the degree to which the student is out. Prior to disclosing any information about a transgender or non-binary student related to their gender identity, staff should work with the student to discuss the manner, time, and message of that disclosure. The school counselor will work with the student in coming out to their family and others, as appropriate, and collaborate with families to promote consistent gender support.

When contacting or communicating with a parent/guardian of a transgender or non-binary student, school staff should use the name and pronouns that the student’s parent/guardian use, unless the student requests otherwise. If a parent/guardian asks a staff member about whether their student uses another name/pronoun at school or has other gender-related questions, the staff member should refer them to the school counselor, who can address questions and concerns that the parent/guardian may have. If a school counselor receives questions from a parent/guardian, they should use their professional judgment to determine how best to follow up with the student and then the parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians have the right under FERPA to view all education records of their student upon request, which would include a student’s *Individual Gender Support Form*. This form is discussed in the Facilitation and Communication of an *Individual Gender Support Form* section of these Guidelines. If a request for student education records is made, staff should forward the request to the Records Department to process.



Intentionally causing distress to a student by disclosing their transgender or non-binary identity may constitute harassment in Colorado law. This is in compliance with 3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.6, which states that prohibited conduct includes, “intentionally causing distress to an individual by disclosing to others the individual’s sexual orientation.” Within 3 C.C.R. 708-1, the definition of “sexual orientation” includes one’s transgender status.

## Name and Pronouns

A student has the right to be addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to the student’s gender identity and gender expression. A court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and official records need not be changed. Staff should use the student’s affirming name whether the name has been legally changed or not, not unlike the common practice of using a nickname by which others refer to the student rather than their legal name.

Transgender and non-binary students may request that their name and/or gender be updated in Synergy by completing a *Name and/or Gender Update Request Form* from their school counselor, which includes a parent/guardian signature. This will update the student's Synergy profile that is visible in StudentVUE, ParentVUE, and TeacherVUE to promote clarity of the student's affirming name and gender. The options for gender within Synergy will be based on state reporting requirements and may not be inclusive of every student’s gender identity, and PSD will update the gender options in Synergy as state reporting requirements are updated.

If a student submits a *Name and/or Gender Update Request Form*, applicable staff must ensure that the student’s name is appropriately changed in/on Synergy, cumulative file, IEPs/504 Plans/ALPs, seating charts, rosters, school photos, student identification/library cards, yearbooks, IT accounts (within PSD’s capability), after-school program lists, unofficial school-home communication, official school-home communication, outside district personnel or providers, summons to the office, posted lists, certificates, and anywhere else their name may appear, aside from situations where legal name changes are required. The Official Records section of these Guidelines address the situations where legal name changes are required.

If a student does not submit a *Name and/or Gender Update Request Form* due to a lack of a parent/guardian signature, staff should use the student’s affirming name and pronouns at school and the name and pronouns that the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) use on any communication or document with, in front of, or to the parent(s)/guardian(s), as addressed in the Confidentiality and Privacy section of these Guidelines. In some rare circumstances when a student cannot obtain a parent/guardian signature but is out to their parent(s)/guardian(s), District staff may determine that it is in the best interest of the student to update the name and/or gender in Synergy to support an affirming school environment. If this determination is made, staff will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to making this update.

If a staff member unintentionally deadnames or misgenders a student by using the student’s incorrect name or pronouns, this must be addressed as appropriate for each situation and practice should occur so that the staff member does not repeatedly use the student’s incorrect name or pronouns. If a student unintentionally deadnames or misgenders another student by using the other student’s incorrect name or pronouns, a staff



member should correct the student to promote an environment where students are addressed in an affirming manner.

The deliberate or persistent refusal to respect a student's gender identity or gender expression by intentionally using an incorrect name and/or pronoun is a violation of these Guidelines and may constitute harassment. Policy [JBB](#) specifies that harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression includes deliberately misusing a transgender student's preferred name, form of address, or gender-related pronoun. Toward that end, any District employee who engages in harassment of a student shall be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action, as set forth in Policy [GBAA](#), Harassment of Employees, and any student who engages in harassment of another student shall be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary actions, as set forth in Policy [JBB](#), Harassment of Students.

This is in compliance with 3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.6, which prohibits conduct that constitutes sexual orientation harassment, including deliberately misusing an individual's preferred name, form of address, or gender-related pronoun.

## Official Records

As addressed in the Name and Pronouns section of these Guidelines, to the extent that the school is not legally required to use a student's legal name and gender on school records and documents, the school should use the affirming name and gender identity of the student.

To comply with state reporting requirements, the District shall maintain a permanent student record ("official record") that includes a student's legal name and gender. To help maintain the privacy of transgender and non-binary students who submit a *Name and/or Gender Update Request Form*, the legal name and/or gender is included in their official record as protected information, which can only be viewed by certain District and school staff, not all staff. The district will amend a student's official record to reflect a legal update in first name, middle name, and/or gender upon the receipt of appropriate documentation, such as a court order from the parent/guardian substantiating the legal change.

Staff should alert and prepare students and families that the student's legal name, often referred to as their deadname, will appear on certain documents and communications due to legal reporting requirements. In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or report a transgender or non-binary student's legal name and/or gender, such as during standardized testing, school staff and administrators shall adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information as well as to avoid the student having to write, select, or see their deadname and/or incorrect gender.

## Dress Codes

Students may dress in accordance with the student's gender identity and gender expression within the constraints of the District's dress code policy and the dress code adopted by the school. School staff should



not enforce the district or school's dress code more strictly against transgender and non-binary students than other students. This includes prom and other school events.

This follows the District Policy [JICA](#), Student Dress.

This is in compliance with 3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.8, which states, "Covered entities may prescribe standards of dress or grooming that serve a reasonable business or institutional purpose, provided that they shall not require an individual to dress or groom in a manner inconsistent with the individual's gender identity."

## Restroom Accessibility

All students shall have access to a restroom that corresponds with their gender identity, including transgender and non-binary students. The use of restrooms by transgender and non-binary students should be assessed on an individual basis with the goals of maximizing the student's social integration, ensuring the student's safety and comfort, and minimizing stigmatization of the student. In no case shall any student be required to use a restroom that conflicts with the student's gender identity.

PSD schools and buildings should have male, female, and gender-inclusive restroom options to ensure all students have access to a restroom that aligns with or is inclusive of their gender identity. School administrators should take steps as reasonably possible to designate gender-inclusive restrooms on their campus to ensure access to restrooms for all students while considering the accessibility of the locations. If the location of this facility requires students to travel in ways that could delay their timely arrival to school commitments, an accommodation plan should be developed.

Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, can request to be provided with a reasonable alternative, such as access to a single stall restroom. However, no student shall be required to use a single stall restroom if there is another restroom option that aligns with or is inclusive of their gender identity, unless required as part of a school safety plan or other plan.

This is in compliance with 3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.9, which states, "All covered entities shall allow individuals the use of gender-segregated facilities that are consistent with their gender identity. Gender-segregated facilities include...restrooms."

## Locker Room Accessibility

All students shall have access to a locker room that corresponds with their gender identity, including transgender and non-binary students. The use of locker rooms by transgender and non-binary students should be assessed on an individual basis with the goals of maximizing the student's social integration and equal opportunity to participate in physical education classes and sports, ensuring the student's safety and comfort, and minimizing stigmatization of the student. In no case shall any student be required to use a locker room that conflicts with the student's gender identity.





Relevant PSD schools and buildings should have male, female, and gender-inclusive options for locker rooms to ensure all students have access to a locker room that aligns with or is inclusive of their gender identity. School administrators should take steps as reasonably possible to designate gender-inclusive locker rooms or gender-inclusive restrooms with lockers in them on their campus to ensure access to locker rooms for all students while considering the accessibility of the locations. If the location of this facility requires students to travel in ways that could delay their timely arrival to school commitments, an accommodation plan should be developed.

Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, can request to 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, an area separated by a curtain, or a P.E. instructor's office in the locker room), or with a separate changing schedule (e.g., using the locker room that corresponds to their gender identity before or after other students). However, no student shall be required to use a separate changing area if there is another option that aligns with or is inclusive of their gender identity, unless required as part of a school safety plan or other plan.

This is in compliance with 3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.9, which states, "All covered entities shall allow individuals the use of gender-segregated facilities that are consistent with their gender identity. Gender-segregated facilities include...locker rooms... In gender-segregated facilities where undressing in the presence of others occurs, covered entities shall make reasonable accommodations to allow access consistent with an individual's gender identity."

## Physical Education Classes

Schools are encouraged to create gender-inclusive physical education classes to ensure access to opportunities for students of all gender identities. Schools must follow regulations regarding single-sex classes within Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, including ensuring these classes meet the requirements of allowable sex-segregation and providing a substantially equal gender-inclusive class in the same subject for those who are excluded based on sex.

Participation in gender-segregated physical education classes shall be facilitated in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity. For non-binary students who wish to participate in a class that is segregated along the male-female gender binary that does not have a gender-inclusive alternative option, the school should work with the student to determine the gender with which the student chooses to participate.

This follows the Poudre School District Board Policy [AC](#) – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, which states, "No otherwise qualified student shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any District program or activity on the basis of...sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, [or] gender expression[.]"

This is in compliance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, which guarantees that, "no person in the U.S. shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."



The U.S. Department of Education clarified their enforcement authority over discrimination based on gender identity under Title IX as of June 2021.

## Student-Centered Activities, Clubs, and Programs

Schools and staff are encouraged to reduce or eliminate activities that segregate students by gender. In activities where students are segregated by gender, students should be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity, and staff should work to create options that are inclusive of all gender identities.

Schools are encouraged to create gender-inclusive clubs and programs to ensure access to opportunities for students of all gender identities. Schools must follow regulations regarding single-sex activities within Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, including ensuring these activities meet the requirements of allowable sex-segregation and providing a substantially equal gender-inclusive activity in the same subject for those who are excluded based on sex.

Participation in gender-segregated clubs and programs shall be facilitated in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity. For non-binary students who wish to participate in a club or program that is segregated along the male-female gender binary that does not have a gender-inclusive alternative option, the school should work with the student to determine the gender with which the student chooses to participate.

This follows the Poudre School District Board Policy [AC](#) – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, which states, “No otherwise qualified student shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any District program or activity on the basis of...sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, [or] gender expression[.]”

This is in compliance with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, which guarantees that, “no person in the U.S. shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The U.S. Department of Education clarified their enforcement authority over discrimination based on gender identity under Title IX as of June 2021.

## Athletics and Activities Sanctioned by the Colorado High School Activities Association

Schools will follow the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) Constitution & Bylaws for all students. According to the CHSAA Constitution & Bylaws, the CHSAA “recognizes the right of transgender student-athletes to participate in interscholastic activities free from unlawful discrimination based on sexual orientation. In order to ensure appropriate gender assignment for purposes of athletic eligibility, a transgender student-athlete's home school will perform a confidential evaluation to determine the gender assignment for the prospective student-athlete. The CHSAA will review athletic eligibility decisions based on gender assignment of transgender student-athletes in accordance with its approved policies and appeals procedures.” The CHSAA Bylaw states that the school will be the first point of contact for determining the student's eligibility to participate





in CHSAA sanctioned event(s). The CHSAA states that, “The student and parent(s)/guardian must notify the school in writing that the student has a consistent gender identity different than the student’s gender assigned at birth and list the sanctioned event(s) in which the student would like to participate. The consistent gender identity as stated in the school letter will be the gender recognized for the entirety of the student’s participation in CHSAA athletics/activities.” Therefore, staff should allow a transgender student to participate in accordance with their gender identity. Transgender students may fill out the *Transgender Student-Athlete Statement of Gender Identity for CHSAA* from their school counselor to comply with CHSAA policy.

The CHSAA Constitution & Bylaws also state that, “[gender fluid] students that want to participate in CHSAA athletics and activities must select one gender in which to participate. The process for gender identification and notification to the school is the same as stated [for transgender students].” According to the CHSAA, this also applies to non-binary students. Staff should work with gender fluid and non-binary students who wish to participate in a gender-segregated sport to determine the gender with which the student chooses to participate. Schools will follow the CHSAA’s procedures regarding the recognized gender of each student, which is currently one gender recognized for the entirety of the student’s participation in CHSAA athletics/activities but allows for multiple written requests to be submitted for approval at the local level. Gender fluid and non-binary students may fill out the *Transgender Student-Athlete Statement of Gender Identity for CHSAA* from their school counselor to document their selection of a gender to participate with to comply with CHSAA policy.

## Overnight Activity and Athletic Trips

All students shall have access to an overnight room arrangement that corresponds with their gender identity, including transgender and non-binary students. In the planning of sleeping arrangements during overnight activity and athletic trips, the needs of transgender and non-binary students should be considered on a case-by-case basis with the goals of maximizing the student’s social integration and equal opportunity to participate in overnight activity and athletic trips, ensuring student safety and comfort, and minimizing stigmatization of the student. Under no circumstance should any student be required to share a room with students whose gender identity conflicts with their own.

Staff should involve transgender and non-binary students in identifying safe and supportive peers to room with to help maintain confidentiality and safety when determining room arrangements. In most cases, transgender students who identify as male or female should be assigned to share overnight accommodations with other students who share the student’s gender identity. Staff should work to create inclusive and supportive options for non-binary students who may not identify as male or female when room assignments are based on the male-female gender-binary to ensure that all students are roomed based on their gender identity and not their sex assigned at birth.

Staff should not disclose any student’s transgender or cisgender status to other students or parents/guardians, as addressed in the Confidentiality and Privacy section of these Guidelines. If a student or a student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) express concerns or request that the student not be roomed with someone who is transgender, staff should address that individually and in a manner that ensures that no other student’s protected information is inappropriately shared, such as by stating that the student will be roomed with other students who hold their gender identity.



Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, can request to be provided with a reasonable alternative, which may include a private room. However, no student shall be required to sleep in a private room if there is another rooming option that aligns with or is inclusive of their gender identity, unless required as part of a school safety plan or other plan.

This follows the Poudre School District Board Policy [AC](#) – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, which states, “No otherwise qualified student shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any District program or activity on the basis of...sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, [or] gender expression[.]”

This is in compliance with 3 C.C.R. 708-1, Rule 81.9, which states, “All covered entities shall allow individuals the use of gender-segregated facilities that are consistent with their gender identity. Gender-segregated facilities include...dormitories. In gender-segregated facilities where undressing in the presence of others occurs, covered entities shall make reasonable accommodations to allow access consistent with an individual’s gender identity.”

## Facilitation and Communication of an *Individual Gender Support Form*

While these Guidelines support staff understanding of how to foster an inclusive and affirming environment for transgender and non-binary students, it is important to understand each student’s story, experience, and needs to provide individualized and purposeful support. It is important to keep in mind that each situation, student, and school community are unique. There is no one answer for how to best support all transgender and non-binary students, and therefore PSD has an *Individual Gender Support Form* to intentionally connect these Guidelines to an individual student. Transgender and non-binary students, or the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), can elect to complete an *Individual Gender Support Form* with school staff members, and the school counselor will facilitate that conversation.

An *Individual Gender Support Form* is intended to support a transgender or non-binary student in gaining access to a school environment that is affirming and is free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. Cisgender and gender normative students inherently have access to a gender-affirming school environment based on this held identity, and an *Individual Gender Support Form*’s purpose is to work to ensure this access for students who have historically faced discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender identity and gender expression.

An *Individual Gender Support Form* is helpful in ensuring student knowledge of their rights and what opportunities, supports, or resources are available to them. It is also helpful in documenting individual student supports and communicating these to relevant school staff to ensure access to an affirming school environment. There is no one best way to manage communication with classmates, parents/guardians, and staff. Therefore, it is helpful as the school counselor meets with the student and parents/guardians, if involved, to discuss if others are aware of the student’s gender identity, if they plan to share this information, and whether they require communication or confidentiality from the involved staff member(s).

While a student’s age and grade level should be considered in the planning of appropriate support, it should never be used by the school to justify delaying or denying affirming a student’s gender identity. Schools should



use appropriate materials with students at any grade level to support a student's gender identity while creating greater awareness and space for every child's gender identity and expression. If school staff believe that a student's gender identity or expression is presenting the need for support, it is appropriate for the school counselor to discuss this with the student and then use their professional judgment related to approaching the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

For most elementary-aged and some secondary-aged transgender and non-binary students, their parent(s)/guardian(s) may inform the school of this identity rather than the student themselves. Together, the family and school can then identify appropriate ways for staff to support the student through the facilitation and completion of an *Individual Gender Support Form* by the school counselor.

If a student initiates a conversation about needing support at school related to the student's gender identity or gender expression, the school counselor will encourage and discuss with the student how to inform and/or include the parent(s)/guardian(s) in this process. While it is not unusual for a student's identity to be first communicated at school, PSD recognizes the importance of involving the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to promote congruent and affirming environments through the student's daily experiences. If a student requests not to inform or include their parent(s)/guardian(s) at the time of creating or reviewing an *Individual Gender Support Form*, staff will work with the student to support them in their coming out process, and there are exceptions for student safety. For some transgender and non-binary students, notifying their parent(s)/guardian(s) can carry risks for the student. Other students may not yet be ready to come out to their family for another personal reason. Staff will support students as they navigate the emotional, complex, and personal decision to come out to others and will advocate for the student themselves to be the one who comes out. Regardless of the student's out status with their family, staff will work to ensure that the student is affirmed and free from discrimination and harassment at school as outlined in these Guidelines, and this may include the facilitation of an *Individual Gender Support Form* with the school counselor.

School counselors should review and update a student's *Individual Gender Support Form* as individually necessary, such as when the student changes schools or as new needs arise.

Transgender and non-binary students are encouraged to meet with their school counselor to complete this form in order to ensure clear and consistent knowledge of the student's individual needs for gender support through communication of the form with relevant staff members. However, completion of this form is not required for the student to use an affirming name/pronoun or access the facilities, programs, and activities that align with their gender identity because such access is protected by policy and law, as addressed in these Guidelines. A student's completed *Individual Gender Support Form* should not be added to their cumulative folder to protect their privacy, unless otherwise requested, but the form would be considered as part of the student's education records. As addressed in the Privacy and Confidentiality section of these Guidelines, parents/guardians have the right to view all education records of their student upon request, which would include an *Individual Gender Support Form*. If a request for student education records is made, staff should forward the request to the Records Department to process.



## Resources

Resources specific to these Guidelines will be included and updated on the LGBTQIA+ Support subpage within PSD's Student Services website.

## Terminology and Definitions

Definitions of select terms related to gender identity and gender expression are below. Definitions are from the [Human Rights Campaign](#), [Safe Zone Project](#), and [Merriam-Webster](#).

**Affirm:** Validate, confirm. *Throughout this document, the term “affirm” is used in the context of the name, pronouns, or gender identity that is affirming to the student, meaning the name, pronouns, or gender identity that validates or confirms the student’s internal sense of self.*

**Agender:** A person with no (or very little) connection to the traditional system of gender, no personal alignment with the concepts of either male or female, and/or someone who sees themselves as existing without gender.

**Androgyny:** A gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity.

**Bigender:** A person who fluctuates between traditionally “male” and “female” gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both male and female genders. Or, identifying with either a male or female gender, as well as a third, different gender.

**Biological sex:** A medical term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal, and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as male, female, or intersex. Often referred to as simply “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned at birth.”

**Cisgender:** A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

**Deadname (noun):** The name that a transgender person was given at birth and no longer uses upon transitioning.

**Deadname (verb):** To speak of or address someone by their deadname.

**Gender binary:** A system in which gender is constructed into two strict categories of male or female. Gender identity is expected to align with the sex assigned at birth and gender expressions and roles fit traditional expectations.

**Gender dysphoria:** Clinically significant distress caused when a person’s assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.



Gender-expansive: A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system. Often used as an umbrella term when referring to young people still exploring the possibilities of their gender expression and/or gender identity.

Gender expression: External appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, body characteristics or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

Gender-fluid: A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender identity: One's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither – how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender non-conforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category. While many also identify as transgender, not all gender non-conforming people do.

Gender normative: Someone whose gender presentation, whether by nature or by choice, aligns with society's gender-based expectations.

Genderqueer: Genderqueer people typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity or gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation. People who identify as "genderqueer" may see themselves as being both male and female, neither male nor female, or as falling completely outside these categories.

Gender variant: Someone who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society.

Intersex: Intersex people are born with a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy. There is a wide variety of difference among intersex variations, including differences in genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits.

Misgender: To identify the gender of a person incorrectly, as by using an incorrect label or pronoun.

Mx.: An honorific (e.g., Mr., Ms., Mrs., etc.) that is gender neutral. It is often the option of choice for folks who do not identify within the gender binary. Mx. is pronounced as "mix" or "schwa."

Neopronouns: Pronouns besides the ones most commonly used in a particular language. As one's pronouns are ultimately a reflection of their personal identity, the number and types of (neo)pronouns a person may use is limitless. Examples of neopronoun sets include: xe/xem/xir, ze/zir/zirs, and fae/faer/faers.

Non-binary: An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside of these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do.



Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, or gender-fluid.

Out: Having one's LGBTQ+ sexual orientation or gender identity publicly known.

Outing: Disclosure of another person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status without their prior consent to such disclosures.

Personal pronoun: A pronoun (such as *I*, *you*, or *they*) that expresses a distinction of person.

Queer: A term people often used to express a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or gender-expansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ+ movement.

Questioning: A term used to describe people who are in the process of exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Sex assigned at birth: The sex – male, female, or intersex – that a doctor or midwife uses to describe a child at birth based on their external anatomy.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation.

Transitioning: A series of processes that some transgender people may undergo in order to live more fully as their true gender. This typically includes social transition (such as changing name and pronouns), medical transition (which may include hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries), and legal transition (which may include changing legal name and sex on government identity documents). Transgender people may choose to undergo some, all, or none of these processes.

Two-spirit: An umbrella term traditionally within Native American communities to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both male and female genders.