



# Transgender Student Policy and Guidelines

## AS Johnson High School

Many questions arise for students and school staff when considering the best supports for transgender students. These guidelines are designed to provide direction for our school to address issues that may arise concerning the needs of transgender students. Because this is an evolving area for schools, some of this guidance will undoubtedly change over time.

Schools should be proactive in creating a school culture that respects and values all students and fosters understanding of gender identity within the school community. These guidelines are intended to help ASJ ensure a safe learning environment free of discrimination and harassment, and to promote the educational and social integration of transgender students. They do not anticipate every situation that may occur and the needs of each student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Every student is unique and principals should discuss these issues with students and their families and draw on the experiences and expertise of their colleagues as well as external resources where appropriate.

### Definitions:

1. "Gender Identity" is a person's inner sense of being male or female, regardless of their sex assigned at birth.
2. "Transgender" is a term which describes people whose gender identity or gender expression is different from their assigned sex at birth.
3. "Gender expression" refers to the way a person expresses gender to others in ways that are socially defined as either masculine or feminine, such as through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice or mannerisms.
4. Gender non-conforming people are those whose gender-related identity and/or gender expression do not conform to the social expectations or norms for a person of that sex assigned at birth.
5. The term transgender should not be confused with transvestite (a person who adopts the dress and often the behavior typical of the opposite gender); or transsexual (a person that transitions from one sex to another, through hormone treatment and/or surgery). Here, "sex" is defined as the biological identity of the person.

### Discrimination/Harassment

It is the policy of the Central Quebec School Board and our schools to maintain a safe and supportive learning and educational environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying and free from discrimination on account of actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, or weight.

## **Privacy**

Except as set forth herein, school personnel should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status. Disclosing confidential student information to other employees, students, parents, or other third parties without valid reason may violate privacy laws. Transgender students have the ability, as do all students, to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and decide when, with whom, and how much of their private information to share with others.

Our school should work closely with the student and family in devising an appropriate plan regarding the confidentiality of the student's transgender status that works for both the student and the school. Privacy considerations may also vary with the age of the student.

In some cases, transgender students may feel more supported and safe if other students are aware that they are transgender. In these cases, school staff should work closely with the student, families and other staff members on a plan to inform and educate the student's peers.

## **Official Records**

Each school is required to maintain a permanent pupil record of each student, which includes the legal name of the student as well as the student's biological gender. In addition, schools are required to use a student's legal name and gender on standardized tests and reports to the MEESR.

To the extent that the school is not legally required to use a student's legal name or gender on school records and other documents, the school should use the name and gender preferred by the student.

A student's permanent pupil record should be changed to reflect a change in legal name or gender only upon receipt of documentation that such legal name and/or gender have been changed pursuant to applicable law.

## **Names/Pronouns**

Students should be addressed by school staff by the name and pronoun corresponding to their gender identity that is consistently asserted at school. Students are not required to obtain a court ordered name and/or gender change or to change their pupil personnel records as a prerequisite to being addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity. To the extent possible and consistent with these guidelines, or consistent with the arrangement made with the student and family, school personnel should make efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the student's transgender status.

Student IDs should be issued in the name that reflects a student's gender identity that is consistently asserted at school.

### **Sports and Physical Education**

Transgender students are to be provided the same opportunities to participate in physical education as are all other students. Generally, students should be permitted to participate in physical education and sports in accordance with the student's gender identity that is consistently asserted at school. Participation in competitive athletic activities and contact sports will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

### **Restroom and Locker Room Accessibility**

ASJ aims to support transgender students while also ensuring the safety and comfort of all students. The use of restrooms and locker rooms by transgender students requires schools to consider numerous factors, including, but not limited to: the transgender student's preference; protecting student privacy; maximizing social integration of the transgender student; minimizing stigmatization of the student; ensuring equal opportunity to participate; the student's age; and protecting the safety of the students involved.

A transgender student who expresses a need or desire for increased privacy should be provided with reasonable alternative arrangements. Reasonable alternative arrangements may include the use of a private area, or a separate changing schedule, or use of a single stall restroom. Any alternative arrangement should be provided in a way that protects the student's ability to keep his or her transgender status confidential.

A transgender student should not be required to use a locker room or restroom that conflicts with the student's gender identity.

### **Gender Segregation in Other Areas**

As a general rule, in any other circumstances where students are separated by gender in school activities (i.e. overnight field trips), students should be permitted to participate in accordance with their gender identity consistently asserted at school. Activities that may

involve the need for accommodations to address student privacy concerns will be addressed on a case-by-case basis considering the factors set forth above.

### **Dress Codes**

Schools can enforce dress codes that are adopted by the Governing Board and outlined in the Code of Conduct. Students have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity that is consistently asserted at school, within the constraints of the adopted dress codes.

### **Resources for Transgender or “Transitioning” Students**

Schools have a unique and powerful opportunity to support transgender students, including those going through a gender transition, while providing education to the entire school community. It is not unusual for a child’s desire to transition to first surface at school. If school staff believes that a gender identity issue is presenting itself and creating challenges for the student at school or if a student indicates an intention to transition, the school should make every effort to work with the student and the child’s parents. Where the student indicates an intention to transition, the school should work with the family to prepare for a formal gender transition at school and put in place measures for supporting the child and creating a sensitive supportive environment at school. Toward that end, schools should:

- 1) Make support resources available to student and parents who have additional questions or concerns.
- 2) Develop age-appropriate lessons for students about gender diversity and acceptance:  
and
- 3) Be especially vigilant for any bullying or harassment issues that may arise for transgender students.

Some transgender students do not want their parents to know about their transgender status. These situations must be addresses on a case-by-case basis and require schools to balance the goal of supporting the student with the requirement that parents be kept informed about their children. In these circumstances, the principal, school professional, behavior tech and relevant staff will determine the course to follow.