

# Council Bluffs Community School District

## Gender Identity Equity Guidelines

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The Council Bluffs Community School District prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity. This document sets out guidelines for schools and district staff to address the needs of transgender and gender expansive students, and clarifies how to protect the legal rights and safety of such students. This document does not anticipate every situation that might occur with respect to transgender or gender expansive students, and the needs of each transgender or gender expansive student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the goal is to ensure the safety, comfort, and healthy development of transgender or gender expansive students while maximizing the student's social integration and minimizing stigmatization and harassment of students.

### Definitions

The definitions provided below are not intended to label students but rather to assist in understanding these guidelines and the legal obligations of District staff. Students might or might not use these terms to describe themselves. These terms are ever-changing and evolving with society and the community they represent. It is highly encouraged to educate oneself on these issues further to the level that is necessitated by the situation and student needs.

**Sex** – A set of characteristics associated with reproduction and biology that generally assign individuals into categories of “male” and female.”

**Gender** – A set of cultural constructs describing characteristics that may historically be related to femininity, masculinity, women, men, non-binary people, or social norms.

**Gender Identity** – One's internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or other gender(s)

**Gender Expression** – The physical manifestation of one's gender identity through clothing, hairstyle, voice, body shape, etc. (typically referred to as masculine or feminine). Many transgender people seek to make their gender expression (how they look) match their gender identity (who they are), rather than their sex assigned at birth. Someone with a gender nonconforming gender expression may or may not be transgender.

**Gender Expansive**- youth who did not identify with traditional gender roles but were otherwise not confined to one gender narrative or experience.

**Transgender** –An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. The term transgender is not indicative of gender expression, sexual orientation, hormonal makeup, physical anatomy, or how one is perceived in daily life

**Transition(ing)** – A person's process of developing and assuming a gender expression to match their gender identity. Transition can include: coming out to one's family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgery.

**Gender Fluid** – A changing or “fluid” gender identity.

<http://www.transstudent.org/definitions/>

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/resources-on-gender-expansive-children-and-youth>

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## **Collaborative Planning Process**

The following planning process is initiated upon student request to be considered a transgender or gender expansive individual:

1. Student shares their identity with a trusted administrator, counselor, or school staff member.
2. School counselor, student, student's family, and administrator develop a plan for restroom, locker, pronoun/name use, and other arrangements relevant to the student's school experience..
3. The building administration provides process for the student to report issues of harassment or discomfort.
4. Building administrators or counselors provide professional development and requirements for the school staff members directly involved in the education of that student.

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## **Privacy**

Information about a student's transgender or gender expansive identity status will be considered confidential information that will only be shared with school personnel on a need-to-know basis. Information about a student's transgender identity status also may constitute confidential medical information. School personnel may not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender identity status or gender expansive presentation to others unless legally required to do so or unless the student or the parent or the guardian has authorized such disclosure. The district will not require the student to discuss their identity status with any others. The student and their family may wish to identify a small group or circle of teachers, staff and other students who are aware of the student's transgender or gender expansive status and are trusted allies for the student. This is a group of individuals who when the student has a situation they need to talk about, they can go to them in confidentiality. For transgender or gender expansive students, having this small group of individuals identified can relieve much of the stress and anxiety of being at school.

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## **Official Records**

The district will change a transgender student's official record to reflect a change in name upon receipt of documentation (such as official name changes or written request from parent). The district will change a student's official record to reflect a change in gender upon receipt of documentation from the parent or guardian that such change has been made. In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or to report a transgender or gender expansive student's legal name or gender, such as for purposes of state reporting or the Iowa High School Athletic Association (IHSA) or Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union (IGHSAU), school staff and administrators shall report the legal name or gender. School staff and administrators shall adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information. Within the school, parents should work with an administrator, counselor, teacher or other school personnel. If the family wishes to keep this information

as confidential as possible, they may be directed to the Executive Director of Student and Family Services, Tim Hamilton. He will complete all of the necessary paperwork and records changes. Alternatively, the family may choose to work through school personnel to provide the needed information. All documentation should be sent to the Executive Director of Student and Family Services.

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### **Names/Pronouns**

Students shall be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity, as requested in writing by the student, parent or guardian. Neither a court-ordered name or gender change, nor a change in official student records, is required. The student has authority over how they are to be addressed in the school environment. All employees should respect names and pronouns. Any employee or student who intentionally or persistently refuses to respect the gender identity of a student after notification of the preferred pronoun/name used by the student is in violation of this guideline.

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### **Dress Code**

Transgender and gender expansive students shall be permitted to dress in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity or gender expression. Where dress code requirements do not apply to all students, transgender and gender expansive students should comply with the dress code requirements consistent with the student's gender identity.

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### **Internal and External Social-Emotional Support Resources**

School counselors are available to all students. Students are encouraged to contact their school's designated social-emotional school-based counselors to request support. The Council Bluffs Community School District may coordinate with external counselors and resources as requested by students and families.

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### **Student Access to Programs and Facilities**

#### **Gender-Segregated Activities**

To the extent possible, schools should reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by gender. In situations where students are segregated by gender, such as health education classes or royalty, students will be included in the group that corresponds to the student's gender identity.

#### **Restroom Accessibility**

Students shall have access to the restroom that corresponds to the students' gender identity consistently asserted in the school environment. Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should be provided access to a single stall restroom (including those located in the health or school office areas). Under no circumstances may students be required to use gender-segregated facilities that are inconsistent with their gender identity.

## **Locker Room Accessibility**

The use of locker rooms by transgender and gender expansive students shall be assessed by building administration on a case-by-case 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. Any student who has a need or desire for increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason, should 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, a P.E. instructor's office in the locker room, or a nearby health office restroom), or with a separate changing schedule (e.g., using the locker room that corresponds to the student's gender identity before or after other students). Any alternative arrangement should be provided by building administration in a way that protects the student's ability to keep his or her transgender status confidential. In no case shall a transgender student be required to use a locker room that conflicts with the student's gender identity.

## **Physical Education Classes and Intramural Sports**

Transgender and gender expansive students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in a manner consistent with the student's gender identity.

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### **Interscholastic Competitive Sports Teams**

The Iowa High School Athletic Association and Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union offer the following guidance for transgender student athletes:

#### **Gender Identity:**

The transgender student at an IHSAA or IGHSAU member school who identifies as one gender, despite having been born with differing genitals, shall be allowed to fully compete as his/her identified gender as long as he/she consistently identifies as the same gender at school, home and socially.

#### **Communications and Publications:**

**Pronouns and Name Changes** The preference for the use of masculine, feminine or gender-neutral pronouns should be the choice of the student-athlete. Coaches, administrators and athletes should abide by a transgender student-athlete's name and pronoun preferences, demonstrating respect for the individual and validating the transgender student-athlete's gender identity and expression.

#### **Access to Locker Rooms and Bathrooms:**

Every student-athlete should have access to a locker room, bathroom and shower facilities in a safe, comfortable and convenient environment. When the transgender student-athlete uses a separate locker room space do not use the common locker room as a team meeting space or the only location that important team information is shared. Coaches and team members are strongly encouraged to identify other spaces to conduct team meetings. When member schools are traveling, the student-athletes school representatives should identify safe spaces for transgender student-athletes to have their needs met with regard to changing spaces, restroom accommodations, and meeting spaces.

#### **Overnight Accommodations:**

If a member school requires overnight accommodations, transgender student-athletes should be assigned rooming assignments based on their gender identity, with the recognition that the student who needs extra privacy should be accommodated whenever possible.

**Apparel and Dress Codes:**

All team members should have access to uniforms that are appropriate for their sport. Participants are expected to be in compliance with the uniform regulations of the National Federation of State High School Associations. In cases where the coaches of member schools set dress codes or expectations, coaches should set a gender neutral dress code that is comfortable for all members of the team.

**Confidentiality:**

The privacy of transgender student-athletes is a priority for member schools and the Iowa High School Athletic Association. All medical information must be kept confidential.

<https://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Transgender-Guidelines.pdf>

<https://ighsau.org/about/policies-guidelines/>

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**Legal Guidance for Iowa School Districts**

To access the Iowa Department of Education “Equality for Transgender Students” guidance, go to the Iowa Department of Education:

<https://educateiowa.gov/resources/legal-resources/legal-lessons/equality-transgender-students>

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Questions about Gender Identity Equity Guidelines?

Contact Equity Coordinator Tim Hamilton at 712-328-6423, [thamilton2@cbcsd.org](mailto:thamilton2@cbcsd.org)

Council Bluffs Community School District

300 W. Broadway, Suite 1600

Council Bluffs, IA 51503

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**Council Bluffs Community School District Nondiscrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the Council Bluffs Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, (for employment), national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, (for programs), socioeconomic status (for programs), physical or mental disability, religion, creed, genetic information, ancestry, geographic location, citizenship, political party preference or belief, familial status or any other protected attribute, in its educational programs, activities or employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the school district’s Equity Coordinator, Tim Hamilton, 712-328-6423, [thamilton2@cbcsd.org](mailto:thamilton2@cbcsd.org), 300 W. Broadway, Suite 1600, Council Bluffs, IA 51503.