

FAQ: Supporting Gender Identity and Gender Expression

1. What is the purpose of these guidelines?

The Limestone District School Board (LDSB) is committed to ensuring all students have equitable access to school life. These guidelines help staff understand their responsibilities in creating inclusive, safe, and affirming spaces.

2. Who do these guidelines apply to?

These guidelines apply to all students at LDSB schools, including virtual spaces, school-related events, and activities. They also provide guidance for staff in supporting students' rights and dignity.

3. What does gender identity and gender expression mean?

Gender Identity: A person's internal sense of being a man, woman, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum.

Gender Expression: How a person publicly presents their gender, including clothing, hairstyle, voice, name, and pronouns.

4. Do students need parental consent to change their name or pronouns?

No. Students of any age have the right to choose their name and pronouns, and school staff must respect and use them. Legal documentation is not required for these changes in school records.

5. How should staff handle student names and pronouns?

Staff must use a student's chosen name and pronouns in all interactions. Persistent refusal to do so may constitute discrimination or harassment. Schools should ensure attendance lists and communications reflect chosen names when requested.

6. What are the expectations for gender-inclusive language in schools?

Avoid gendered greetings such as "boys and girls" or "ladies and gentlemen."

Use gender-neutral terms like "students" or "everyone."

Avoid dividing students by gender in activities unless necessary.

7. What are the guidelines for washrooms and changing facilities?

Students may use the washroom or changing facility that aligns with their gender identity.

Single-stall, all-gender washrooms must be available and accessible.

Gendered locker rooms should have private changing spaces for any student who requests them.

Students objecting to sharing a space with a transgender student will be provided with an alternative space; transgender students will not be reassigned.

8. Can transgender and nonbinary students participate in sports?

Yes. Students may play on the team that best aligns with their gender identity. Nonbinary students may choose a team for each sport but cannot play on multiple gendered teams for the same sport in one season.

9. How should staff address bullying or harassment based on gender identity or expression?

- Any harassment or violence must be addressed immediately.
- Use existing Board procedures for resolving issues, such as reporting incidents under AP 376: Student Human Rights Incidents and Complaints.
- Ensure targeted students have access to safe and affirming spaces.

10. How should schools handle overnight field trips?

- Transgender and nonbinary students choose the accommodation that best fits them.
- They will not be reassigned based on another student's discomfort.
- Staff should plan accommodations in advance to ensure inclusivity and safety.

11. How can staff build their capacity to support gender-diverse students?

- Engage in professional development on gender identity and gender expression.
- Foster an inclusive learning environment by incorporating diverse gender representations in the curriculum.
- Model respect and affirmation in daily interactions with students.

12. How can students request accommodations related to gender identity or expression?

Students can make verbal or written requests to a staff member or school administrator. Parental consent is not required, and accommodations should be individualized to best support the student.

For additional resources and support, visit LDSB's website or access local organizations such as the Kingston Community Health Centres Transgender Health Clinic and TransFamily Kingston.

If you have further questions, please contact your school administrator.