

	Lloydminster Catholic School Division – Administrative Procedures	
	AP 309 – Supporting and Respecting Gender Identity and Expression	
Related LCSDF AP's	AP 203 - Family Life Program AP 205 - Controversial Issues AP 321 - Student Information Systems AP 351 - Bullying	
Form(s)		
References:	Deepening the Discussion: Gender and Sexual Diversity, <i>Saskatchewan Ministry of Education 2015</i> SCSBA Student Alliances for Gender and Sexual Diversity – Formation Protocol, 2015 SCSBA Caring for Students and Staff: Creating an Atmosphere of Trust and Respect around Issues of Sexual Orientation SSBA Pastoral Response to Transgender Students LCSDF Board Policy Handbook, Policy 1 Division Foundation of Statements	
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Background

“Our schools share a foundational belief that all children are loved by God, created in God's image, and individually unique. As such, all human beings are inherently sacred and must be treated with dignity and respect. Our schools have a mission to help students grow as children of God in all aspects of their person: physically, academically, socially, emotionally, morally, and spiritually.” (SSBA Pastoral Response to Transgender Students, p.1)

Consistent with its mission and vision, the Board of Trustees of the Lloydminster Catholic School Division (“Board”) is committed to a safe, caring, respectful, inclusive, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all students in accordance with School Board Policy 1 Division Foundational Statements.

To ensure all members of the Division’s school communities work together in an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of all students, this Administrative Procedure (“AP309”) has been approved for the safety, health, and educational needs of all students, regardless of gender identity and/or gender expression.

The Board will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation or discrimination based on a student’s actual or perceived differences, gender identity and/or gender expression. To achieve this goal, the Board requires that its schools and staff and students promote a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe learning environment that respects diversity, and fosters a sense of belonging.

Ministerial Definitions:

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that are considered appropriate for men and/or women.

Gender identity refers to an individual's internal sense of their gender, which may or may not align with their sex assigned at birth and is not visible to others.

Legal name refers to the name that appears on a birth certificate.

Parents refer to parents or guardians, as defined in The Education Act, 1995.

Preferred first name refers to a name that has been identified by a student to be used in place of their legal first name which is more aligned with their gender identity.

Preferred pronoun refers to a pronoun that has been identified by a student that aligns with their gender identity.

Sex is a biological classification based on physical attributes such as sex chromosomes, hormones, internal reproductive structures, and external genitalia. At birth, it is used to identify individuals as male, female, or intersex.

Sexual orientation refers to a person's romantic, psychological, and emotional feelings of attraction towards another person.

Students refers to pupils, as defined in The Education Act, 1995.

School Personnel refers to educators, administrators and support staff employed in schools and divisions as defined in The Education Act, 1995.

Transgender refers to a person whose gender identify (feeling of being either male or female) does not match their physical/anatomical sex.

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education

Rationale

“Every human being has been created by our loving God as a unique person. Every human being is created equal in dignity and human rights. A major part of our Catholic educational tradition is to form our students both in self-awareness of these truths and in respect for all others in accord with these truths.” (SCSBA Caring for Students and Staff: Creating an Atmosphere of Trust and Respect around Issues of Sexual Orientation, Appendix A, p.7)

1. LCSB recognizes that students must feel that they are respected and free to express themselves within a safe and welcoming school environment. AP 309 is intended to support students who wish to change their pronouns and/or preferred first name to align with their gender identity. It recognizes the important role that parents and guardians have in protecting and supporting their children as they grow and develop.

2. AP 309 has been developed to:
 - 2.1. Support and affirm the dignity of all students in every aspect of school life;
 - 2.2. Improve the understanding of the lives of all students and find ways to increase respect for the dignity of each other in ways appropriate to the Catholic school setting;
 - 2.3. Provide training consistent with the Catholic faith for all teachers and other staff with respect to gender identity and/or gender expression; and
 - 2.4. Provide resources consistent with Catholic teaching, to support students who require assistance because of their gender identity and/or gender expression.
3. Given that all students are created in the divine image and likeness and are therefore endowed with an inalienable worth that cannot be violated, circumstances involving gender identity and/or gender expression, as they affect a student, are to be addressed with a high degree of sensitivity, respect, and inclusion, and where required, expertise (in the context of the school's resources).
4. The goal of any reasonable supports offered by a school in this area is to afford dignity and success in learning for a student who has advised the school of their gender identity and/or gender expression needs.
5. Within this context and based on available school resources, staff are committed to creating a student learning environment that is inclusive, flexible, and responsive to the student's needs. To this end, staff may:
 - 5.1. Take into consideration a continuum of supports and services in the context of a reasonable accommodation; and
 - 5.2. Collaborate with families and, if permissible, community support services for accommodation purposes.

Principles

"Jesus Christ came to call his disciples to live within the reign of God. By imitating Christ all Christians are to transform this world into a place where the ideals of respect, individual dignity, mutual support, encouragement in learning and personal growth, faith, hope and love give witness to God's loving presence in our midst "on earth as it is in heaven". Our communities, including our schools, are to take this responsibility seriously that we might all be brothers and sisters in Christ, with one Father in heaven. May the Holy Spirit give us the strength and the courage to live this discipleship. We, the Bishops of Saskatchewan, support the staff and students of our Catholic Schools in living these principles and values for the good and holiness of all in our community of faith."
(SCSBA Caring for Students and Staff: Creating an Atmosphere of Trust and Respect around Issues of Sexual Orientation, Appendix A, p.9)

- All individuals in our schools must be treated with complete respect and acceptance. Sexual orientation must never be used as a basis for discrimination, marginalization, emotional bullying or any other ill treatment.
- All students need to be encouraged to understand the powerful values that underlie Catholic teaching about human sexual relationships. These values taught in a searching atmosphere must be lived in fidelity to Christ.

- It is the responsibility of the staff and school leaders to put a great deal of energy into creating an environment of respect and support in our schools. All students must feel safe and accepted. Any prejudice, discrimination, bullying or inappropriate talk must be dealt with firmly, fairly and in accord with our values of mutual respect and human dignity.
1. Students at all grade levels may need individualized support and guidance with respect to their gender identity and/or gender expression.
 2. A teacher and/or administrator who is approached with a request for assistance, support and/or an accommodation must respond in a timely manner with sensitivity, respect, mercy and compassion.
 3. Since all students have been created in the divine image and likeness, and are therefore endowed with an inalienable worth that cannot be violated, circumstances involving issues with gender identity and/or gender expression as it affects a student shall:
 - 3.1. Be addressed with fairness, sensitivity, respect and inclusion;
 - 3.2. Be addressed in a positive manner by all school personnel;
 - 3.3. Be addressed in a manner where students have reasonable resources available to them without fear of reprisal, when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying and/or violence; and
 - 3.4. Protect student and parental confidentiality to support of the process outlined in AP 309 (subject to circumstances which require disclosure on a need to know basis).
 4. The goal of a reasonable accommodation in this area is to afford dignity and success in learning for a student who has gender identity and/or gender expression needs. To this end, based on available resources, staff may collaborate with families and, with the student and/or families' permission, community support serves to reasonably address student needs and take into consideration a continuum of available reasonable supports and services.

Procedures

"All individuals in our schools must be treated with complete respect and acceptance. Sexual orientation must never be used as a basis for discrimination, marginalization, emotional bullying or any other ill treatment."

And,

"All students need to be encouraged to understand the powerful values that underlie Catholic teaching about human sexual relationships. These values taught in a searching atmosphere must be lived in fidelity to Christ."

(SCSBA Caring for Students and Staff: Creating an Atmosphere of Trust and Respect around Issues of Sexual Orientation, Appendix A, p.8)

The following procedures identify the Division's best practices related to support and/or accommodation for a student experiencing gender identity and/or gender expression needs. Because gender identity and/or gender expression issues are complex, delicate, and highly personal, a parent/guardian, or independent student who works to submit a request based on gender identity and/or gender expression is required to work with school administration on the process for accommodation.

Responsibilities:

1. Division Leadership shall:
 - 1.1. The Deputy Director shall ensure all aspects of Administrative Procedure 309 are clearly communicated to staff, students, and the public.

2. Principals shall:
 - 2.1. Create a school culture that reflects a supportive, inclusive, and respectful learning environment.
 - 2.2. Ensure all staff recognize and ensure the confidentiality of all students' personal information.
 - 2.3. Inform the Deputy Director that a student and/or parent(s) has made a specific request regarding their child's gender identity and/or gender expression needs and consult regarding the procedures.
 - 2.4. Ensure that:
 - 2.4.1. Parents/guardians for students under the age of 16 have submitted a signed authorization form provided by the principal during the initial consultation process; and that the documentation is stored securely according to the Division's records management procedures.
 - 2.4.2. Students over the age of 16 have submitted a signed authorization form provided by the principal and that the documentation is stored securely according to the Division's records management procedures.

3. Teachers of Family Life Program shall:

In alignment with AP 203 Family Life Program, teachers shall inform parents about instruction of sexual health (commencement/completion dates, objectives, scope and sequence of content, resources, and activities) and give them the opportunity to ask questions, get clarification, and express concerns. Parents shall be given the opportunity to opt out of all or part of the Human Sexuality unit. The withdrawal shall be expressed in writing. Respect of all students' personal and family beliefs regarding family life and human sexuality will be the foremost objective. The primary response to a student who raises a controversial issue will be to refer that student to family to clarify personal and family beliefs. Further counsel offered to a student will be considered only with expressed, written parental/guardian consent.

4. School Staff shall:
 - 4.1. Reflect the Division's commitment to respectful learning and working environments.
 - 4.2. Immediately make the school principal aware of any student request made with respect to gender identification and/or gender expression needs.
 - 4.3. Initially respond with sensitivity and compassion to a student's disclosure of their gender identification and/or gender expression needs, and immediately make the school principal aware of the student request.
 - 4.4. Ensure the confidentiality of a student's request is maintained after they have reported it to the principal.
 - 4.5. Work to create a school culture that reflects a supportive, inclusive, and respectful learning environment.

5. Students and/or parents/guardians shall:
 - 5.1. During the early consultation process between the parent(s) and the principal regarding their child's gender identity and expression needs, the principal shall provide the parent(s) with the section "Guidelines for Parents" outlined in the document *SCSBA Caring for Students and Staff: Creating an Atmosphere of Trust and Respect around Issues of Sexual Orientation* for their consideration (Appendix D, p.17).
 - 5.2. Submit their authorization form provided by the principal.
 - 5.3. Work with the Principal on any concerns about failure to use approved name and/or pronouns.

Change of Preferred Name or Pronouns

1. When a student requests that their preferred name, gender identity, and/or gender expression be used, the following conditions shall be completed:
 - 1.1. if the student is under the age of 16, school administration will request parental/guardian consent using a form provided by the principal; or
 - 1.2. if the student is 16 or older, school personnel will gain formal consent using a form provided by the principal.
2. The principal shall:
 - 2.1. Shall inform school staff of the student's preferred first name or pronouns once parental consent is received.
 - 2.2. Inform the Deputy Director regarding completion of the consultation process with the student and parent(s).
3. If a student requests assistance in gaining parental consent a support team consisting of appropriate support, personnel will be established to support the student in developing a plan to speak with their parents.
 - 3.1. The make-up of the support team will be determined by the principal based on the student's individual needs and situation.
 - 3.2. The plan to speak to parents will be created with the student's needs and interests at the centre. The student should be made aware that until authorization is in place, their preferred name and pronouns will not be changed.

Official Records and Student Information

1. When parental authorization has been received, the student's official record will be changed to reflect their preferred name and pronouns. All school forms and records shall be changed to ensure that a student's preferred name and gender markers are current on class lists, timetables, student files, identification cards, cumulative record, etc.
2. Privacy of personal information that either directly or indirectly identifies a student's sex as being different from his or her gender identity will be protected.
3. Principals, in consultation with the Deputy Director, will provide opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge, awareness, skills and attitudes in promoting respect for human rights, respecting diversity, and understanding issues related to gender identity and/or gender expression in relation to the Catholic faith as well as the greater society.
4. Further to the references set out in AP 309, staff will refer any matter that could be a barrier in furthering the understanding to or support of a student requiring gender identity and/or gender

expressing accommodation to the school learning team via the school principal. The school principal, in consultation with the school learning team, specialists, professional staff, and/or parents, will provide appropriate guidance to staff to proceed in addressing these student needs.

5. Educational organizations collect personal information both directly and indirectly about individuals while providing educational services. Educational organizations should take all reasonable steps to protect this personal information from unauthorized uses and disclosures, and to protect the privacy of the individual.