

## QUICK REFERENCE: Supporting Students with Gender Identity

Montgomery County Board of Education [Policy ACA, Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency](#), prohibits discrimination, stigmatization, and bullying based on gender identity, as well as sex, gender, gender expression, and sexual orientation, among other personal characteristics. It is critical that all MCPS staff members recognize and respect matters of gender identity; make all reasonable accommodations in response to student requests regarding gender identity; and protect student privacy and confidentiality. To assist in these efforts, MCPS has developed [Guidelines for Student Gender Identity](#) to achieve these goals. These guidelines cannot anticipate every situation which might occur. Consequently, the needs of each student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis.



| Topic   | Guidance   |
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| MCPS Form 560-80<br><a href="#">Intake Form</a> | This form is used to develop a plan to help support the student while participating in school, activities, and athletics. To ensure that all supports are in place, the form should be filled out with the student, by the counselor or school psychologist. All plans should be evaluated on an ongoing basis and revised as needed. The form must be maintained in a secure location and may not be placed in the student's cumulative or confidential files, and a copy should be forwarded to <a href="#">SWC</a> .  |
| Names and Pronouns                              | School staff members should address students by the name and pronoun corresponding to the gender identity that is consistently asserted at school.   |
| Synergy   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The registrar has edit rights to SYNERGY.</li> <li>• The student's identified name will go into the "Main Name Field" (not the nickname field), this will sync with unofficial documents such as class rosters, emergency cards, and report cards etc.</li> <li>• The Legal Name will be moved to the "Protected Information" tab.</li> <li>• Zoom/Google/Email Accounts sync with SYNERGY every three hours</li> <li>• Contact the HELP Desk for any issues.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>To prevent "outing" a student to their parent/guardian, inform students that the parent view of Synergy and report cards will reflect the identified name/gender.</i></b></p>   |
| Communication                                   | Prior to contacting a student's parent/guardian, school staff should speak with the student to ascertain the level of support from home. This information is also shared on MCPS Form 560-80.  |
| Official School Record<br>Legal Name Changes    | <p>A student's permanent record will be changed to reflect a change in the student's legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation that such legal named and/or gender have been changed. Any of the following documents is evidence of a legal name and/or gender change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Court Order</li> <li>• Birth Certificate/Registration</li> <li>• State or Federal Issue Identification (e.g. driver's license)</li> <li>• Documentation from Physician/Licensed Healthcare Practitioner</li> <li>• Passport/Visa</li> <li>• Baptismal Certificate</li> <li>• Hospital Certificate</li> <li>• Parent/Guardian Affidavit</li> </ul> <p><b><i>When a name and/or gender change has been made to official school records, the school must notify the Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) so that the appropriate notice to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) can be made.</i></b></p> |

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| Legal Gender Changes      | Student self-identification of their gender is sufficient for legal gender changes to MSDE. This is consistent with guidelines regarding gender designation for U.S. Passports, Maryland driver's license, and identification documents.   |
| Dress Code                | Transgender and gender nonconforming students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression, as long as it complies with MCPS dress code. Schools should consider gender-neutral dress codes for class or yearbook photos, honor society ceremonies graduation ceremonies, or dances.   |
| Gender-Separated Areas    | Students are entitled to use a facility consistent with their gender identity and cannot be required to use an alternative arrangement. Alternative arrangements should be used only at the request of a student and in a manner that keeps the student's transgender status confidential.   |
| Gender-Based Activities   | Whenever students are separated by gender in school activities or are subject to an otherwise lawful gender-specific rule, policy, or practice, students must be permitted to participate consistent with their gender identity.   |
| Interscholastic Athletics | Transgender and gender nonconforming student participation in interscholastic athletics is determined in accordance with Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) policies and guidelines. For more information contact MCPS Athletics at 240-740-5650.   |
| Flash Pass                | If needed, schools will allow a transgender or gender nonconforming student to go to a Safe Space (e.g., main office, counselor's office) at any time the student encounters a situation that feels unsafe or uncomfortable.   |
| SAFE Spaces               | Schools will designate specific offices or locations in the school that are deemed <b>Safe Zones</b> where any student, for whatever reason, may go to be free from judgment and to feel comfortable and safe. Schools also should ensure that the staff members who have Safe Zone placards on their doors have received the appropriate training regarding providing inclusive, affirming environments.  |
| Staff Support             | All MCPS employees are protected from any form of discrimination, including actions that are motivated by an invidious intent to target individuals based on their actual or perceived personal characteristics. Staff seeking guidance and supports involving issues of gender identity are encouraged to contact the coordinator in the Department of Compliance and Investigations (DCI) at 240-740-2888.   |
| Bullying and Harassment   | <a href="#">MCPS Board of Education Policy JHF, Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation</a> , sets forth the Board's commitment to an environment that is free of bullying, harassment, or intimidation so that schools are a safe place in which to learn; and <a href="#">MCPS Regulation JHF-RA, Student Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation</a> , provides procedures that address the prohibition of bullying in schools. To report bullying on line click <a href="#">HERE</a> .<br><br>To anonymously report an incident of hate-bias, discrimination, and/or bullying using the <b>Safe Schools Maryland Tip Line</b> , click <a href="#">HERE</a> . |