

# Best Practices for Serving Gender Nonconforming Students

## Eugene School District 4J

Eugene, Oregon

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[PLACEHOLDER FOR INTRODUCTORY LETTER]

DRAFT

## **INTRODUCTION**

Eugene School District 4J believes that all students deserve to be physically and psychologically safe at all times. These guidelines were developed with the intent of supporting all 4J students. They apply to all students, staff and families from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in all 4J schools.

In recent years, 4J schools have seen a growing number of students who exhibit behaviors that do not conform to expectations for students of their gender of physical birth. This has included dressing in clothing that is typically associated with the opposite gender and/or announcing to peers or staff that they identify as a person of the opposite gender. As we create a safe environment for these students, it is reasonable to project an increase in the number of students who “come out.”

These students are among the most at-risk in our school district and elsewhere. Some studies have shown suicide rates of up to eight times the rate for gender-typical students. The 2007 National School Climate Survey conducted by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) found that 87% of transgender students had been verbally harassed in the past year because of their gender expression, more than a quarter had been physically assaulted, and more than half (54%) who were victimized did not report the events to school authorities. These traumatic experiences negatively affected the youth in school as almost half (47%) skipped school at least once in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, their GPAs dropped to an average of 2.5, and, as noted in other studies, many became at-risk for developing depression and suicidal tendencies. The evidence is overwhelming that transgender and gender nonconforming youth need active school support and protection for their physical, mental, and educational well-being. Harassment and bullying very likely contribute to suicide attempts, poor attendance, poor achievement, substance abuse, and a host of other negative outcomes.

There is not a strong research base to determine how many people identify as transgender. Here are a few things that are supported by what little research there is:

1. Students who exhibit gender nonconforming behavior do not necessarily identify as transgender upon reaching adulthood. The three variables that are most predictive are age of onset, intensity, and duration.
2. Students who identify as transgender may not exhibit any gender nonconforming behavior until many years after they first experience feelings of identification. They may not even accept themselves, much less seek acceptance or approval from others.
3. Initial attempts to “come out” may not be obvious to adults. These attempts are sometimes subtle. The student may come out only in a very safe setting with a trusted peer or adult; or may start by exhibiting mild forms of gender nonconforming behavior and then take more steps if there is no negative backlash.

## Guiding Principles

In creating this document, it is the goal of Eugene School District 4J to create a safe and inclusive environment for every student. Equity is a core value of the district and school board. All decisions are guided by this core value. The guiding principles for supporting transgender and gender nonconforming students are:

- **Safety:** The district shall promote physical and psychological safety of students who exhibit gender nonconforming behavior.
- **Honoring Diversity:** The district shall affirm the right of every student to live in safety and be treated respectfully in the gender of identification.

## Chapter I. Definitions

### A. Definitions

*Adverse Action:* Any form of exclusion, intimidation, reprisal, or harassment such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action involving any school-sponsored activity. **This includes** any action or non-action that demonstrates a failure to take steps to prevent or respond appropriately to incidents of harassment directed towards gender nonconforming students.

*Assigned Sex:* A student's legally assigned sex at birth.

*Gender Identity:* How a student identifies one's own gender, or inner sense of being a boy or a girl or somewhere in between these identities, regardless of the student's assigned sex at birth. This includes a student's gender-related identity, appearance, expression, or behavior.

*Gender Expression:* How a student expresses gender identity or the characteristics and behaviors that people use to identify another person's gender. This can include appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, preferred pronouns and social interactions that are perceived as masculine, feminine, or androgynous.

*Gender Nonconforming:* Having gender-related characteristics and/or behaviors that do not conform to stereotypical or traditional expectations; this can include appearance, dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions that are perceived to be androgynous and/or a variation of masculine and feminine expressions.

*Preferred Name:* The name with which a student identifies and prefers others to use. A student may choose to legally change their name to correspond to their gender identity and/or expression. A student may also prefer to use a name that is different from their legal name, without legally changing their name. The expectation is that others refer to the student by their preferred name, rather than their legal name.

*Protected Class:* A group of persons distinguished, or perceived to be distinguished, by race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, source of income or disability.

*Schools:* Includes all public primary, secondary, and charter schools.

*School Community:* Includes, but is not limited to, all students, parents, school employees, contractors, unpaid volunteers, work study students, interns, student teachers, and visitors.

*School Official:* Any employee of Eugene School District 4J.

*Transgender:* An umbrella term used to describe students whose gender expression and/or gender identity is different from their assigned sex at birth, regardless of any gender-related medical or surgical treatment they may or may not have received. This can include transsexual students, transgender students, cross-dressing students, androgynous students, and other students whose appearance or characteristics are perceived to be gender-atypical.

*Transgender Boy (Female-to-Male/FTM):* A student who was assigned the female sex at birth, but identifies as a boy and uses/prefers masculine pronouns.

*Transgender Girl (Male-to-Female/MTF):* A student who was assigned the male sex at birth, but identifies as a girl and uses/prefers feminine pronouns.

*Transition:* The personal process a transgender/transsexual student undergoes to begin to live as their self-identified gender. This may include some or all of the following cultural, legal, and medical adjustments: telling one's family, friends, and/or classmates; changing one's style of dress; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgical procedure.

## **Chapter II. Guidelines for District Response**

### **A. Legal Responsibilities of Staff**

In order to hold a teaching license, Oregon educators are required to demonstrate knowledge of civil rights laws and laws prohibiting discrimination. Teachers and other school district employees need to be aware of anti-discrimination laws:

- To make sure their actions do not violate the civil rights of students, staff, or the public
- To protect the school district from liability
- To protect the employee from personal liability for damages or attorney fees or both.

Oregon law protects persons from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, familial status, or source of income.

Eugene School District 4J policy specifically includes gender identity and expression as a protected class, as gender identity is technically different from sexual orientation or gender.

If a school or school representative has a policy or takes an action that negatively affects someone (including a student, employee, or member of the public) on the basis of one of the protected attributes, unlawful discrimination may exist. Inaction—not taking action and stopping discriminating behavior—rather than action—directly perpetrating discriminating behavior—is what often implicates a district and/or individual educator in a civil rights violation.

## **B. Safety**

Once it comes to the attention of staff that a student is exhibiting gender nonconforming behavior, a proactive approach is required. Staff should assume that the likelihood of harassment is high. It is common for students to experience harassment but not report it. It is recommended that a trusted adult—usually a teacher, counselor, or principal—approach the student and have a private conversation that goes something like this:

***“Thanks for coming to meet with me. First, you are not in trouble. I meet with students for lots of reasons. Here are some things your teachers and I really appreciate about you [name at least 3 things]. You know that our school rules are: ‘Be Respectful; Be Safe; and Be Responsible’ [or whatever applies]. How is that going for you? Are other students and staff treating you with respect? Do you feel safe in our school? [Wait for a response].”***

***[If the student affirms that she or he feels safe, say:] “That’s great. We take pride in having a safe school. Will you let me know if something happens that makes you feel unsafe? [Wait for a response.] [If the student says that he or she feels unsafe, then ask:] “Please tell me. What has happened? I will do my best to help.”***

Do not expect the student to “come out” during this meeting. Do not call attention to the gender nonconforming behavior. The student’s gender nonconforming behavior is not the issue—safety is. Just establish yourself as someone who is there to be supportive. If the student feels supported, it is likely that she or he will start to appear at various times for more support—offering to help, stopping to chat in the hallway, or other ways to let you know they want to continue a relationship. Building this relationship is one of the best possible ways to support the student. Allow the student to come out in his or her own time.

If the student indicates she or he is being harassed, develop a Safety Plan. Refer to Chapter V, page 14, for detail about developing a team and Safety Plan to support the student.

Even if the student indicates he or she is not being harassed, the principal, school counselor, or primary teacher should check in with the student regularly to determine if the student is still safe. If the student indicates that there have been incidents of disrespect, interview the student according to the following protocol:

**Step 1:** If/when a student indicates that other students are **not treating him or her with respect**, Step 1 is to offer empathy. **“Thank you for telling me. I’m sorry this is happening to you.”**

**Step 2:** Ask for specifics: When, where, who, what specifically happened. Be aware that the student may be willing to report being treated poorly, but may be reluctant to give specifics that would “out” him or herself. If this appears to be the case, say, **“Whatever is happening, you have the right to be treated with respect and you have the right to be yourself in our school.”** If the student still does not report, tell the student what you have heard from other students, and repeat that she or he has the right to be him or herself in this school.

**Step 3:** Ask if this is the first time, or have there been other times. How long has it been going on?

**Step 4:** Ask about the potential for retaliation if you were to confront the perpetrator. This could lead into a long conversation about what it would take to keep the student safe.

**Step 5:** If gender nonconforming behavior has been discussed, ask the student if his or her parents know that he or she is being treated disrespectfully at school over this.

**Step 6:** Tell the student, **“The most important thing is to keep you safe. How can we do that? Let’s think of some ideas.”** Brainstorm ideas with the student. Write them down. The adult may have to lead this, but encourage the student to offer ideas. Ideas include:

- A plan to minimize contact with the perpetrator(s) (find out how many there are).
- A lesson plan with all students that reviews every student’s right to be different (Lesson 1 of Bully Prevention within Positive Behavior Support is one example of a structured format for doing this).
- Continued, frequent check-ins with the student to make sure the harassment has stopped.
- Disciplining the perpetrators. If the student is concerned about retaliation, then his or her wishes should be honored—somewhat. This is tricky, and depends on the extent to which it is a safety risk. Either way, any discipline exacted toward the perpetrators should have a strong element of teaching respect. YouTube videos and then a paper on differences and respect might be a good option. Consequences that limit contact are also appropriate if a “talking to” doesn’t get the job done. Lesson 2 in Expect Respect provides a list of videos that send anti-bullying messages. If the student is really concerned about retaliation even if there are serious safety concerns, let the student know that the perpetrators have been told the school

administrator will be checking in with him or her regularly, and any further harassment will have grave consequences for the perpetrators.

- Informing the student's parents: If there is a safety concern, or ongoing harassment that isn't responsive to low-level interventions, the student's parent must be informed. The student may not want this to happen, as he or she may not be "out" to his or her parents. But the parents have a right to know that their student is being harassed. This can be handled delicately by giving the student choices about who talks to her or his parents; whether the student is present or not when the conversation happens; what will be said to the parent; etc.
- Mediation: There are many excellent protocols for mediation, such as "Talking and Listening Chairs." CAUTION: Mediation is tricky and generally the research does not support it. This is especially true if there is a power differential between the two parties, such as when a number of students are ganging up on the recipient of harassment and/or the perpetrators have high social standing. In general, be very careful about using mediation and only use it if the recipient thinks it is a good idea. Positive indicators that mediation may be helpful would be if the perpetrator is not being reinforced by peer attention for harassing the recipient, and the perpetrator has a history of being very empathetic. If these criteria are not easily met, mediation is usually not a good option.

### **C. Parent Involvement**

An obvious question in supporting students who exhibit gender nonconforming behavior is: At what point should parents of the student be informed? If the student is exhibiting behavior not typical for the assigned gender, but is not being harassed, and is not asking to be treated in a manner different from their assigned gender, there is no obligation to contact the student's parent. This is true at all levels—elementary, middle, and high school.

There are instances in which the student is not being harassed, but is asking staff to behave in ways that support the student in the gender the student identifies with. Examples include:

- Asking staff to use pronouns associated with the opposite sex.
- Asking to use the bathroom assigned to the opposite sex.
- Asking staff to use a name different from the given name, and one that is strongly associated with the opposite sex. Examples would be asking to be called Debbie rather than Jonathan, or Michael rather than Michelle. Non-examples would be shortening a name, as in Kimberly to Kim or using initials such as KJ.

If there is harassment, district policy is that the parent(s) or guardian must be informed of the harassment (the specific behaviors defined as harassment that were directed toward the student by other students or staff). Before informing the parents, someone (typically the student's teacher, the school counselor, or a school administrator) should meet with the student and let the student know that a conversation with the parent is required.



Depending on the student's response, then the student should be given the choice of being present when the staff member talks to the parent, and also prepped on the content to be covered with the parent. This is important because the parent may or may not be aware that the student is engaging in gender nonconforming behavior.

***The conversation with the parent should be descriptive and not evaluative. It should describe the exact actions taken by students or staff toward their child. The parent may or may not ask, "Why would other children (or staff) act in this way toward my child?" If they ask, be descriptive and share information about their child's gender nonconforming behavior. Include a statement that the child's gender nonconforming behavior is totally acceptable and it is our job to support all students. The issue is, how do we prevent more harassment?***

Also, if there is no harassment but staff members have been supporting the student in her or his gender of identification, the parent must be informed if staff members are to continue supporting the student in this way. In this case, the staff person who is supporting the student should determine if the student is comfortable with a conversation with the student's parent, and the student should be given a choice:

- Choice 1: No conversation needed, but staff must continue to treat the student (names, bathrooms, etc.) as a member of the gender assigned at birth.
- Choice 2: Conversation with parents so that the parents' wishes can be honored. The student should still have the choice as to whether she or he participates in this conversation, and who is present when it happens.

If a meeting is called, staff should communicate that all students, regardless of personal values, religion, race, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identification or expression have the right to be treated with respect by other students and by staff. The reason for the meeting is so that staff can best honor the wishes of the parent(s) and the student involved. Safety is our top priority, and respecting diversity is a second high priority.

There may be a wide variety of reactions from parents of students who exhibit gender nonconforming behavior. These reactions can range from complete acceptance and encouraging the student to explore her or his gender identity, to shock and complete rejection of the preferred identification. The student usually has a very good idea of where the parent(s) will align along this continuum prior to the meeting, so it is highly recommended to ask the student, "How do you think your parent(s) will react?"

If parents express outrage that school officials would even consider supporting the student in the preferred gender identification, staff should respond by saying, ***"It is not our place to judge value systems. It is district policy to prioritize the safety of all students, and to honor diversity. This is why we are meeting—so that your wishes can be honored."***

Also during this meeting, it is recommended that the parents be told, ***"There have been several instances across the district in the last few years in which students have***

***expressed clearly that they identify with a gender different from the one assigned at birth. Your student is not alone in this. There are local and national resources available for support. Some of these resources are primarily educational in nature. Some offer counseling or other supports. If you would like, I can provide a list of contacts for local and national supports.***” At this point, the staff person will offer a printed document of ***Top Ten Questions Parents Will Ask*** (this is a PDF that is available on the list of resources in the appendix; but staff can locate by contacting Carmen Urbina; Brianna Stiller; or Jennifer Harris.)

### **Chapter III. Administrative and Staff Practices**

#### **A. NAMES AND PRONOUNS**

Transgender and gender nonconforming students in Eugene School District 4J shall be addressed and referred to by their preferred names, as determined by the parent and the student. Pronouns corresponding to the student’s gender identity shall also be used in a manner congruent with the student’s stated preferences.

Students are not required to obtain a court-ordered name and/or gender change, change their official records, or have a diagnosis from a psychologist or therapist as a prerequisite to being addressed by their preferred name and pronoun. While inadvertent slips or honest mistakes may occur, intentional or persistent refusal to respect a student’s gender identity is not acceptable.

#### **B. OFFICIAL RECORDS**

***Before making any changes to the student’s name or gender in student records, be sure the parent is informed and in agreement. Approach the student prior to contacting the parent to determine how knowledgeable and supportive the parent is regarding the student’s preferred name and gender identity. If the student indicates he or she is uncomfortable with contacting the parent, please refer to pages 6–10 for information on how to proceed.***

The district will use the student’s preferred name and gender on all documents at the school level upon a request by the student and his or her parent/guardian. A name or gender change request form is available from the Technology Department.

To change the student’s name in his or her records, enter the student’s preferred name into the legal name field within Synergy, and then contact the Technology Department (formerly CIS) at 541-790-7776. The designated person from the Technology Department will enter the student’s legal name into the a.k.a. field, a hidden field that is invisible to school-level staff, so that the record of the student’s legal name and gender is retained discreetly in the student information system.

A student's recorded gender can be changed without a legal document. The district aligns to the process prescribed by the Oregon Department of Education for name and gender changes for transgender students in ODE systems. "ODE will change the gender upon request from a district. That request is through a change to the SSID system and we will allow the request from the district to serve as the 'documentation' .... There is no need for the student to 'prove' their new gender .... The student's declaration of their gender is acceptable."

A transgender student may also legally change her or his name. To alter school district records in this case, the student may present a copy of the legal court document to the school secretary, who will then change the legal name within the student information system.

If the student is 18 years or older, parent involvement is encouraged but not required.

**Transcripts and Other Official Documents:** When a student changes their name and/or gender through the described process, official records will be sent to colleges and other institutions under the student's preferred name.

The student and/or parent can instead choose to have these records sent under the legal name by requesting that the Technology Department change the name from the preferred name back to the legal name in the student information system (currently Synergy). It is the student's responsibility to initiate this process by contacting the registrar at the school of attendance. The registrar will then contact the Technology Department to make the change. This process is described on the form that the student and parent completed when originally requesting the name change.

Some conversation with officials at the University of Oregon has suggested that this process is not likely to cause much difficulty for the student. Oregon higher education officials indicate that [schools in Oregon are very aware of preferred name and respond, after a preferred name is determined, based simply on the student's ID number.](#)

If the student does not legally change his or her name, a recommended best practice for high schools is to issue two diplomas to graduating students whose preferred name is different from their legal name. One diploma should bear the student's legal name and the other should bear the student's preferred name.

### **C. CONFIDENTIALITY**

For the purpose of this section, consent means a written consent form that identifies the specific information to be released and states the purpose for which the information is being requested.

A student's gender identity is confidential and may not be disclosed to anyone without the student's consent. Serious damage could occur if the student's transgender status becomes public knowledge.

An exception is when staff members are honoring the student's and parent's request for the student to be treated according to their preferred identity. An example of honoring a parent's or student's request would be informing the staff when a parent has requested a change in name, pronoun or restroom use to be congruent with the student's gender identity. A second exception would be if a staff member concludes the student is in clear and immediate danger as a result of gender nonconforming behavior. An example would be if the student has been threatened with physical assault.

There are some scenarios that call for differentiated response:

1. The student has been present in the school over a period of time under their assigned sex and during that time has made it known that they identify differently. In this instance, the school must respond proactively to prevent harassment and provide training to all staff regarding the student's preferred gender identity.
2. A student enrolls under their preferred gender identity, which is different from their assigned sex. In this instance, key staff including administrators, school counselors, and homeroom teacher (if there is one) will create a safety plan for the student. This will include careful consideration, with input from parents and the student, regarding "who needs to know."

## **D. TRANSFERS**

A transgender or gender nonconforming student who decides that another school would provide a safer and/or more conducive learning environment should be able to transfer within the district or into a different district in accordance with school board policy.

## **Chapter IV: Restroom and Sex-Segregated Space Accessibility**

### **A. Restroom Accessibility**

Students shall have access to a restroom that corresponds to their gender identity. A student shall not be required to use a restroom that is incongruent with the student's gender identity. Use of restrooms by transgender or gender nonconforming students shall be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on specific circumstances.

Students who desire to access restrooms corresponding to their gender identity shall make a request to the school administrator. The student, his or her parent(s), and school and/or district officials shall come to a collective decision based on the guiding principles of ensuring student safety and honoring the student's gender identity and expression.

Where feasible, schools will provide a single-stall bathroom that is available to any student, transgender or gender typical, who desires increased privacy regardless of the underlying reason. These stalls will have an “occupied / not occupied” sign or a lock on the door. No student shall be compelled to use such bathrooms, but there may be situations in which, for safety reasons, it is the only workable solution. In these cases, the school officials, parents, and student shall come to agreement.

## **B. Locker Room Accessibility**

A student shall not be required to use a locker room that is incongruent with the student’s gender identity. Locker room usage shall be determined on a case-by-case basis, using the guiding principles of ensuring student safety and honoring the student’s gender identity and expression. The support team for the student (the student, his/her parents, and school officials) shall meet and determine how to address locker room accessibility.

Some options include:

- Use of a private area in the locker room (e.g., a bathroom stall with a door; an area separated by a curtain; a physical education instructor’s office in the locker room).
- A separate changing schedule (e.g. using the locker room before or after the other students).
- Use of a nearby private area (e.g., a nearby restroom; a nurse’s office).

If gender nonconforming students are uncomfortable with all of the available changing area options, another option is that they be allowed to choose other electives or activities in lieu of activities that require use of locker rooms.

## **C. Dress Codes**

Schools that adopt and enforce dress codes may not discriminate based on gender identity. The same rules that apply to students who exhibit gender typical behavior apply equally to students who exhibit gender nonconforming behavior. For example, a student who identifies as male-to-female transgender is allowed to wear anything that is acceptable for females. Any limitations such as hemlines or revealing necklines apply equally to all students regardless of gender or gender identity.

## **D. Overnight Trips**

For overnight trips and other activities that may involve the need for accommodations to address student privacy concerns, sleeping, changing and bathroom arrangements shall be determined on a case-by-case basis using the guiding principles of safety and honoring the student’s gender identity and expression.

## **E. Sex Education**

For sex education that is sometimes separated by gender, the student's support team (the student, parents, principal, teacher, school counselor or psychologist) shall determine the most appropriate group for the student to participate in, or determine that the instruction shall be individually provided.

## **F. Participation in Athletics**

For physical education and intramural athletics, transgender and gender nonconforming students shall be allowed to participate with students of their self-identified gender. This includes being allowed to wear clothing and/or uniforms that correspond with their gender identity expression.

For participation in interscholastic athletics, the Oregon School Activities Association has established a policy addressing participation by transgender students. The OSAA Handbook states:

*A. A female-to-male transgender student athlete who is not taking hormone treatment related to gender transition may participate on a boys or girls team, but once the student selects the gender of the team on which the student wishes to participate, the student thereafter must consistently participate on teams of that gender in all sports for the duration of their high school career.*

*B. A male-to-female transgender student who is not taking hormone treatment related to gender transition may participate only on a boys team.*

*C. A female-to-male transgender student who is taking medically prescribed testosterone for the purposes of gender transition may participate only on a boys team.*

*D. A male-to-female transgender student who is taking medically prescribed hormone treatment for the purposes of gender transition may participate on a boys team at any time, but must complete one year of hormone treatment related to gender transition before competing on a girls team.*

## **Chapter V: Bullying and Harassment**

Prevention of bullying and harassment against transgender and gender nonconforming students is a priority for all 4J schools. Given the data from the Eugene School District 4J Climate Survey, school officials should assume that harassment toward gender nonconforming students is probable. There is an obligation for proactive intervention. This includes checking in with gender nonconforming students and their parent(s) per the protocol described under safety (Section I).

If a staff member becomes aware that a student is being harassed within the context of gender nonconforming behavior, the staff member will report it to the school administrator. The school administrator will develop a team to support the student who is being harassed and to provide education for the perpetrators. The support team should include the student, the student's teacher(s), the school administrator, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and support staff such as a school counselor, the district equity coordinator, or one of the district's behavior consultants. This team will determine the best steps for keeping the student safe and promoting mutual respect. A safety plan or similar steps for supporting the student, such as a mentor, are some options to consider. Refer to Appendix for more detail.

## A. Definitions

**Bullying/Harassment:** Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any act, including verbal, written, physical, or electronic messages, that substantially interferes with the recipient's educational benefits, opportunities or performance, and

- Physically harms the recipient
- Damages the recipient's property
- Places the recipient in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself
- Places the recipient in reasonable fear of damage to his or her property
- Interferes with the psychological well-being of the recipient or
- Creates a hostile educational environment for the recipient.

Bullying, intimidation or harassment may be based on, but is not limited to, the recipient's gender identity or expression. Such behavior can materially and substantially disrupt the education of the gender nonconforming student. It may have the purpose or effect of interfering with the transgender student's performance in school, attendance to classes, and/or school activities. It may affect the gender nonconforming student's opportunity to join extracurricular activities, sports teams, or other out-of-school activities sponsored by the school.

Examples of harassment include *deliberately* misusing a student's preferred name and/or preferred gender pronoun; asking inappropriate questions about the student's body, gender identity, gender expression or gender transition (including whether they have plans to have medical procedures done); causing distress to the student by disclosing to other students or staff that the student is transgender; posting offensive pictures or sending offensive communications related to the student; making derogatory remarks, jokes, insults or epithets including negative stereotypes about transgender students.

**Harassment of Gender Nonconforming Students by Staff Members:** Staff members who deliberately engage in harassment toward gender nonconforming students shall be subject to disciplinary action. Staff members who accidentally engage in harassment toward gender nonconforming students, or who fail to report harassment toward a gender nonconforming student by other students, will receive support, training, or coaching from administrative or district personnel.

**Third Party Harassment:** This is any form of harassment committed by someone from outside the school community, such as a contracted vendor, service provider, visiting faculty, members of visiting athletic or club teams, or other guests of the school community against a transgender student.

## **B. Conduct of School and District Staff**

All school personnel must take incidents and/or allegations of bullying and harassment of any student seriously and must address and report these situations promptly. Harassment and bullying are prohibited on school grounds, on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, at school bus stops and on school buses, as well as in off-campus behavior that would disrupt the educational process or the operation of the school or district.

## **C. Training**

It is expected that all 4J schools have bullying prevention plans in place. Age-appropriate instruction directly addressing harassment based on sexual orientation and gender expression should be included in the bullying prevention plan.

Julia Heffernan and Tina Guitierrez-Schmich teach classes in gender studies at the University of Oregon and have proven a wonderful resource for the facilitation of staff training in gender awareness.

For information about staff training, contact:

Brianna Stiller 541-790-7816, [stiller@4j.lane.edu](mailto:stiller@4j.lane.edu)  
Carmen Urbina 541-790-7714, [urbina\\_c@4j.lane.edu](mailto:urbina_c@4j.lane.edu)  
Jennifer Harris 541-790-7232, [harris\\_j@4j.lane.edu](mailto:harris_j@4j.lane.edu)

Examples of curricula that meet district guidelines can be found in the appendices. Some particularly valuable resources are given below. For a more exhaustive list, refer to the appendices.

### **Elementary**

- ***Film: It's Elementary by Debra Chasnoff and Helen Cohen***
- ***Film: It's Still Elementary by Debra Chasnoff and Johnny Simons***
- ***Book: 10,000 Dresses by Marcus Ewert***
- ***Book: Ballerino Nate by Kimberly Bradley***
- ***Book: The Different Dragon by Jennifer Bryon***
- ***Book: Supporting Transgender and Gender Creative Youth by Elizabeth Meyer***



## **Intermediate and Above**

- **Book: The Harvey Milk Story by Kari Krakow**
- **Book: Luna by Julie Ann Peters**
- **Book: Close to Spiderman by Ivan Coyote**
- **Book: Loose End by Ivan Coyote**
- **Book: Supporting Transgender and Gender Creative Youth by Elizabeth Meyer**
- **DVD: Straightlaced**
- **DVD: Just Call Me Cade**

## **Chapter VI: Appendices and Resources**

### **Resources for School Personnel and Families**

#### **LGBTQ\* Youth Group for ages 13–18**

Fridays, 4:00–6:00

Amazon Community Center

2700 Hilyard, Eugene

support - friends - info - snacks

drop-in - confidential - adult-facilitated - free

\*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning

**TransActive:** Child/Family Counseling; Peer Support; Advocacy; Case Management

1631 NE Broadway 355-T, Portland, OR 97232

503-252-3000, [services@transactiveonline.org](mailto:services@transactiveonline.org)

**Trans\*Ponder:** Email and meetup group for trans-identified or questioning folks. Contact for information: [transponder.eugene@gmail.com](mailto:transponder.eugene@gmail.com) or 541-914-1559

#### **24-hour hotlines:**

Trevor Lifeline national hotline for LGBTQ youth: 1-866-488-7386

White Bird (LGBT-friendly counselors): 541-687-4000

Looking Glass Station 7 (LGBT-friendly crisis support & housing): 541-689-3111

#### **Online:**

**genderspectrum.org** (info for parents and professionals supporting youth of all genders)

**imatyfa.org** (Trans Youth Family Allies info for youth, family, professionals)

**youthresource.com** (Advocates for Youth site for LGBT youth)

**itgetsbetter.org** (videos in support of LGBT teens)

**trevorproject.org** (LGBT youth suicide prevention, including live chat support)

**gsanetwork.org** (national organization connecting & supporting school GSAs)

**pflag.org** (Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays; offers PDF brochures for youth and parents)

## **YouTube:**

<http://www.upworthy.com/im-45-years-old-and-i-have-never-once-casually-comfortably-held-hands-with-a-partner-in-public?c=ufb1> (high school and above)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/norman\\_spack\\_how\\_i\\_help\\_transgender\\_teens\\_become\\_who\\_they\\_want\\_to\\_be](https://www.ted.com/talks/norman_spack_how_i_help_transgender_teens_become_who_they_want_to_be)

<https://www.glaad.org/blog/you-dont-look-queer-students-challenge-stereotypes-viral-campaign-photos-video>

<http://www.lgbtqnation.com/2015/03/why-pronouns-matter-for-trans-people/>

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/gender-neutral-pronouns-when-they-doesnt-identify-as-either-male-or-female/2014/10/27/41965f5e-5ac0-11e4-b812-38518ae74c67\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/gender-neutral-pronouns-when-they-doesnt-identify-as-either-male-or-female/2014/10/27/41965f5e-5ac0-11e4-b812-38518ae74c67_story.html)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/gender-neutral-pronouns-when-they-doesnt-identify-as-either-male-or-female/2014/10/27/41965>

## **Articles**

Gender Spectrum Education and Training: Top 10 Parent Questions and Concerns Regarding Speaking About Gender Variations with Children

<https://www.genderspectrum.org/>

Sex Redefined

<http://www.nature.com/news/sex-redefined-1.16943>

## **Websites**

Camp Aranú'tig

<http://www.camparanutig.org/about-us>

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students: Your Rights at School by the National Center for Transgender Equality

<http://transequality.org/know-your-rights/schools>

Be Yourself: Questions & Answers for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Youth

[www.pflag.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publications/Be\\_Yourself.pdf](http://www.pflag.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Be_Yourself.pdf)

### **Resources for Teachers/Administrators**

Welcoming Schools: This website provides a great deal of information for how to promote awareness and respect within the context of typical interactions students might have. It is concrete, specific, and provides very practical tools for teachers and administrators to use in promoting awareness and interrupting problems.

<http://www.welcomingschools.org>

<https://www.genderspectrum.org/>

Harsh Realities: The Experience of Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools—A report of GLSEN's School Climate Survey discussing the experience of transgender youth in K-12 schools.

<http://glsen.org/sites/default/files/Harsh%20Realities.pdf>

Discussing Gender: Strategies for Re-Thinking and Discussing Gender Issues  
[genderspectrum.org/images/stories/Discussing\\_Gender.pdf](https://www.genderspectrum.org/images/stories/Discussing_Gender.pdf)

### **Resources for Parents**

Ophelia's Place can provide information about therapy, counseling and medical resources: 541-284-4333 or [info@opheliasplace.net](mailto:info@opheliasplace.net)

Gender Spectrum: Gender Spectrum has many resources for parents.

TransYouth Family Allies, Inc. empowers students and families by partnering with educators, service providers and communities, to develop supportive environments in which gender may be expressed and respected. National organization [www.imatyfa.org](http://www.imatyfa.org) or call 1-888-462-8932

### **College Resources**

<http://www.campuspride.org/scholarships/>

### **Books**

#### **Books for Youth**

**10,000 Dresses** by Marcus Ewert, ages 5-8: Every night, Bailey, a transgender student, dreams of dresses, but when she tells her parents of her wishes to wear dresses, they yell at her, saying she's a boy and should not think about wearing dresses. Bailey meets an older woman across the street who is more open-minded and wants to sew but lacks ideas so she and Bailey work together to make beautiful dresses.

**My Princess Boy** by Cheryl Kilodavis, ages 3–8: Inspired by the author’s son, this is a story about a 4-year-old boy who loves to wear girls’ clothes. It teaches students and adults to accept and support students for who they are and how they wish to look.

**Be Who You Are** by Jennifer Carr, ages 5+: This book tells the story of Nick, a student who has known he is a girl inside for as long as he can remember. Nick’s parents support her, but in school she is forced to be a boy. Nick’s parents seek help from a therapist, and Nick decides she will live as a girl.

**Jumpstart the World** by Catherine Ryan Hyde, ages 14–17: Jumpstart the World tells the story of Elle, a loner. She meets Frank, the guy who lives next door, who is unlike anyone she has ever met, and begins falling for him hard. Elle finds out that Frank is transgender, which turns her world upside down. Now, she’ll have to search inside herself to find not only the true meaning of friendship but also her own role in jumpstarting the world

**Hello Cruel World: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks and Other Outlaws** by Kate Bornstein and Sara Quin: This is a one-of-a-kind book about staying alive outside the box. It provides an unconventional approach to life for those who want to stay on the edge, but alive. Designed to encourage readers to give themselves permission to unleash their hearts’ harmless desires, the book has only one directive: “Don’t be mean.”

### **Books for Families and Professionals**

**The Transgender Student: A Handbook for Families and Professionals** by Stephanie Brill and Rachel Pepper: This is a comprehensive guidebook that explores the unique challenges faced by families raising gender variant and transgender students. Through extensive research and experience, as well as years of experience working in the field, the authors cover gender variance from birth through college.

**Mom, I Need to Be a Girl**  
By “Just Evelyn”

**Helping Your Transgender Teen: A Guide for Parents** by Irwin Krieger. If you are the parent of a transgender teen, this book will help you understand what your student is feeling and experiencing. Irwin Krieger is a clinical social worker with many years of experience helping transgender teens.

**Transitions of the Heart: Stories of Love, Struggle and Acceptance by Mothers of Transgender and Gender Variant Students** by Rachel Pepper. Transitions of the Heart is the first collection to ever invite mothers of transgender and gender variant students of all ages to tell their own stories about their student’s gender transition. Often “transitioning” socially and emotionally alongside their student but rarely given a voice in the experience, mothers hold the key to familial and societal understanding of gender difference.

**Gender Born, Gender Made: Raising Healthy Gender-Nonconforming Students** by Diane Ehrensaft PhD. A comprehensive guidebook developed for the parents and therapists of students who do not identify with or behave according to their biological gender. From her perspective as both clinician and parent of a gender creative student, Dr. Ehrensaft advocates a new approach, encouraging caregivers to support gender-variant students as they explore their gender identities. Rather than offering a “cure” for gender variance, Gender Born, Gender Made facilitates improved understanding and communication about gender identity.

**Responsive School Practices to Support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Students and Families (School-Based Practice in Action)** by Emily S. Fisher and Kelly S. Kennedy. This book provides a practical and useful guide for school-based mental health professionals to support students, families, teachers, and administrators in the development of a safe, inclusive school environment for all LGBTQ students and families.

**The Right to Be Out: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in America’s Public Schools** by Stuart Biegel. The Right to Be Out begins with a cogent history and analysis of the dramatic legal developments concerning the rights of LGBT persons since 1968. Stuart Biegel then turns to what K–12 schools should do—and in many cases have already done—to implement right-to-be-out policies. He examines recent legal and public policy changes that affect LGBT students and educators in the K–12 public school system.

### **Citations**

The following publications and resources were consulted and adapted for these best practice recommendations:

**Best Practices for Serving Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students in Schools.** Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition Policy Committee. November 2012. [www.masstpc.org](http://www.masstpc.org) 617-778-0519

**California Safe Schools Coalition: Model School District Policy Regarding Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students.** [www.casafeschools.org](http://www.casafeschools.org)

**Gender Spectrum Education and Training: Top 10 Questions and Concerns Regarding Speaking about Gender Variations with Children.** [www.genderspectrum.org](http://www.genderspectrum.org) 925-254-3907

**GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Educational Network).** National Center for Transgender Equality: Model District Policy On Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students. [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

**Lambda Legal. Preventing Censorship of LGBT Information in Public School Libraries.** National Headquarters, New York. [www.lambdalegal.org](http://www.lambdalegal.org) 212-809-8585

**Oregon Department of Education: Gender Change Process for ODE Systems.** Office of Information Technology; Support Services Unity. ODE Helpdesk. **Contact:** Amy McLaughlin; Director of IT Support Services. [Amy.mclaughlin@state.or.us](mailto:Amy.mclaughlin@state.or.us)  
503.947.5771

**OSAA. Oregon Schools Activities Association Transgender Policy.** 2013-2014 Handbook.

**SAMHSA: A Practitioners Resource Guide: Helping Families to Support Their LGBT Children.** [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov) 877-726-4727

**Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN): Harsh Realities: the Experience of Transgender Youth in Our Nation's Schools.** November 2010.

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