

## **504.4 GENDER INCLUSION POLICY**

### **I. PURPOSE**

District students deserve respectful and inclusive learning environments that value students' gender identity and gender expression. The District aims to provide all students access to programming and facilities in which they feel comfortable and safe. The District is not required by law, but actively chooses, to create spaces that honor and value diversity at all levels, including gender identity.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

This policy addresses the inequities some students, including intersex, transgender, and gender nonconforming students, confront as they navigate a system designed using a gender binary model.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. *Gender* refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society attaches to femininity or masculinity.
- B. *Sex* refers to a person's biology and is generally categorized as male, female, or intersex.
- C. *Gender Binary* refers to the social construction of a gender dichotomy between masculinity and femininity. The gender binary excludes alternate gender constructions.
- D. *Gender Identity* refers to a person's deeply held sense or knowledge of their own gender.
- E. *Gender Expression* refers to the manner in which persons represent or express gender to others, often through behavior, appearance, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- F. *Gender Nonconforming*, *Gender Nonbinary*, and *Genderqueer* are terms for persons whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectation or roles. This includes persons who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both genders.
- G. *Intersex* refers to a person's combination of features that distinguish male and female anatomy.

- H. *Transgender* is an adjective (not a noun) describing a person whose gender identity or expression differs from that traditionally associated with the sex at birth.
- I. *Cisgender* is an adjective (not a noun) referring to an individual who has a match between the gender they were assigned at birth and the roles and behaviors considered by society to be appropriate for that sex; describes someone who is not transgender.

#### **IV. ENSURE GENDER INCLUSIVENESS**

- A. District staff ensure inclusive access to programming and facilities. In accordance with procedure, the District will:
  - 1. Respect all students' gender identity and gender expression by honoring the right of students to be identified and addressed by their preferred name and pronoun:
    - a. District staff will ask the student's gender pronouns and preferred names, and renew this process each time a new student joins the group.
    - b. To ensure students' safety and autonomy, District staff will ask the student with whom this information can be shared or revealed: other students, other staff, parents, et cetera.
    - c. District staff will set a plan in place regarding how to best communicate students' gender information.
  - 2. With academic programming, prohibit the separation of students and/or curricular materials based upon gender unless it serves as a compelling pedagogical tool.
  - 3. Provide all students the opportunity to participate in co curricular and extracurricular activities offered in the District in a manner consistent with their gender identity.
  - 4. Provide all students with access to facilities that best align with students' gender identity.
  - 5. Change the gender of a student in the Student Information System if the Name/Gender Change Request Form is filled out and signed by the student and, if the student is under 18, the parent/guardian.
  - 6. Take steps to educate themselves on gender identity terminology, rights, and issues.

*Legal References:* Minn. Stat. 121A.04 (Athletic Programs; Sex Discrimination)  
Minn. Stat. ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)  
Minn. Stat. 121A.031 (Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)  
Minn. Stat. 121A.03, subd. 2 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence Policy) 20 U.S.C 1681 et. seq. (Title IX)  
20 U.S.C. 1791 et seq. (Equal Educational Opportunities)  
*Pronouns Matter! A Guide to Creating Safer Classrooms for Transgender Students* by Oliver Schminkey