



School Officials

School Officials Agree: Policies Protecting Transgender Student Do Not Compromise the Privacy or Safety of Other Students

Every student should have a fair chance to succeed in school. But many transgender students face hostility, discrimination and bullying—including when it comes to using the restroom. A growing number of schools have worked with transgender and non-transgender students and their parents to develop policies that ensure a safe learning environment for everyone. These policies help ensure that transgender students have the opportunity to fully participate and succeed in school, so they can graduate with their classmates.

Opponents of laws and policies that protect transgender students often claim that those policies put other students' safety and privacy at risk. However, school officials who have implemented or overseen these policies have found that these claims are simply unfounded. In this letter (http://www.lambdalegal.org/in-court/legal-docs/grimm_20170302_amicus) signed by school officials from Kentucky, Massachusetts, California, Washington, Illinois, New York and Oregon—speaking directly of their experience with integrating transgender students into the facilities that match their identities, they explain:

Discussions about school policy involving transgender students often focus on hypothetical concerns that respecting students' gender identity, and allowing them to use facilities in accordance with their gender identity, will violate the privacy or "comfort" of other students, and lead to the abolition of gender-segregated facilities such as restrooms and locker rooms altogether. Other commonly voiced concerns include the idea that transgender students might just be "confused," likely to change their minds about their gender identity, or falsely claiming to be transgender for some nefarious purpose. We have addressed—and in some cases personally grappled with—many of the same concerns. But in our experience, none of those concerns have materialized in the form of actual problems in our schools. We have not experienced problems with policies allowing transgender students to access bathrooms or locker rooms in accordance with their gender identity. Nor have we experienced transgender students or any other students attempting to be dishonest or break the rules. To the contrary, our transgender students simply want to be safe while using school facilities.

Other notable quotes from school officials and organizations:

Referring to the school's move to accommodate transgender students: "This was probably the best decision we made as a school all year," said Kevin Biggs, principal of Roosevelt High School in Des Moines, Iowa (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/national/article84797527.html>).

"Superintendents across Massachusetts have been welcoming transgender students to their schools for years without issue," wrote the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (<http://www.freedommassachusetts.org/education-associations/>).

With transgender-friendly policies in place for a decade, officials in Los Angeles and San Francisco – which cover about 700,000 students total – have made it clear that they have not had any of the problems some feared. No problems have been caused by transgender students, and other students have not pretended to be transgender either (<http://schools.jefferson.kyschools.us/high/atherton/SBDMDocuments/Letter%20from%20LA%20Unified%20School%20District%20Asst%20Supt.pdf>).

Want more? Check these out:

Transgender Students and School Bathrooms: Frequently Asked Questions (<https://www.genderspectrum.org/bathroomfaq/>) by several school-related organizations, such as the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

School Action Center (<http://www.transequality.org/schoolaction>): Get resources to help your school become more trans-friendly.



"As educators it is our responsibility to make sure all children feel safe and welcomed into our school communities. This includes students who are transgender and our policy should reflect that," Jeremy Majeski, principal of Komensky Elementary School in Berwyn, Illinois



"In 2014 our school council judiciously reviewed the law and precedent established by the courts on the issue of gender identity; our community recognized the importance of supporting transgender children the same way we provide the best educational experience for every child. Atherton High School in Louisville, Kentucky, has encountered no problems with the accommodation of transgender children and our community is proud to create a safe environment that respects the many different backgrounds of our children." -Dr. Thomas Aberli, Principal of Atherton High School, Louisville, KY

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(202) 642-4542

ncte@transequity.org (<mailto:ncte@transequity.org>)

1133 19th St NW

Suite 302

Washington D.C. 20036

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