

Use of Preferred First Name and Pronouns by Students

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Authority

- *The Education Act, 1995*

Intent

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to ensuring safe school environments where all students feel included, protected and respected. The Provincial Education Plan outlines expectations for inclusive, safe and welcoming learning environments.

Meeting the needs of all Saskatchewan students is a shared responsibility for families, school divisions/conseil des écoles (CÉF) and government.

This policy recognizes that students must feel that they are respected and free to express themselves within a safe and welcoming school environment. The policy 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.

Policy

This policy sets the requirements for school divisions and the CÉF to seek consent on the use in the school environment of a student's preferred first name and pronouns.

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to ensuring safe school environments where all students feel included, protected and respected. The Provincial Education Plan outlines expectations for inclusive, safe and welcoming learning environments.

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All school divisions and the CÉF will develop and publish administrative procedure(s) for the implementation of this policy. A draft AP is provided for school divisions to use as a guide.

Given the sensitivity of gender identity disclosure, when a student requests that their preferred name, gender identity, and/or gender expression be used, parental/guardian consent will be required for students under the age of 16.

For students 16 and over, parental consent is not required. The preferred first name and pronoun(s) will be used consistently in ways that the student has requested.

In situations where it is reasonably expected that gaining parental consent could result in physical, mental or emotional harm to the student, the student will be directed to the appropriate school professional(s) for support. They will work with the student to develop a plan to speak with their parents when they are ready to do so.

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.

Outcomes/Objectives

- Saskatchewan's school divisions will review policies and practices to ensure they align with the expectations of this policy.
- Saskatchewan students will learn in safe and welcoming learning environments.
- Policies and procedures related to the use of preferred pronouns will be clearly communicated and understood by students, parents, teachers, and school administrators.

Appendix A: Sample Administrative Procedure for ABC School Division

Background:

ABC School Division is committed to ensuring safe school environments where all students feel included, protected and respected.

The *Framework for a Provincial Education Plan 2020-2030* outlines expectations for inclusive, safe and welcoming learning environments.

Parents and guardians are important partners in education.

Students must feel that they are respected and free to express themselves within a safe and welcoming school environment.

Purpose:

This administrative procedure sets out ABC School Division's procedures to seek consent and support students in the use of students' preferred first name and/or pronouns aligned with gender identity.

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*.

Procedures

Responsibilities

1. Division Leadership shall:
 - 1.1 Ensure that all aspects of the Administrative Procedure 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 Ensure that:
 - 2.3.1 Parents/guardians for students under the age of 16 have submitted a signed authorization form (Form 1) and that the documentation is stored securely according to records management procedures.
 - 2.3.2 Students over the age of 16 have submitted a signed authorization form (Form 1) and that the documentation is stored securely according to records management procedures.
 - 2.4 In instances when a complaint arises where school officials intentionally fail to use approved names and/or pronouns, these are taken seriously, investigated, properly documented, and dealt with in a timely manner. Documentation shall be compiled and retained.
3. School Staff shall:
 - 3.1 Reflect the Division's commitment to respectful learning and working environments.
 - 3.2 Immediately make the school principal aware of any student request made with respect to gender identification and/or gender expression needs.
 - 3.3 Ensure the confidentiality of student information is maintained.
 - 3.4 Work to create a school culture that reflects a supportive, inclusive, and respectful learning environment.
4. Students and/or parents/guardians shall:
 - 4.1 Submit authorization forms to the principal.
 - 4.2 Report any concerns about failure to use approved name and/or pronouns to school administration.

Change of Preferred Name or Pronouns

5. When a student requests that their preferred name, gender identity, and/or gender expression be used:
 - 5.1 if the student is under the age of 16, school personnel will request parental/guardian consent using Form 1; or
 - 5.2 if the student is 16 or older, school personnel will gain formal consent using Form 1.
6. Consent will be authorized on Form 1, which will be stored securely in keeping with the division's records management procedures and *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
7. Once appropriate consent is received as provided for in section 5, school administration shall inform school staff of the student's preferred first name or pronouns.
8. 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.
 - 8.1 The make-up of the support team will be determined based on the student's individual needs and situation.
 - 8.2 The plan to speak to parents will be created with the student's needs and interests at the centre.
 - 8.3 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

9. When authorized on Form 1, 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.
10. 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.

Revision of this procedure

11. This administrative procedure will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with ministry policy, as well as current legislation and regulations.

References

- Guidelines for Transgender Students Name Change Process, Ministry of Education
- Transgender Students – Q & A, Ministry of Education
- Deepening the Discussion: Gender and Sexual Diversity, Ministry of Education
- Use of Preferred Name and Pronouns by Students, Ministry of Education
- Framework for a Provincial Education Plan 2020-2030, Ministry of Education

Form 1

**AUTHORITY FOR USE OF
PREFERRED NAME OR PRONOUN(S)**

I (we), the undersigned, authorizes that _____
(Legal Name)

be referred to by the following approved name(s):

(preferred name(s))

And / or

be referred to by the following approved pronoun(s):

(pronoun(s))

And / or

Authorize that the above change(s) be reflected on the student's official record.

Yes

No

Signature of student (if 16 or over):

(signature)

(date)

Signature of parent(s)/guardian(s):

(signature)

(date)

(signature)

(date)