

502.2.1 Notification and Consent for Gender Identity Related Names and Pronouns

Purpose

Lethbridge School Division recognizes the importance of open communication between schools and families while ensuring students feel supported and their needs are met in their learning environments. In accordance with section 33.2 of the *Education Act*, when a student requests that school staff refer to them using a new gender identity related name or pronouns, the school is required to follow the procedures and guidelines outlined below.

Procedures

Section 1- Parent/Guardian Notification and Consent

- 1.1.1 When a student under 16 years of age requests the use of a new gender identity related name or pronouns, school staff may only use the new name or pronouns once parents/guardians have been notified, and parental/guardian consent has been granted and recorded using the form provided by the Division.
- 1.1.2 When a student 16 or 17 years of age requests the use of a new gender identity related name or pronouns, school staff may only use the new name or pronouns when parent/guardian notification has occurred and been recorded using the form provided by the Division. Parental/guardian consent is not required.
- 1.1.3 Parents/guardians should be notified as soon as reasonably practical when a student requests a change in name or pronouns.
 - 1.1.3.1 School staff must not use the new name or pronouns until notification has occurred and, where applicable, consent has been provided.
 - 1.1.3.2 During this period, school staff should work with the student to ensure they feel supported. This may include connecting the student with the school's wellness team, providing a trusted adult to check in regularly, and ensuring the student's privacy is respected throughout the process.
- 1.1.4 When an Independent Student, as determined by the school Division in accordance with the Education Act, requests to use a new gender identity related name or pronouns, parental notification and consent are not required.
- 1.1.5 When a student 18 years or older requests the use of a new gender identity related name or pronouns, parental notification and consent are not required.
- 1.1.6 This procedure applies only to new requests for changes related to gender identity. It does not apply retroactively or to preferred names/nicknames unrelated to gender identity.

Section 2- Supporting Students

- 2.1 If a student seeks support before parental/guardian notification, or if such notification is reasonably expected to cause emotional or psychological harm to the student, the school's wellness team and/or administration will work with the student to provide appropriate counselling or assistance on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.2 Students may access wellness team supports without parental consent.
- 2.3 After notification has occurred, and consistent with already established practice, students and families may access additional community-based mental health services as needed.

Section 3-Student Records

- 3.1 Once the notification and consent process is complete, student records may be updated on a case-by-case basis, following Division processes and in compliance with the Students Record Regulation and other applicable legislation.

References

Education Act: Sections 1, 32, 33, 58, 196, 197

Division Policies & Procedures: Policy 502.1 Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments, Policy 502.2 Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression, Procedure 502.2 Guidelines for Attending to Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sexual Orientation