



Hastings and Prince Edward  
District School Board

# Resource Guide to Support Gender Identity and Gender Expression





## **Acknowledgements**

Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board acknowledges the ongoing commitment and advocacy of employees for transgender and gender diverse students and families. They are courageous in working as change agents in our schools.

Parts of this document have been adapted from documents of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and Toronto District School Board. We acknowledge and thank them for their efforts in creating the accommodation of transgender and gender diverse people.



# Introduction

## Our commitment

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Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB) is committed to creating welcoming, inclusive and safe learning environments that optimize students' potential. As part of this commitment, we want to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases and barriers that limit student success. We seek to have educational environments that are safe and free from discrimination for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

School boards exist within the broader context of the law and public policy that protects and defends human rights. The *Human Rights Code (Ontario)* (HRC) provides for equal rights and opportunities and freedom from discrimination. It recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario and prohibits actions that discriminate against people based on a protected ground in a protected social area.

## Vision

All students prepared and empowered for the possibilities of today and tomorrow.

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## Protected grounds and social areas under the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*

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### Protected grounds

- Age
- Ancestry, colour, race
- Citizenship
- Ethnic origin
- Place of origin
- Creed
- Disability
- Family status
- Marital status (including single status)
- Gender identity, gender expression
- Receipt of public assistance (in housing only)
- Record of offences (in employment only)
- Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding)
- Sexual orientation

### Protected social areas

- Accommodation (housing)
- Contracts
- Employment
- Goods, services and facilities
- Membership in unions, trade or professional associations

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This includes transsexual, transgender and intersex persons, people who crossdress, and people whose gender identity or expression is, or is seen to be, different from their birth-identified sex.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Human Rights Commission: *Policy on preventing discrimination because of gender identity and gender expression*, <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-because-gender-identity-and-gender-expression>



# Purpose

This guide is a resource to raise awareness and help protect against discrimination and harassment. Through providing reference documents like this, HPEDSB is taking steps to understand, accept and protect individuals' gender identity and gender expression, which may be different than their birth identified gender. This includes people who are transitioning, or identify as androgynous, gender fluid, gender variant, gender non-conforming, intersex, two-spirit or transgender.

This guide describes best practices related to accommodations based on gender identity and gender expression. It includes insight gathered from HPEDSB students who participated in LGBTQ+ focus groups and research.

These guidelines:

1. support the inclusion of individuals on the basis of gender identity and gender expression;
2. facilitate appropriate accommodation on the basis of gender identity and gender expression;
3. promote awareness of gender identity and gender expression; and
4. are not intended to be exhaustive, or a step-by-step procedure for facilitating gender identity and gender expression inclusion.

## Application of the guidelines

It is expected that these guidelines be used to respectfully engage in a collaborative process that recognizes the realities of every person's experience.

The following points illustrate the context in which these guidelines were developed in order to facilitate the gender transition process.

- This is an evolving area of law and policy
- The need for considered and measured discussions of what is appropriate in the circumstances, recognizing that circumstances may evolve and change over time in accordance with the needs of the individual

## Did you know . . .

. . . that lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and questioning (LGBTQ+) youth are at significantly greater risk of suicide than their heterosexual and cisgender peers?

. . . that 33% of LGBTQ+ youth have attempted suicide in comparison to 7% of youth in general?

. . . that LGBTQ+ youth who experience high levels of family rejection are more than eight times as likely to report a suicide attempt and nearly six times as likely to report high levels of depression as peers with accepting families?

From the Egale LGBTQ Youth Suicide Prevention Summit.



# Roles and responsibilities

Everyone in a school community—students, families, employees—has a responsibility to ensure that transgender and gender diverse students learn in welcoming, inclusive, safe and accepting learning environments. This includes ensuring that incidents of bullying, harassment, discrimination or violence, when reported or become known, are investigated according to HPEDSB policies and procedures.

## Student roles and responsibilities

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- Respect the rights of all members of the school community with regard to their gender identity and gender expression
- Support the safety and well-being of all students
- Celebrate the diversity of the student population

## Parent/guardian roles and responsibilities

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- Demonstrate respect for the rights of all students, employees, families and members of the school community with regard to their gender identity and gender expression
- Engage in initiatives that foster a positive, safe school environment
- Work with school principal and other employees to request and fulfill an accommodation request

## School staff roles and responsibilities

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- Respect the rights of everyone in the school community with regard to their gender identity and gender expression, and in compliance with the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*
- Support the safety and well-being of all students
- Celebrate the diversity of the student population
- Take personal responsibility to educate themselves (e.g. be aware of available resources to help connect students to the supports they need)
- Model respect, understanding, appropriate behaviour and affirmation of diversity in the working and learning environment
- Ensure curriculum, classroom materials and activities contain positive images and accurate information about history, *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* and HPEDSB policies and procedures
- Develop a plan to prevent and respond to homophobic and/or transphobic incidents (e.g. bullying prevention plan, developing safer spaces, responding to situations according to HPEDSB safe school procedures)
- Work with students and/or families to support and fulfill an accommodation request(s)



## HPEDSB roles and responsibilities

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- Ensure that HPEDSB policies, procedures and guidelines are reflective in nature of transgender and gender diverse students and comply with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*
- Identify and address discriminatory biases so that each student may maximize their learning potential, including the use of inclusive curriculum, instructional strategies that reflect the diverse needs of students and pathways for all learners
- Support schools in issues of equity (including gender identity) within the existing structures, practices and environments
- Provide professional learning opportunities and other supports for employees about creating inclusive learning environments for transgender and gender diverse students
- Work in partnership with transgender and gender diverse communities



# Accommodation guidelines

## Legal duty to accommodate

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HPEDSB has a legal duty to accommodate the needs of people because of their gender identity and gender expression. The goal of accommodation is to facilitate an inclusive environment that supports and respects the dignity of all.

In responding to a request for accommodation, HPEDSB will accommodate in consideration of several factors, such as undue hardship, including:

- the cost of the accommodation to HPEDSB;
- health and safety risks to the person requesting accommodation and to others; and
- the effect of accommodation on the HPEDSB ability to fulfill its duties under its policies, the *Education Act* and the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*.

The duty to accommodate is made up of several principles, including respect for dignity, individualization, integration and full participation. An accommodation that works for one cannot simply be assumed to be appropriate for another.

The duty to accommodate has both a procedural and a substantive component. The procedural duty involves the considerations, assessments and steps taken to respond to each person's accommodation need. The specifics of each accommodation may change over time.

Board and school staff must consider individual needs and concerns separately. Each individual is unique with different needs.

## Accommodation based on request

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HPEDSB will take reasonable steps to provide accommodation to people making a request based on their right to free gender expression and/or gender identity.

It is expected that these guidelines will be adhered to in general. However, it is also recognized that specific accommodations sought may be fulfilled on a case-by-case basis and individualized to best meet the needs of an individual who is making the accommodation request.

HPEDSB will balance its decision to accommodate on several factors, such as undue hardship, including:

- the cost of the accommodation to HPEDSB;

## Guidelines for students

Transgender or gender non-conforming individuals have the right to be who they are openly. This includes expressing gender identity without fear of unwanted consequences, as well as the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

Board and school staff must consider each student's needs and concerns separately.

Each transgender and gender non-conforming student is unique with different needs. An accommodation that works for one student cannot simply be assumed to be appropriate for another.





- health and safety risks to the person requesting the accommodation and to others; and
- the effect of the accommodation on the Board's ability to fulfill its duties under Board policies and the *Education Act* and the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*.

Accommodations are made upon request regardless of age on a case-by-case basis. Whenever possible, school staff will work collaboratively with the student and parent/guardian. In the event of a safety risk, HPEDSB will follow appropriate policies and procedures.

An accommodation request should be made in writing to the school principal. The request may come directly from a student or the student's parent/guardian(s). Staff may also work in an advocacy capacity and work with the student to support them in their request. The school will work together with the student and/or family on an accommodation that best respects dignity, meets individual needs and promotes inclusion.

There is no age limit on making an accommodation request; young students have the same rights to privacy and to have accommodations made on their behalf with or without their parents'/guardians' knowledge. Accommodation requests are generally specific requests as it pertains to a student, based upon some of the categories described in this document.

## Unresolved requests

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Despite the Board's commitment to accommodate, an individual may feel that discrimination has occurred. The Board will, through its policies and procedures, take reasonable steps to address the unresolved issues raised by the affected person.

Failure to accommodate may lead to a finding of discrimination under the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*.

## Confidentiality

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Everyone has the right to confidentiality; schools must keep an individual's transgender/gender diverse status confidential. School staff should not disclose anyone's transgender/gender diverse status to others unless there is a specific need to know (e.g. to fulfill a specific accommodation request). School staff will ensure that consent is sought from a student and a student's family prior to sharing the information in order to fulfill an accommodation request.

## Professional learning, advocacy support and role models

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HPEDSB and provincial legislation require school board leaders to ensure employees are educated in gender diversity, advocacy and gender inclusive education, in challenging gender stereotypes, and in using gender neutral and inclusive language.





Transgender and gender fluid individuals may feel like they are alone in their communities. School leaders should be aware of this when working through sensitive situations that may affect employees and/or students.

Administrators/managers/supervisors who have been asked to facilitate an accommodation within the scope of these guidelines should communicate with all affected parties. These may include front-line staff, educators, families and Student Services staff, etc. Refer to **Appendix A: Considerations for Gender Transition Planning** and **Appendix B: Gender Identity and Gender Expression Support Planning Template**.

HPEDSB will support actions, activities and campaigns that are trans-positive, create awareness about and see to end transphobia, gender stereotypes, and gender-based discrimination and violence.

## Names and pronouns

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Everyone has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun corresponding to their gender identity. This is true whether they have obtained a legal name or sex designation change (e.g. a student's preferred name and change of gender can be used in the student information system, on class lists or timetables). School staff may need to make manual changes to report cards and diplomas to ensure that the preferred name and pronouns appear on these documents.

Students who wish to use gender diverse pronouns, such as 'they,' 'them,' 'zhe,' 'ze,' 'hir,' to identify themselves will be accommodated.

## Official records

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The school will change a student's official records (Ontario Student Record (OSR) and Ontario Education Number (OEN)) to reflect a change in legal name upon receipt of documentation that such legal name has been changed (e.g. birth certificate).

## Washroom access

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Everyone has a right to access safe restroom facilities and the right to use a washroom that best corresponds to their gender identity and gender expression, regardless of sex assigned at birth. Requiring people to prove their gender by requiring a doctor's letter, for example, is not acceptable. A person's self-identification is the sole measure of the person's gender.

## Sports activities, physical education classes and change rooms

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School staff must ensure students can exercise their right to participate in gender-segregated sports, interscholastic athletics and physical education class activities in accordance with each student's gender identity. Coaches and educators will work with, and be supported by, school staff and administration to address each student's accommodation needs and ensure safety.



Students have the right to a safe change room that corresponds to their gender identity. Transgender or gender-diverse students have the right to an accommodation that best meets the individual student's particular needs. Such accommodation, according to the student and/or family request may include the following:

- access to the change room as would be afforded to any other student of that gender identity;
- use of a private area within the public area (e.g. bathroom stall with door or an area separated by a curtain);
- a separate changing schedule in the private area (either utilizing the change room before or after the other students); or
- use of a nearby private area (a nearby washroom or other private room or office).

A coach will plan ahead in the case of away games.

It is not acceptable to deny a student the opportunity for Health and Physical Education. For example, not allowing the student to participate in Health and Physical Education; forcing the student to choose independent study; requiring a transgender or gender diverse student to use the change room corresponding to the student's sex assigned at birth.

## Participation in other areas, such as class trips

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As a general rule, in any other circumstances where students are separated by gender in school activities, such as class discussions or field trips, students shall be permitted to participate in accordance with their gender identity.

Activities that may involve the need for housing accommodations in order to address student privacy concerns will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. All students on school field trips need to be housed in a manner that is safe and respectful. No student should be excluded from participating in a field trip or asked to pay more to participate because of their gender identity. In some cases this may mean offering private accommodation to transgender students.



# Best practices

This section outlines some proactive measures that help contribute to a positive school climate.

While some will require specific accommodations and supports to ensure their safety and well-being, all members of the school community have a responsibility to ensure that the environment is welcoming, inclusive, safe, accepting and free from discrimination.

School staff are expected to challenge gender stereotypes and integrate trans-positive and gender-inclusive content into the teaching in all subject areas. This practice is in accordance with *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*, *The Ontario Curriculum* and provincial legislation. It is important to affirm and de-stigmatize transgender individuals, histories and issues in order to create a space in which people who are questioning their gender feel safe, are represented and have a place in our society.

## Inclusive language

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Schools should use gender inclusive language in order to reflect the diversity of genders in the school community.

## Gender roles in classrooms

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Students sometimes have fixed ideas about gender roles and what it means to be a boy or girl. It is important to have conversations that encourage acceptance of everyone. This includes the ways students express themselves.

During play times, particularly for elementary-age children, students may impose rigid gender roles on one another. Avoid making assumptions about gender or how a particular student should act.

## Suggestions to model and nurture an environment of gender diversity and acceptance

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- Support children in the range of opportunities available in the classroom. Make sure children have opportunities to dig, build, bake, etc.
- Encourage students to mix up their play groups and get to know one another. Allow them to pretend to be male, female or an animal or inanimate object when they play.
- In dramatic play, students will pretend to be whomever they want, regardless of assigned gender.
- Avoid lining up separately, separating the class based on gender, or giving out awards based on gender.

## Did you know . . .

. . . that there are gender-inclusive pronouns beyond 'he/she' only?

. . . that it is appropriate to use 'they' as singular or 'folks' to address a group of people?

. . . that the use of non-inclusive language, such as 'you guys' or 'ladies' may be viewed as exclusionary or derogatory?

- Encourage and model diverse family structures that reflect our society, to promote gender equality.

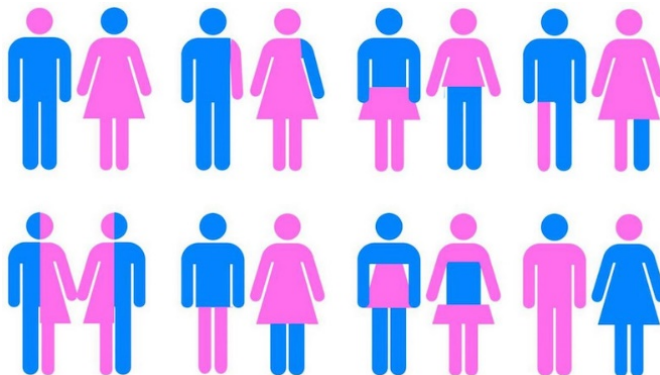


## Creating welcoming, inclusive, safe and accepting classrooms

For people to thrive in their schools and communities, they need to feel safe and supported socially, emotionally and physically. A positive school climate has been associated with decreased feelings of depression or suicidal thoughts, decreased substance use, and fewer unexcused school absences among gender diverse students.

To help promote health and safety among gender diverse people, schools can implement the following practices:

- Encourage respect for all and empower individuals to address bullying, harassment, and violence.
- Identify safe spaces, such as counselors' offices, designated classrooms, or student organizations, where LGBTQ+ youth can receive support from administrators, teachers or other school staff.
- Encourage student-led and student-organized school clubs that promote a welcoming, inclusive safe and accepting school environment, such as gender sexuality alliances, which are school clubs open to youth of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- Encourage all employees to be aware of gender identity and gender expression through professional learning about how to create safe and supportive school environments for all students, regardless of sex, sexual attraction, gender identity or gender expression.
- School dress codes should make no assumptions or stereotypes about diverse racial heritage, culture, creed, gender identities and expressions related to hair, clothing colours, fashion choices, etc. that are based on or reinforce bias, prejudice and discrimination.



Gender Fluidity

## Did you know . . .

. . . that approximately 47% of LGBTQ+ workers have experienced workplace harassment and/or violence based on their sexual attraction (orientation)?

. . . that transgender women are more likely to experience physical violence and discrimination within an intimate relationship, and more likely to experience police violence when interaction with authorities following an incident?

. . . that men who are HIV positive are at least 50% more likely to experience same-sex domestic or intimate partner violence?

From the Egale Presentation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy: Point of Consideration for *Bill 132*.



# Curriculum integration

## How to approach gender identity in different subject areas

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Students should be invited to question various aspects of gender identity and expression, such as how it evolves biologically, genetically and socially. This can be done in the context of many different academic subject areas.

### Arts

Deconstruct gender stereotyping in arts classes. Some common misconceptions are that flute players are always female, trumpet players are always male; only girls sing in the choir or dance; only boys are computer savvy; or no females were on stage in Shakespeare's time. Talk with students about people who are exceptions to these stereotypes and why these stereotypes exist.

### Health and Physical Education

Everyone should see themselves represented in health class. Consider the use of statements such as, *When you guys get married*, or *It's a wife's responsibility to . . .* and use more inclusive language instead. Teachers can present the range of human diversity, including a range of body types, sexes, gender identities and gender expressions, and sexual orientations.

### Math

Have a class discussion on famous mathematicians of the past and present. Discuss the dominance of males in the field and possible reasons for that. Ask students to challenge the long-held notion that females are not good at math and discuss whether it's true. Is there evidence to the contrary? If it's not true, where did the belief come from?

### Languages

Discuss how gender connects to language. For example, how the English language is limited by the lack of a singular, gender-neutral pronoun. Do other languages have such a pronoun? What is happening to gender-laden words in every language, such as policeman or spokesman? In a language like French, objects have gender. Does that make sense? How was each gender decided? Do they follow stereotypical lines or are there unusual examples?

### Science

Have students consider the biological and genetic differences between sexes and the scientific definition of male and female. Introduce the notion of intersexuality. Discuss varieties in gender roles through the animal kingdom in terms of reproduction, mating rituals, caregiving and nurturing roles.



### **Social Sciences**

Discuss how gender roles differ through time and by region. Provide students with context for how changes come about through shifts in attitude, understanding, laws or scientific discovery.

### **Technological Studies**

Challenge gender stereotyping in tech class (e.g. only males are auto mechanics; only females are fashion designers), and discuss expectations about these stereotypes to broaden student experience and promote gender diversity.

## **Community assistance?**

Please contact Student Services at the Education Centre for guidance/ assistance in supporting a student's gender identity or gender expression.

They will connect you with community agencies, as appropriate.





# Definitions

Taken from the Ontario Human Rights Commission *Policy on Gender Identity and Gender Expression* and Egale Canada Human Rights Trust.

The words people use to describe themselves and others are very important. Appropriate use of words or terms can affirm identities and challenge discriminatory attitudes. Words or terms that do not honour an individual's choice can inhibit inclusion.

**Acceptance:** An affirmation and recognition of people whose race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, abilities, or other similar characteristics or attributes are different from one's own. Acceptance goes beyond tolerance, in that it implies a positive and welcoming attitude.

**Accommodation:** An adjustment made to policies, programs, guidelines, or practices, including adjustments to physical settings, and various types of criteria, that enable individuals to benefit from and take part in the provision of services equally and to participate equally and perform to the best of their ability in the workplace or an educational setting. Accommodations are provided so that individuals are not disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of the prohibited grounds of discrimination identified in the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*.

**Ally:** a (typically straight or cis-identified) person who supports and respects members of the LGBTQ+ community. While the word does not necessitate action, people who demonstrate such support/respect are considered to be active allies.

**Attraction:** Often referred to as sexual orientation, this classifies a person's potential for emotional, intellectual, spiritual, intimate, romantic and/or sexual interest in other people, often based on their sex and/or gender. Attraction may form the basis for aspects of one's identity and/or behaviour.

**Androgynous:** a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity. Occasionally used in place of "intersex" to describe a person with both female and male anatomy.

**Bias:** An opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgements.

**Bisexual:** a person who experiences attraction to men and women. Some bisexual people use this term to express attraction to both their own sex and/or gender, as well as to people of a different sex and/or gender.

## Helpful info

- **Biology does not imply identity; nor do behaviour and expression alone constitute identity.**
- **Generally, when in doubt, asking a person how they self-identify is the most respectful approach.**
- **The Ontario Human Rights Commission *Policy on Harassment Because of Sexual Orientation (2006)* explains that terminology used to describe members of LGBTQ+ communities is fluid.**
- **While people within a group may prefer a variety of terms to describe themselves, it is useful to identify terms that are considered most appropriate.**
- **While these terms and explanations are considered appropriate at the time of publication of these guidelines, meaning and use can evolve and change over time.**





**Bullying:** Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance. (From HPEDSB Administrative Procedure 378: Student Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention.)

**Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity and biological sex assigned at birth align (e.g. man and male-assigned). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not trans (see definition below), they are cisgender.

**Gay:** A person who experiences attraction to people of the same sex and/or gender. May refer only to people who identify as men or masculine, but may also include people who identify as lesbian.

**Gender expression:** the external display of one's gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on scales of masculinity and femininity. Also referred to as gender presentation.

**Gender fluid:** A gender identity best described as a dynamic mix of male and female. A person who is gender fluid may always feel like a mix of the two traditional genders, but may feel more male some days and more female other days.

**Harassment:** Harassment means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably be known, to be unwelcome contrary to any ground prescribed by the *Human Rights Code (Ontario)*. Harassment can include sexual harassment as defined pursuant to the Code.

**Intersex:** A term used to describe a person born with reproductive systems, chromosomes and/or hormones that are not easily characterized by male or female. This might include a woman with XY chromosomes or a man with ovaries instead of testes. Intersex characteristics occur in about one out of every 1,500 births. Typically intersex people are assigned one sex at birth, male or female. Some intersex people identify with their assigned sex, while others do not. Some choose to identify as intersex. Intersex people do not typically identify as transgender or transsexual. The term hermaphrodite was used in the past although is now considered outdated and derogatory.

**Lesbian:** A person who identifies as a woman and who experiences attraction to people of the same sex and/or gender.

**LGBTQ+:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, two-spirited, plus any other terms that an individual may identify with.

**Queer:** A term used by some in LGBTQ+ communities, particularly youth, as a symbol of pride and affirmation of diversity. This term makes space for the expression of a variety of identities outside rigid categories associated with sex, gender or attraction. It can be used by a community to encompass a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender or

## Helpful info

It is better to avoid using the term homosexual and to adopt the terms by which people self-identify, such as gay, bisexual, lesbian, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit or two-spirited, intersex, queer, questioning or asexual.



attraction (as with the acronym LGBTQ+), or by an individual to reflect the interrelatedness of these aspects of their identity. Queer was historically a derogatory term for difference, used in particular to insult homosexuality and LGBTQ+ people. Although sometimes still used as a slur, the term has been reclaimed by some members of LGBTQ+ communities.

**Trans or transgender:** An umbrella term that describes people with diverse gender identities and gender expressions that do not conform to stereotypical ideas about what it means to be a girl/woman or boy/man in society.

“Trans’ can mean transcending beyond, existing between, or crossing over the gender spectrum. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transsexual, cross dressers or gender non-conforming (gender variant or gender queer). “Trans” includes people whose gender identity is different from the gender associated with their birth-assigned sex. Trans people may or may not undergo medically supportive treatments, such as hormone therapy and a range of surgical procedures, to align their bodies with their internally felt gender identity.

People who have transitioned from one gender to another may simply identify as female or male. Others may also identify as trans, as a trans woman or a trans man. Some people may identify as trans and not use the labels ‘female’ or ‘male.’ Others may identify as existing between male and female or in different ways beyond the binary of male/female.

Trans people may identify their gender in many ways. There is no single or universal experience of what it means to be trans. As a result, different trans people face distinct forms of discrimination in society, and this may relate to whether they identify as male, female, a person with a trans history, a person in the process of transitioning, a trans man, trans woman, transsexual, or gender non-conforming.

**Transitioning:** Refers to a host of activities that some trans people may pursue to affirm their identity. This may include changes to their name, sex designation, dress, the use of specific pronouns and possibly medically supportive treatments, such as hormone therapy, sex-reassignment surgery or other procedures. There is no checklist or average time for a transition process and no universal goal or endpoint. Each person decides what meets their needs.

**Transsexual:** A person whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth. They may or may not undergo medically supportive treatments to align their bodies with their gender identity, such as hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery or other procedures. They may also undertake other changes to align their external attributes and appearance with their gender identity.

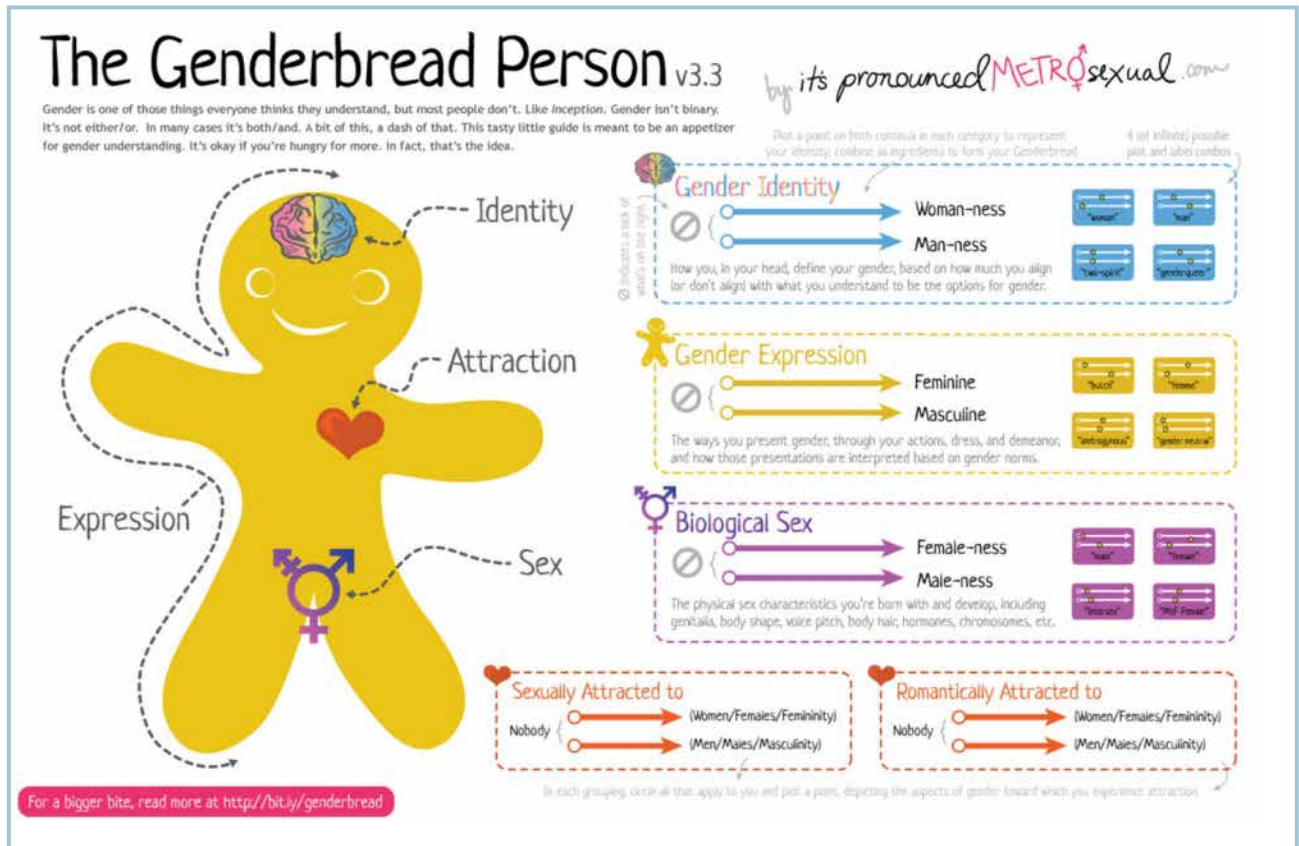
**Two-Spirit(ed):** An English term used by Indigenous people to describe, from a cultural perspective, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex. It is used to capture a concept that exists in many different Indigenous cultures and languages. For some, the term Two-Spirit describes a societal and spiritual role that people played within traditional societies, such as mediators, keepers of certain ceremonies,

transcending accepted roles of men and women or filling a role as an established middle gender.



# The Genderbread Person

The Genderbread Person<sup>2</sup> is a visual representation of some terminology related to gender identity and gender expression and has been used by various organizations for training purposes. To access a larger version, go to <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com>



**Identity** is fluid and complex. It is experienced, interpreted, and articulated in many different ways. Our identity is determined by how we see ourselves, how others see us and, as well, how these two (sometimes oppositional) perceptions interact.

**Gender identity** is a person's internal sense of being male, female, both, neither, or somewhere in between. Gender identity refers to internal experience that cannot be determined by others. How you present or show your gender to the world is known as gender expression. For most people, their gender identity or expression is consistent with their assigned or biological sex at birth. The term for this experience is cisgender. For transgender people, their gender identity or expression differs from their assigned or biological sex at birth. People who are gender variant or gender non-conforming have a gender expression that differs from what is considered "normative," or expected for their "perceived" gender or assigned sex in a given culture.

<sup>2</sup> Image from <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com>



# Resources

## General

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*Human Rights Code (Ontario)*

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code>

Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/education\\_equity\\_plan\\_en.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/education_equity_plan_en.pdf)

## Educator resources

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- Dancing to Eagles Spirit Society  
<http://www.dancingtoeaglespiritsociety.org/twospirit.php>
- Draw the Line <http://www.draw-the-line.ca/>
- Egale Canada Human Rights Trust <http://egale.ca/>
- LGBTQ Health <http://lgbtqhealth.ca/>
- Native Youth Sexual Health <http://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com/supportcircle.html>
- Queer Ontario <http://queerontario.org/tag/two-spirited/>

## Parent resources

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- Rainbow Caregivers Network <http://www.transforumquinte.ca/rcn/>  
154 Cannifton Road North, Belleville, (613) 849 4641
- Rainbow Health Ontario  
<http://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/resources/families-in-transition-a-resource-guide-for-parents-of-trans-youth/>
- Families in Transition: A Resource Guide for Parents of Youth in Transition
- My GSA <http://www.mygsa.ca/> and  
My GSA for Parents <http://www.mygsa.ca/parents>
- PFLAG Canada <https://www.pflagcanada.ca/>
- Quinte West Youth Centre for youth and teens 12-18  
2 Wooler Road, Trenton, Ontario, 613-392-6946



- Say Out Loud is an alternative youth group that offers a warm, inviting and safe place in the community for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, two spirited, queer, questioning youth and their allies  
<http://www.sayoutloud.ca/>
- Transform Quinte, serving the Quinte and Belleville areas, offers safe, confidential, free support and a recreational group for transgender individuals, questioning or in transition. They are open to allies and trans-identified, gender non-conforming and people questioning their gender identity at whatever age or stage. They have regular meetings for support and discussion and you are very welcome to attend <http://transforumquinte.ca/>

## Sources for definitions/terms

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### General

- It's Pronounced Metrosexual  
<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2012/06/how-can-i-make-the-gender-question-on-an-application-form-more-inclusive/>  
<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2013/01/a-comprehensive-list-of-lgbtq-term-definitions/>
- Ontario Human Rights Commission  
<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/gender-identity-and-gender-expression-brochure>

### Gender neutral pronouns

- Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog  
<https://genderneutralpronoun.wordpress.com/>

### Links and resources regarding derogatory terminology

- Rainbow Health Ontario has developed a fact sheet about LGBTQ+ mental health  
<https://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/resources/lgbt-mental-health-fact-sheet/>

### Crisis supports

- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868  
Children and youth ages 5 to 20 can speak with trained counsellors at Kids Health Phone
- Lesbian, Gay, Bi & Trans Youthline 1-800-268-9688  
Offers free peer support for youth



## **Considerations for Gender Transition Planning for Students and Employees**

The process of gender transitioning is significant sensitive for anyone involved, and therefore necessitates a fulsome and respectful conversation focused on understanding the needs of the individual. These considerations are intended to provide guidance to facilitate gender transitioning.

The items outlined below are suggested considerations. Individual circumstances may require variation from this suggested list. When preparing a Gender Transition Plan, be mindful that individual needs and experiences may vary from person to person and over time. Therefore, it may be appropriate to revisit these considerations periodically.

### **Considerations in gender transition planning**

- Identify the appropriate people to be part of the planning process
- Determine whether, when, whom and how to inform others of the change in gender identity
- Determine what changes will be made to records and systems, and when
- Establish when and which pronouns and preferred names will be used
- Determine preferences for use of washrooms and other gender-specific facilities and activities
- Discuss any concerns related to gender expression
- Determine relevant and timely training
- Discuss any time off that may be required for medical treatment
- Identify supports to facilitate transition and interactions in the school or workplace community
- Inform anyone involved of the policies and processes related to protection against harassment and discrimination
- Determine any other supports that may be required

### **Special considerations for students**

- Determine the appropriateness and extent of parent/guardian involvement

### **Special considerations for employees**

- Determine any need to connect with Student Services and/or Human Resources Support Services at the Education Centre





## Gender Identity and Gender Expression Support Planning Template

Before meeting to develop an accommodation plan, please review the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board Gender Identity and Gender Expression Guidelines. In consultation with the person requesting accommodation, identify the appropriate parties to be part of the planning process.

The vision of Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, *All students prepared and empowered for the possibilities of today and tomorrow*, sets the foundation for creating welcoming, inclusive, safe and accepting learning environments that optimize students' potential. It is expected that this plan be created by respectfully engaging in a collaborative process that recognizes the uniqueness of each person's experience.

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Current grade: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Name student uses: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's gender identity: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Sibling names/grades: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian/caregivers names:	Relation to the student:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### 1) PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

a) Are parent(s)/guardian(s) aware and supportive of this student's gender status?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

b) If not, what considerations must be accounted for in implementing this plan?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 2) CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY AND DISCLOSURE

a) How public or private will information about this student's gender be? (check all that apply)

\_\_\_ Staff will be aware (e.g. superintendent, psychologists, Student Services)

Specify the staff members: \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_ Site level administration will be aware (e.g. principal, vice-principal, counselor)

Specify the staff members: \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_ Teachers and/or other staff will be aware (e.g. bus drivers, custodians)

Specify the staff members: \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_ Student will not be openly "out" but some students are aware of the student's gender

Specify students: \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_ Student is open with others (adults and peers) about gender



f) \_\_\_ Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

g) If the student has asserted a degree of privacy, what steps will be taken to ensure privacy if protected?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

h) How will a teacher/staff member respond to any questions about the student's gender from:  
Other students? \_\_\_\_\_

Staff members? \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Community? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3) STUDENT SAFETY

a) Who will be the student's go-to adult?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) If this person is not available, what should students do?

\_\_\_\_\_

c) What, if any, will be the process for periodically checking in with the student and/or family?

\_\_\_\_\_

d) What are expectations in the event the student is feeling unsafe and how will the student signal their need for help?

During class: \_\_\_\_\_

On the yard: \_\_\_\_\_

In the halls: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other safety concerns/questions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e) What should parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student do if they are concerned about how others are treating their child at school?

\_\_\_\_\_

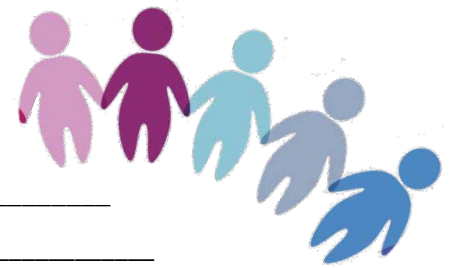
### 4) NAMES, PRONOUNS AND STUDENT RECORDS

a) What name and gender marker (e.g. F, M, X) are listed on the student's identity documents?

\_\_\_\_\_

b) Name/gender marker entered into Maplewood:

\_\_\_\_\_



c) Name to be used when referring to the student:

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d) Who will the point person be at school to ensure adjustments are made and communicated as needed?

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**5) COMMUNICATION DETAILS**

a) What is the specific information that will be conveyed to other students? (be specific)

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b) What requests will be made? (e.g. new name, pronoun, use of facilities)

---

c) With whom and when will this information be shared?

\_\_\_\_ with peers in the student's class only      Date this will happen: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ with peers in the student's grade level      Date this will happen: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ with some/all students at  
the school (specify) \_\_\_\_\_      Date this will happen: \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_ other (specify)

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e) Who will lead the lessons/activities framing the student's announcement?

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f) What will the lessons/activities be?

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g) Will the student be present for the lessons/sharing of info about gender?

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h) If yes, what if any, role does the student want to play in the process?

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i) What does the student wish to communicate about their gender? (e.g. change in identity, expression)

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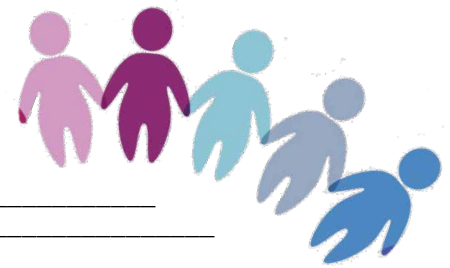
j) How urgent is the student's need? Is the student currently experiencing distress regarding their gender?

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k) Once the information is shared, what parameters/expectations will be set regarding approaching the student?

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l) Other notes, considerations or questions:

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m) If the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are not aware and/or supportive of the student's gender status, how will school-home communication be handled?

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**6) USE OF FACILITIES**

a) Student will use the following restroom(s) at the school:

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b) Student will change clothes in the following place(s):

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c) If student has questions/concerns about facilities, who will be the contact person?

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d) What are the expectations regarding the use of facilities for any class trips?

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e) What are the expectations regarding accommodation for any overnight trips?

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f) Are there any questions or concerns about the student's access to facilities?

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**7) EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

a) In what extra-curricular programs or activities will the student be participating? (e.g. sports, theatre, clubs)

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b) What steps will be necessary for supporting the student there?

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**8) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

a) Does the student have any siblings at school? \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any factors to be considered regarding the sibling's needs.

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b) Are there lessons, units, content or other activities coming up this year to consider? (e.g. growth and development, swim unit, social justice unit, name projects, dance instruction, healthy acting living unit, Pride events, school dances)

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- c) Are there any specific social dynamics with other students, families or staff members that need to be discussed or accounted for?

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- d) What training will the school engage in to build capacity for working with gender-expansive students? How will the school work to create more gender inclusive conditions for all students?

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- e) Are there any other questions, concerns or issues to discuss?

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**9) SUPPORT PLAN REVIEW AND REVISION**

- a) How will this plan be monitored over time?

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- b) What will be the process should the student, family or school wish to re-visit any aspects, or seek additions to the plan?

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- c) What are specific follow-ups or action items emerging from this meeting and who is responsible for them?

<b>Specific Actions Emerging from this Meeting</b>		
<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Who?</b>	<b>By When?</b>

**Next meeting or check-in**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

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Spring 2018, v3