UNITING OUR MEMBERS AND THE NATION

Empowering leaders, educating students, strengthening communities

Creating Safe Schools for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students and Staff

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COMPETENCY: STRATEGY AND FISCAL HEALTH

• NEA Leadership Competency progression level:
  – Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building

• NEA Leadership Competency theme:
  – Utilizes data and analyzes trends to inform decision making
NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority

• **NEA Strategic Goal:**
  – Strategic Goal 1: Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice and Empowerment

• **NEA Organizational Priority:**
  – Early Career Educators
  – My School, My Voice
Welcome and Purpose

Classroom Level:
- Create supportive classroom culture and educate others to do the same
- Know where to find classroom resources

School, District, and Community Levels:
- Provide PD and education to create school and district-wide positive, gender-inclusive cultures
- Develop and implement model policies and procedures to support transgender students and staff

Local and State Association Levels:
- Strategically plan and budget for programs and support
Gender 101 - Key Terms

- Biological/Anatomical Sex
- Gender Identity v. Sexual Identity
- Gender Expression
- Gender Role
- Gender Dysphoria

- Transgender
- MtF
- FtM
- Gender fluidity
- Binary v. Non-binary
- Cisgender/Gender Normative

BEST RULE OF THUMB: LET PEOPLE SELF IDENTIFY!
Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don’t. Like Inception. Gender isn’t binary. It’s not either/or. In many cases it’s both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for understanding. It’s okay if you’re hungry for more.

**Gender Identity**
- Nongendered
  - Woman-ness
  - Man-ness
  - 5 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos
    - “woman”
    - “man”
    - “gender neutral”
    - “genderqueer”
    - “genderflex”

**Gender Expression**
- Masculine
- Feminine
- 5 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos
  - “butch”
  - “femme”
  - “androgynous”
  - “gender neutral”
  - “hyper-masculine”

**Biological Sex**
- Female-ness
- Male-ness
- 5 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos
  - “male”
  - “female”
  - “intersex”
  - “female poly”
  - “male poly”

**Attracted to**
- (Men/Males/Masculinity)
- (Women/Females/Femininity)
- 5 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos
  - “straight”
  - “gay”
  - “pansexual”
  - “bisexual”
  - “asexual”
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students

- 77% of those who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between K-12 experienced some form of mistreatment
  - Verbally harassed
  - Prohibited from dressing according to their gender identity
  - Disciplined more harshly
  - Physically or sexually assaulted

Source: National Center for Transgender Equality 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

- 20% believe they were disciplined more harshly because teachers or staff thought they were transgender

- 17% faced such severe mistreatment as a transgender person that they left a K-12 school

Source: National Center for Transgender Equality 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

- Among the starkest findings, 40% of the respondents attempted suicide
  - Nearly nine times the attempted suicide rate in the U.S. population

Source: National Center for Transgender Equality 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

• 96% of LGBTQ students heard negative remarks about gender expression
  – Not acting “masculine enough” or “feminine enough”

• 86% of LGBTQ students heard negative remarks specifically about transgender people
  – “Tranny” or “he/she”

Source: The 2015 Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s National School Climate Survey
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

- Compared to LGBTQ cisgender students, transgender, genderqueer, and other non-cisgender students faced more hostile school climates.

- 58% of LGBTQ students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation while 43% felt unsafe because of gender expression.

Source: The 2015 Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s National School Climate Survey
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

- 56% of students reported hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff.

- 17% of students were prohibited from discussing or writing about LGBTQ topics in school assignments.

Source: The 2015 Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s National School Climate Survey
Why We ALL Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

• 64% of students reported hearing negative remarks about gender expression from teachers or other school staff

• 60% of transgender students had been required to use a bathroom or locker room of their “legal sex.”

Source: The 2015 Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s National School Climate Survey
Why We **ALL** Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students **cont.**

- 58% of LGBTQ students who were harassed or assaulted in school did not report the incident to school staff
  - Doubted that effective intervention would occur
  - The situation could become worse if reported

Source: The 2015 Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s National School Climate Survey
Why We ALL Need to Advocate for Our Transgender Students cont.

- 64% of the students who did report an incident said that school staff did nothing in response or told the student to “ignore it”

Source: The 2015 Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network’s National School Climate Survey
Transgender People of Color

• Experience deeper and broader patterns of discrimination

• LGBTQ youth of color:
  – Discipline Disparities
  – School Push Out
  – “School-to-Prison Pipeline”

Source: Gender and Sexuality Alliance Network’s 2014 Report
Transgender People of Color cont.

- LGBTQ youth of color perceive:
  - A higher level of surveillance than their white peers
  - Feel as though they are “not liked” or supported by school staff
- LGBTQ youth of color also reported incidents of:
  - Harsher school discipline
  - Biased application of policies

Source: Gender and Sexuality Alliance Network’s 2014 Report
LGBTQ youth of color report frequent harassment and bullying from school staff

- When they seek help they are told the bullying is their own fault

Source: Gender and Sexuality Alliance Network’s 2014 Report
Transgender Women

- MtF students reported higher rates of violence

- FtM students reported higher rates of harassment and bullying

- Speculate MtF students under-reporting verbal harassment that occurred when experiencing violence

Source: The National Center for Transgender Equality National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2011)
Transgender Women cont.

- Mistreatment in school had lasting effect on respondent’s lives which correlated with negative outcomes including higher rates of:
  - Sex work
  - Incarceration
  - Homelessness
  - Smoking and drug and alcohol abuse
  - HIV
  - Attempted suicide

Source: The National Center for Transgender Equality National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2011)
Transgender Women cont.

- Urgent need for reform of the education system
- Urgent need to end abuse of transgender and gender non-conforming students

Source: The National Center for Transgender Equality National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2011)
Like all other students, transgender and gender non-conforming people have a right to equal opportunity in school, free from harassment and violence.

Source: The National Center for Transgender Equality National Transgender Discrimination Survey (2011)
“When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing.”

– Adrienne Rich
In the Classroom

1. Ask what the student would like you to do to be a good ally
2. Take the student’s gender identity and expression seriously
3. Acknowledge mistakes (and own them)
4. Respect the student’s preferred name/pronoun
5. Do not out anyone (or allow anyone else to do so) without their consent
6. Treat trans people as members of their gender identity
In the Classroom

7. Provide support and resources that are gender inclusive.

8. Avoid gendered language (“Bye boys”, “thank you ladies”)

9. Avoid dividing students into gendered groups (boys’ line and girls’ line, etc.)

**Remember to always refer to transgender persons by the name and pronoun that corresponds with their gender identity (even if you are not in their presence)
How Your Union Can Advocate at the School, District, and Community Level

Model Policies and Administrative Procedures

Visibility - Institutional Systems

Inclusive Educational Materials

PD for Educators and Community
At the Local Union Level

Organizing around issues:

• Case study IEA Action Network LGBTQ+ Strategy Team
• Working with GSA Advisors (can also get non-active members involved with the union)
• Tie in with other racial and social justice initiatives, pro-student initiatives
• Plan as part of union’s strategic plan, priorities around member engagement
Other Ways to Help

School Home Partnerships
Curricular inclusion

Personally demonstrate inclusive practice
Interrupt gender stereotypes, gender bias, and binary ideas of gender
If you have a student in crisis:

Other Ways to Help

The Trevor Project
Trans Lifeline
Strategic Planning and Budgeting

- Make supporting LGBTQ+ Students & Staff Part of Your Local or State Affiliates’ Strategic Planning
- Prioritize and make it a value
- Earmark resources within budget
- Promote, create a plan, including money and resources needed
- Build data into your strategic plan - clear need to support one of our most at-risk student groups
Resources Needed

- People
- Space and time
- Quality professional development
- Quality, science-based information
Creative Ways to Get Resources

- Lots of Free and Low Cost Resources Available
- Go through state affiliate for financial aid
- Go through NEA for grants and research/PD
- Start with: Schools in Transition: A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 School (Comprehensive Guide Created by NEA and Partner Organizations)
Free Resources: Curriculum/PD

Illinois Safe Schools Alliance

Lambda Legal: Out, Safe & Respected for Educators and Parents

Gender Spectrum: Great resource for educators and parents

Welcoming Schools (Elementary Focus)

CPS Supporting Gender Diversity Toolkit

National Association of Social Workers LGBT Resources

American School Counselor Association Transgender Student Support

National Association of School Psychologists Transgender Youth Resources
Free Model Policies, Procedures, and Other Legal Resources

- [Chicago Public Schools](#) Guidelines
- [Berwyn South School District 100](#) 7:10 Administrative Procedure
- [Harlem District 122](#) 7:10 Administrative Procedure
- [Evanston Township District 202](#) 7:10 Policy
- [Lurie Children’s Hospital Model Policy](#)
- [Lambda Legal Factsheet: A Transgender Advocate's Guide to Updating and Amending School Records](#)
- [Lambda Legal: A Transgender College Student's Rights Guide](#)
- [Campus Pride (Higher Ed)](#): LGBTQ focus; includes trans advocacy and trans policy clearinghouse pages
NEA edjustice.org

http://educationvotes.nea.org/neaedjustice/social-justice-issues/lgbtq/
Questions
Contact Information

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Session Outcomes

Classroom Level:
- Create supportive classroom culture and educate others to do the same
- Implement gender-inclusive curriculum

School, District, and Community Levels:
- Provide PD and education to create school and district-wide positive, gender-inclusive cultures
- Develop and implement model policies and procedures to support transgender students and staff

Local and State Association Levels:
- Strategically plan and budget for programs and support
Closing

• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session by using the **NEA Summit Mobile APP**!

• Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at **www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment**