

# Background Information on Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students and Policies to Protect Them

According to the [National Transgender Discrimination Survey](#), conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National LGBTQ Task Force, transgender and gender non-conforming students face systemic discrimination and mistreatment in schools:

- Transgender and gender non-conforming adults who expressed their gender identity in K-12 school reported high rates of harassment (78%), physical assault (35%) and sexual violence (12%) while in school.
- One third of those former students also reported harassment by teachers or staff.
- Nearly one-sixth of former students faced harassment that was so severe that they dropped out of school.
- Mistreatment in school was associated with lower income levels and higher rates of homelessness, incarceration and suicide attempts later in life.

For more information about school policies, see:

- [Model District Policy on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students](#). Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network and the National Center for Transgender Equality (updated 2016).
- [Schools in Transition: A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools](#), Gender Spectrum, the National Center for Lesbian Rights and others (2015).
- [Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students: Your Rights at School](#). National Center for Transgender Equality (updated 2015).

Many other state and local school boards have already adopted similar guidelines to create supportive environments for transgender students. These include, among many others:

- **South Dakota** [High School Activities Association Transgender Policy](#) (2015)
- **New York** State Department of Education, [Guidance to School Districts for Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students](#) (2015).
- **Massachusetts** Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, [Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity](#) (2013).
- **Washington** Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, [Prohibiting Discrimination in Washington Public Schools](#) (2012).
- **Connecticut** State Department of Education, [Guidelines for Schools on Gender Identity and Expression](#) (2012).
- **Oregon** Department of Education, [Guidance to School Districts: Creating a Safe and Supportive School Environment for Transgender Students](#) (2016)



- **California** Interscholastic Federation, [Guidelines for Gender Identity Participation](#) (2014).
- **District of Columbia** Public Schools, [Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Policy Guidance](#) (2015).
- **Chicago** Public Schools, [Guidance Regarding the Support of Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students](#) (2016).
- **Los Angeles** Unified School District, [Transgender Students—Ensuring Equity and Nondiscrimination](#) (2014).
- **San Francisco** Unified School District, [Board of Education Administrative Regulation 5163](#) (2011).

Child health, safety, welfare, and education experts across the country support protections for transgender students. These include, among many others:

- American Academy of Pediatrics, American Counseling Association, American School Counselor Association, Child Welfare League of America National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of Social Workers, National Education Association, [Open Letter to Governors Opposing Anti-Transgender Student Bills and Supporting Equal Opportunity](#)
- Over 300 National, State and Local Anti-Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Organizations, [Statement in Support of Equal Access for the Transgender Community](#)