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| Administrative Procedures Manual | Administrative Procedure 359.1 |
| | Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity |
| Page 1 of 5 | APPROVED: November 2015 AMENDED/REVIEWED: September 2025, September 2019, June 2018 |
| LEGAL REFERENCE: | |
| Section 33.2, 35, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 Education Act Canadian Human Rights Act; Alberta Human Rights Act; Individual's Rights Protection Act; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Professional Conduct; | Alberta Teachers' Association Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities; Criminal Code; Access to Information Act (ATIA) Protection of Privacy Act (POPA) Advisory on Disclosing a Student's Participation in a School Club; Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta |

Background

The Grande Prairie Public School Division affirms the right of all students and staff to be a contributing member of a school community that is welcoming, caring, respectful and safe for all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression. The Grande Prairie Public School Division does not tolerate any bullying, harassment, or discrimination directed at individuals or groups of individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression.

Foundations and Basic Commitments

- Board Policy 20 affirms the commitment of the Trustees of the Grande Prairie Public School Division to support welcoming, caring, respectful and safe working and learning environments in all Division sites.
- [AP 359, Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments](#), commits all staff members of the Grande Prairie Public School Division to ensuring that our classrooms, schools, and all work spaces are free of bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Discrimination and harassment occurs when a person is subjected to unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct because of race, religious beliefs, colour, **gender, gender identity, gender expression**, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or **sexual orientation**. Alberta human rights law prohibits discrimination and harassment based on these grounds.
- The Grande Prairie Public School Division is committed to addressing complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying related to sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression. Specific provisions for are supported by [AP 170 \(Harassment\)](#), [AP 171 \(Student Harassment and Discrimination\)](#), [AP 175 \(Protection of Staff\)](#), and [AP 359 \(Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments\)](#)
- The Grande Prairie Public School Division is committed to ensuring that all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures supporting welcoming, caring respectful and safe working and learning environments are recognized and understood by staff and students.
- Parents are critical partners in a child's learning and as such parental involvement, including but not limited to notification and consent, while supporting students of diverse gender identities is required. In cases where those involved have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child needs intervention counselling shall be provided, and further services and supports may be accessed as appropriate.

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Procedures

1. Division Leadership will:

- 1.1. Ensure that all aspects of this Administrative Procedure are clearly communicated to staff, students, parents, and the public;
- 1.2. Provide opportunities for staff to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes to appropriately support all students in welcoming, caring respectful and safe learning and working environments;
- 1.3. Collect, evaluate, and distribute current supporting resources for administration to support all students and staff;
- 1.4. Maintain Division policies and procedures to ensure they are current with accepted best practices and legislation

2. School Leadership will:

- 2.1. Strive to create schools which reflect the values of the Division in terms of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environments;
- 2.2. Ensure all staff recognize the confidentiality of sexual orientation and gender identity of all students.
- 2.3. Ensure staff have an appropriate level of understanding of Division policies and procedures, and process for implementation at the school level.
- 2.4. Ensure that complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying are taken seriously, investigated, properly documented, and dealt with in a timely manner. Documentation should be compiled and retained by School Administration.
- 2.5. Support the establishment of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA's) or similar groups or activities in accordance the Education Act Section 35.1 and Board Policy 20.
- 2.6. Upon receiving a student request, work collaboratively with individual parents on matters of gender identity.

3. School Staff will:

- 3.1 Foster learning and working environments that reflect the Division's commitment to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environments;

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- 3.2 Be respectful of all diversity in the school and among staff;
- 3.3 Address all discriminatory attitudes and behaviours in establishing welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environments;
- 3.4 Report to school administration any repeated behavior directed towards students identified in this policy.
- 3.5 Not impose their personal opinions as fact and allow for different opinions to be fostered in a respectful manner.
- 3.6 Upon receiving a student request, inform school administration who will follow process to work collaboratively with individual parents on matters of gender identity.

4. Gender Identity and Gender Expression

To support the safety, health, and educational needs of students and staff who identify as or are perceived to be transgender or transsexual persons, Division staff shall adhere to the following practices as appropriate:

4.1. Names and Pronouns

- 4.1.1. Traditional use of pronouns is not to be discouraged in schools.
- 4.1.2. Where a student under 18 years of age requests that teachers or school staff use a new gender identity-related preferred name or pronouns, parent notification and/or consent is required.
 - 4.1.2.1. For students who are 16 or 17 years old, school staff can only use the new preferred name or pronouns when referring to the student in school after this notification has occurred. Staff are to work with school administration to ensure notification has occurred and is documented.
 - 4.1.2.2. For students under 16 years of age, school staff can only use the new preferred name or pronoun once notification has occurred and parental consent has been provided. [Form 359.1-1 Informed Consent of name and Pronoun Change](#). School staff are to work with school administration to ensure notification has occurred and that consent has been received and documented.

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- 4.1.3. Final approval to use the requested name and/or pronoun will come from school administration once they confirm above process have been completed.
- 4.1.4. Staff are not to use the requested change until they receive the approval from administration.
- 4.1.5. If parental notification is reasonably expected to cause psychological or emotional harm to the student, or if a student requests assistance, the school must ensure the student is provided with counselling or other assistance as required prior to notifying their parents.

4.2. **Official Records and Communication**

When requested by a student, as defined in the Education Act, or the parent/guardian, the student's school record will be changed to reflect their preferred name or gender after parental notification, for 16 and 17 year olds, or parental consent is received for students under 16. All Grande Prairie Public School Division forms and records shall be changed to ensure that a student's preferred name and gender is current on class lists, timetables, student files, identification cards, etc. **Please note, changes in name or gender may not be incorporated into official documents such as diplomas, transcripts, or provincial exams unless legally authorized by the Province.**

4.3. **Locker Room and Change Room Access**

All schools shall proactively review their Physical Education and Wellness curriculum practices to ensure they are inclusive of sexual and gender minority students. All students will be expected to participate in regular physical education programming unless the need for an alternate program is identified following consultation with the student, administration and parents.

4.4. **Restroom/Change Room: Accessibility and Accommodation**

- 4.4.1. All students shall have access to the restroom/change room that allows for appropriate privacy.
- 4.4.2. Schools will ensure gender neutral restrooms/change rooms exist on their site.
- 4.4.3. The Principal shall ensure that individual solutions to restroom/change room access are implemented with respect and discretion. Staff shall

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consistently demonstrate sensitivity to the needs, safety and dignity of all students with respect to restroom/change room access.

- 4.4.4. All parents, adult visitors, volunteers, and contractors will be required to use a restroom/change room that has been designated for adult use.

4.4. Dress Code

All students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression in accordance with [Administrative Procedure 350.1 - Development of Student Dress Code](#).

4.5. Resolving Conflict

- 4.5.1. The principal will support the resolution of disputes that may arise regarding a transgender or transsexual student's participation in educational activities. The principal will ensure that the resolution of any conflict ensures reasonable accommodation and inclusiveness and is consistent with Board Policy and Administrative Procedures.
- 4.5.2. Division Leadership will provide support, directly or indirectly, to school administration in support of dispute resolution.

4.6. Gay-Straight Alliances

- 4.6.1. Under Section 35.1 of the *Education Act*, students have a right to establish a voluntary student organization intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.
- 4.6.2. A Gay-Straight Alliance or GSA is a student run, extra-curricular club that provides a supportive environment for students to meet, offer peer support, and talk about issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Activities of clubs fall within the domain of social support and pro-social activism.