

## ***Guidelines for SPA in Support of Gender Diversity (January 3, 2018)***

### **Gender Diversity Statement**

*In creating a safe educational environment where all students, faculty, and staff can be their authentic selves, St. Paul Academy and Summit School embraces practices and policies that support the affirmed gender identity and gender expression of all community members. SPA recognizes gender identity and expression are not binary classifications. In addition to working to create a school free from discrimination for our gender diverse community, we also provide the education and support necessary to foster an educational environment of inclusion, fairness, and equitable treatment for all.*

### **Harassment and Discrimination**

St. Paul Academy and Summit School is committed to the principles of diversity (see Diversity and Inclusion), and strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, creed, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or any other identity. SPA considers it the right of every member of the school community to work and learn in an environment free from harassment.

Consistent with our Harassment Policies, harassment and discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived gender identity and/or gender expression are strictly prohibited. This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, administration, trustees, families, vendors, and guests whenever and wherever a school-related activity takes place. It is the school's policy to take any necessary action to promote and uphold this policy and to comply with local, state, and federal laws. Anyone found to have acted in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. For students, this may include separation from the school.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment. Conduct is prohibited when it is directed at individuals because of their age, creed, color, disability, national origin, race, marital status, socioeconomic status, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, actual or perceived gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other protected-class status

pursuant to applicable law.

### Privacy/Confidentiality

As part of the Gender Transition and Support Plan, the school will discuss with the transitioning student, and in most cases the family or designated caregivers, a plan for communicating the transition to identified groups in the school community. Some students and families may desire open communication with the school and community about the transition process, which could include, for example, sending a letter home to parents or setting aside time during a class period for the student to discuss their plan for a gender transition. Others may prefer to share this private information with a select group of people in an effort to give the student a support network at school. Regardless of how private a student or family ask the school to keep this information, that decision does not prevent the student from discussing their gender identity openly and deciding when, with whom, and how much to share.

A student's gender diverse status, legal name, or sex assigned at birth will be treated as confidential medical information and protected personally identifiable information; St. Paul Academy and Summit School strives to comply with the requirement of the confidentiality of medical information in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal privacy laws. Information shared with school staff will not be shared publicly without the written consent of the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s).

### Names and Pronouns:

A student may request that teachers and other school personnel use a declared first name and pronouns. Students need not provide the School with legal documents to correct their first name or gender within their internal student records. Neither a student's gender nor pronouns are considered public or directory information. If a teacher is uncertain about how to address a student, a private conversation with the student about their wishes in these regards is encouraged; if a student is requesting a name or pronouns not already documented in the student information system, teachers should encourage a conversation with the student and the counselor to complete a gender communication plan. This will allow the student to identify the way in which they are addressed by different constituencies and in different settings (e.g., in class, in communication home to parents, families, and legal guardians, in parent-teacher conferences, etc.) and a plan for communicating this information with the necessary school staff.

### Official Records

St. Paul Academy and Summit School will maintain a permanent student record that includes a student's legal name and legal gender as required by law. Students who want their official school transcript and records to indicate a name or gender other than their legal name or biologically-assigned gender at birth must present the school with updated legal documentation indicating this change has been

made. The School does not go back and change past reports/records.

### Bathrooms and Locker Rooms

Students may use the locker rooms that best meet their affirmed gender identity. In an effort to ensure the privacy of all students, the school offers single-person showers and dressing areas and will continue to upgrade locker room facilities with privacy in mind. Any students may use the single-person showers and dressing areas.

Students may use the bathrooms that best meet their affirmed gender identity. In an effort to ensure the privacy of all students, the school offers single-person bathrooms and will strive to design multi-use restrooms with individual privacy in mind. Any students may use the single-person bathrooms.

On both campuses, adult guests are asked to utilize the single-use facilities. On the Goodrich Campus (K-5), adult guests will be directed toward single-use facilities on the main floor. On the Randolph Campus (6-12), adult guests will be directed toward the single-use facilities located throughout the building.

### Interscholastic Athletics

Following Minnesota State High School League (“MSHSL”) rules and regulations, students may participate in a sport according to their affirmed gender identity, and SPA will support the student accordingly. When a student requests to participate on a gender-identified team that corresponds with the student’s affirmed identity but not with the student’s biological assignment at birth, students will work with, and have the support of, the Athletic Director and Counselor to understand the necessary requirements outlined by the MSHSL should an appeal be necessary.

### Other Gender-Based Activities, Rules, Policies and Practices:

SPA will treat all students equitably on the basis of gender identity in any school activities or the application of any school rule. In the case of gender-segregated programs, students may participate in the programming consistent with their affirmed gender identity.

For overnight trips, any student who has specific needs for privacy can alert school administrators; the school can make arrangements based on that student’s needs. Students are assigned to lodging that best matches their affirmed gender identity. Options may include individual room assignments if they are available and requested; staff may also work with students to create mutually acceptable roommate groupings. When communal sleeping areas are used, there will always be an option for more privacy; the school will work with

hosting facilities to determine options.

### Dress Code:

Students are expected to adhere to the school dress codes. The school dress codes are not gender-specific and do not assume gender identity; as such, students are not required to conform to gender identities that feel inauthentic when it comes to dress.

### Student Transitions:

SPA will develop a Gender Transition and Support Plan to support a student in planning for, and communicating, a change in one or more aspects of their gender. Factors such as the student's age, personality and emotional state, the level of family support, and even the time of year may affect how the student's transition unfolds. The Gender Transition and Support Plans will vary from one division to the next in accordance with age-appropriate policies that reflect the developmental ages of the children.

Students may choose, but are not required, to transition over a summer break or between grades to afford additional privacy and confidentiality. The Gender Transition and Support Plan is used to create the most favorable conditions for a successful experience, and to identify the specific actions that will be taken by the student, school, family, or other support providers to create the necessary conditions to make this particular student's experience as positive as possible.

When the school is informed of a desired gender transition for a student by the parent(s) or guardian(s), the school and designated care providers for the student will meet to review and complete a Gender Transition and Support Plan. Together, the family and school can then identify any appropriate steps that may be necessary to support the student. Most often, this meeting will be initiated by the family or guardian; however, if school staff believe a gender identity or expression issue is presenting itself and creating difficulty for the child at school, any administrator and/or school-based mental health professional in collaboration with those persons (e.g., classroom teacher) who are observing the difficulties may notify the family or guardians.

Whenever a gender diverse student initiates this process, school staff will strive to assess whether the student's family is accepting in order to avoid inadvertently putting the student at risk of greater harm. School staff will work closely with the student to assess the well-being and safety of the transitioning student and determine the degree to which parents or guardians will be involved in the process. The School and student will determine how to proceed through the collaborative process of identifying how the School can support the student and balance the student's need to be affirmed at school with the reality that the student may not have that support at home. While addressing the student's needs at school provides a short-term solution for the student, when possible, the goal is one of seeking opportunities to foster a relationship of understanding and support between the student and their family.

## **Transgender and Gender Diverse Students New to SPA**

The principal concern of SPA is the emotional and physical safety of its students. New students to SPA who have socially transitioned prior to their enrollment at SPA will generally meet together with parents/families/guardians and the school counselor to discuss a Gender Support Plan as part of the enrollment process. The purpose of this plan is to identify those factors that will support the student in their transition to a new school, identify their wishes with regard to names and pronouns, and discuss any needs for privacy.