



Use Your Preferred Name...

Names are important and help to tell the larger story about who we are as individuals. Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) recognizes that some students would prefer to use a different name to identify themselves rather than their legal names. We see it every day in our schools as students ask to be called by a nickname, go by their middle name, or use a preferred English/Western name or one that better reflects their identity.

GCPS is taking steps to ensure that students are called by their preferred name at school. The first step in acknowledging the preferred names used by many of our students is to facilitate updates to this information in Synergy, the district's student information system. With that in mind, the district is transitioning away from using the "Nickname" field in Synergy to using a new "Preferred Name" field. **Families of students who wish for their child to be called by a "Preferred Name" other than their legal name will need to go into ParentVUE (in the GCPS Parent Portal) to provide that information.** (Please note that if you had provided a Nickname previously, you still will need to enter that name as your child's Preferred Name.) GCPS reserves the right to remove a "Preferred Name" if it is deemed inappropriate. Once the Preferred Name has been provided, your local school will verify the name and make the change in the system.

Again, "Preferred Name" changes that families enter into Synergy will not be reflected immediately and will not change a student's name in all of our systems. In Phase I of this multi-phased, multi-year process, "Preferred Names" will be incorporated to populate class lists and rosters and for student schedules. In Phase II, which will begin next school year, GCPS will begin using the "Preferred Name" for student email addresses and as part of additional student resources and applications.

Note that this option to add a "Preferred Name" is available in the Parent Portal *only*. A student may not request a change via the eCLASS Student Portal.

Only families of students who prefer to go by a name other than their legal name need to make that change in ParentVUE.

Once verified by the school, the **Preferred Name** will begin populating teachers' class lists, seating charts, and schedules. This means that teachers (or substitute teachers) will have the student's **Preferred Name** at their fingertips and can use that instead of the child's legal name.

The child's legal name will continue to appear on legal and official documents such as report cards, transcripts, IEPs, etc.

