

FAQ – Gender Support Plan

The following questions were collected from Pupil Services staff and Principals. Contact Christina Watkinson cwatkinson@ecasd.us or Dang Yang, dyang1@ecasd.us if you have any additional questions.

This document was originally prepared in October 2023. *Last updated August 2025.*

1. Where are we at in the process of the Gender Support Plan (GSP)?

As of October 2023: system leaders reviewed the updated documents in late-September with the Director of Student Services and the Director of Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion. The feedback from both Pupil Services and Principals/System Leaders will inform the revisions to the Gender Support Toolkit. The anticipated next steps will be as follows:

- Revisions to the Gender Support Toolkit will be implemented based on ongoing feedback
- The “Change of Name and Gender Identity” form is in effect.
- Update (Fall 2025): As of the Fall of 2025-26, the Gender Support Toolkit documents are ready for use and are live in the Student Services SharePoint page.

2. Who facilitates the Gender Support Plan (GSP) discussions?

The School Counselor/Support Plan Coordinator is the lead facilitator in discussions related to Gender Support Plans. Typically, the School Counselor assigned to the student who requests a GSP will serve as the Support Plan Coordinator. In their absence, a designee of the School Counselor or one assigned by the building Principal may serve in this role.

3. Who has access to this document?

Once a GSP is active, it is placed in a student’s cumulative file. These documents within the student cumulative file are considered pupil records. All pupil records are governed by [Wisc. Stat. sec. 118.125](#), which is also adopted by ECASD in our [District Policy 8330—Student Records](#). Generally, a pupil, or the parent or guardian of a minor pupil, shall, upon request, be shown and provided with a copy of the pupil’s progress records, including documentation found in a student’s cumulative file.

4. Where are the documents stored?

Gender Support Plans that have active supports should be stored in a student’s cumulative file in the “Behavioral Record” folder. Moreover, if there are multiple versions of a Gender Support Plan, the latest version of the Gender Support Plan in the student’s cumulative file should be considered the official version of any supportive measures.

5. When the GSP is updated, do we keep all versions of the GPS in the cumulative file or only the most updated version?

The latest version of the Gender Support Plan in a student’s cumulative file will be considered the official version of the supports provided to the student.

Updates that make minimal changes to the Gender Support Plan supports can be attached in the form of memos with clear notes and directions about whether the new supports will replace prior supports or supplement prior supports listed in the original GSP. Moreover, all attachments and notes should be clearly dated. It is also best practice to include the name of the person attaching the memos or making the updates. Finally, be sure to include how these changes will be communicated to the appropriate individual.

6. Sibling Information Section:

- Why are we asking about sibling information?

We ask about sibling information in the Gender Support Plan only for the purpose of checking to see if siblings are aware of the student's affirmed name, affirmed gender identity, and if those siblings may potentially need or may benefit from supports.

- Under the Siblings section, do parents need to provide consent for discussion with siblings?

It depends. Whenever it is safe to do so, we should always try to include parents/guardian in these discussions.

- What supports are we required to provide to families or siblings if they communicate a need?

It depends. There are no "required" supports or interventions for siblings or families within the GSP. The priority is to support the student seeking a GSP first and if there are needs and resources that families and siblings may benefit from, a referral to those resources may be one way to provide that support. Examples of resources for parents or guardians may include videos or articles about gender identity, sexual orientation, allyship, etc. Referrals to school based mental health supports may also be considered, when available. In addition, referrals to community agencies, such as the Chippewa Valley LGBTQ Center may be another support system families can be referred to, as well.

Online Resources for Families of LGBTQ Youth

- i. Child Welfare Information Gateway. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/diverse-populations/lgbtq/lgbt-families/>
- ii. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US Department of Health & Human Services) <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/pep14-lgbtkids.pdf>
- iii. LGBTQ Youth Resources (Center for Disease Control & Prevention, CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth-resources.htm>
- iv. LGBTQ Family Acceptance Organization. <https://lgbtqfamilyacceptance.org/>
- v. Resources for Parents & Families of LGBTQ Individuals (American Library Association) <https://www.ala.org/rt/sites/ala.org/rt/files/content/professionaltools/ResourcesforParentsandFamiliesofLGBTQIndividuals.pdf>

7. How often should a Gender Support Plan be reviewed/revised and by whom?

At minimum, a completed and active GSP should be reviewed between the School Counselor and the student at least once per year. Parents should be included whenever possible and appropriate, as well. At the student's or parent's discretion, an additional supporter may also be in attendance during review procedures, if necessary. The student and School Counselor may collectively agree to bring in additional staff members or consultants at any point during the review process.

It is the responsibility of the Support Plan Coordinator to coordinate these annual reviews.

8. Does the School Counselor or Support Plan Coordinator have to address all of the questions on the Gender Support Plan form?

No. The form provides a variety of *potential* topics to discuss, and it is at the discretion of the student and/or parent/guardian (if present) to work with the Support Plan Coordinator to collectively determine which sections are applicable to the student's needs.

Moreover, there may be discussion topics which are not specifically outlined in the Gender Support Plan. Any provision or supports that do not fall within any of these sections may be detailed in the "Other Considerations" section.

9. “Affirmed gender identity” section – What options are available to choose from? Does Skyward have the option for something beyond M/F?

ECASD’s gender identity options in Skyward are aligned with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instructions (DPI) revised reporting standards related to gender. As of Fall 2022, DPI revised their reporting standards to allow students to self-report gender identity as **Male (M)**, **Female (F)**, & **Non-Binary (N)**. Skyward and ECASD has since adopted these fields starting in Fall 2022, as well.

10. What are the specific steps to making a name change? Could that be added to the Gender Support Plan – Section Student Records? Will this change from last year?

At this time, there are no significant changes in the procedure for name changes. Here is a high-level overview of a typical name change process.

1. A Gender Support Plan is developed and formalized with parent/guardian support for a name/gender identity change in the Student Information System.
2. The Support Plan Coordinator completes the Gender Support Toolkit’s “Change to Name & Gender Identity Form” and submits the form directly to the Director of Student Services (at the time of this FAQ, this is Christi Watkinson, cwatkinson@ecasd.us).
3. The Director of Student Services, or designee, will coordinate communication with stakeholders (i.e. IT, Registrar, School Secretary, etc.) to ensure that the name change is processed in Skyward and other ECASD student information systems.
4. It may take 3-4 weeks for most procedures to finalize in Skyward, Canvas, and other ECASD systems. Note that third party systems (e.g. ACT, FORWARD, SWIS, etc.) may take more time to reflect name/gender identity changes, if applicable. Moreover, forms and reports that require legal names will not be changed. Finally, systems outside of ECASD may continue to reflect legal names.

11. In the “Letting people know” section

- At the elementary level, who would be talking to adults (staff) about this plan? The document implies that the student might be doing all the communication.

Generally, the student has primary discretion to determine who, when, and how any of the information in the Gender Support Plan is shared. Depending on the grade level, maturity, and confidence of the student, they could possibly hold some responsibility to share this information directly with teachers and other trusted adults.

However, for elementary school students, this generally would not be their responsibility. For this age group, it is strongly recommended that the Support Plan Coordinator, School Counselor, Principal, or other trusted school adult would get consent from the student and parent to share the information directly with the identified stakeholders in a manner consistent with the supports in the Gender Support Plan. Remember that this information is considered private student information, and therefore, FERPA guidelines apply to this information, as well.

- Is there any guidance or protocol for sharing a student’s gender transitions to elementary age students (i.e. a student transitions mid-year in the 3rd grade: how do we support staff and classmates with that change?)
- Should the GSP specify who in the school/district can know about the plan details?

Yes. Whenever possible, it is recommended that specific people or positions should be named and identified in the

“Letting People Know” section.

12. Overnight Accommodations

- Will they have own room? If not, will other roommate’s parents have the info and ability to deny the pairing?

A student getting their own room is one possible support, but this also may not be the appropriate resolution for every scenario. It is also possible to make room arrangements where the student rooms with a smaller group of peers or just one other peer instead of a bigger group of peers.

Due to student privacy, field trip organizers CANNOT notify other parents about another student’s private information, including disability status, medical conditions, gender identity, or other private information, unless in certain circumstances where that is information that is widely shared with all parents as part of the normal operations of the field trip planning. Field trip organizers may only share student information that is in alignment with FERPA and district policies and guidelines.

- What does “timely manner” mean?

It depends on the complexity of the arrangements for the specific field trip, as well as the complexity of the supports for the student. For example, the arrangements required for a two-day, in-state field trip is very different from a week-long international trip.

Generally, “timely manner” may be based on when information is needed to make the appropriate trip arrangements (i.e. flights, sleeping arrangements, meals, transportation, etc.). Moreover, when organizing any approved school-sponsored field trip, it is best practice to consider a variety of potential needs, including disability accommodations, medical or health accommodations, allergy accommodations, 504 plans, and Gender Support Plans. Including a whole host of considerations when making field trip arrangements minimizes the possibility of stigmatizing and alienating specific student populations.

- What are the expectations for field trips?

Generally, the expectations related to the Gender Support Plan regarding field trips include the guidance that: under most circumstances, anytime facilities and/or accommodations are separated by gender, a student has the right to use the facilities or accommodations that are in alignment with their affirmed gender identity.

At the same time, the field trip organizer reserves the right and has the discretion to balance safety, behavior management, risk management, and practical considerations when making field trip arrangements. If there is disagreement on arrangements, the respective building Principal has the final decision. Teachers and Principals may reach out to appropriate administrators for consultation and assistance in these matters.

Refer to the Gender Support Toolkit’s “Guidance for Overnight Field Trips” for additional considerations.

- When traveling for a co-curricular activity such as a field trip, who at the other school should receive information/requests for locker rooms/bathrooms? And by whom (AD, coach, asst coach) from ECASD, and when (2+ days in advance)?

The field trip coordinator(s), or their designee, is the primary person responsible for communicating and coordinating support and accommodation needs to any site, IF NECESSARY. Communication of any necessary IEP accommodations or GSP supports should be done on behalf of the group of students involved in the field trip and done so in a manner that is holistic and considerate of a variety of accommodations such as those related to disability/ability, medical accommodations, availability of appropriate facilities, etc.

13. Yearbook: Can we get parameters or guidance for this part of the Gender Support Plan so it doesn’t get forgotten?

At this time, the general guidance regarding the use of names in yearbooks is to use the name that is listed in the Student Information System (i.e. Skyward). Gender Support Plans with name changes (with parent/guardian support) should also have their names in the yearbook reflected with the student's affirmed name, as well.

Please note: There may be transgender students (or any other student) who may request removing or not using any pictures of their likeness in the yearbook. Schools should establish internal practices for situations where any student/family requests not to include any picture with their likeness in the yearbook.

14. Can there be a document that is given to parents with what they may need to know/do?

Please refer to the Gender Support Toolkit's "Guidance for Students and Parents" page.

15. How were the numbers you shared in the presentation gathered?

The presentation provided to Pupil Services and Principals included a data point that articulated the number of active Gender Support Plans which include a formal change to a student's name and/or gender marker. This data point does not include Gender Support Plans that do not include a name change or gender marker change to Skyward. This number was gathered from the name change requests that were routed through the Director of Student Services.

16. Should we have a school specific form?

At this time, there are no plans to create a school specific attachment for the Gender Support Plan. If there are school specific information, place those details in the "Additional Considerations" section.

17. Is there anything we should know about custodial rights? If students are living with foster parents, do we need to include legal guardians?

In alignment with district policies and Wisconsin State Statutes that govern the confidentiality and disclosure of pupil records, a parent or guardian is defined by [Wisc. Stat. 118.305\(1\)\(f\)](#). "Parent" means a parent of a pupil, including a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian." It is the "parent" who should be included in the discussions related to Gender Support Plans, whenever possible and whenever appropriate. Only one "parent" is needed for comprehensive supportive measures for a student's Gender Support Plan.

18. Procedure for communication from one building to another? Or when a student is transferring from one school to another?

Follow standard protocol for transferring a student's cumulative file when they transfer from one school to another. Generally, the Gender Support Plan would be treated no differently than any other behavioral record in the student's cumulative file.

19. How are we differentiating between last question in Student Info section & Info in Student Records section regarding name/pronoun?

The original intent of the question at the bottom of page 1 ["What name and pronouns should teachers and staff use with family members or others, if different than the student's affirmed name/pronoun?"] was meant to differentiate how a student's name was to be used informally in front of different audiences and groups, and the original intent of the questions under the heading "Student Records" (pg. 3) is meant to be what is formally changed in Skyward.

20. What is sequence of events when student approaches staff about the potential need for a Gender Support Plan?

- Generally, a student should be referred to their School Counselor when they express interest, questions, or concerns related to their affirmed name or gender identity.
- A good starting point with the School Counselor and the student is to begin a discussion about their needs and experiences in school.
 - It is possible that the School Counselor may use the Gender Support Plan as a discussion guide when they first meet before any changes or supportive measures are put in place.
 - It is also possible that a series of informal discussions may take place before the formalized meeting to document the supports.
- Once a formalized meeting occurs and a GSP is developed and filed in the student's cumulative file (placed in the "Behavioral Record" folder), the supportive measures may be initiated and any associated communication to the appropriate individuals may begin.
- In some instances, it may require time to implement some of the supportive measures. Regardless, timely implementation of supportive measures is a high priority.

21. Student Records/Pupil Records

- Can parents access student records once the student turns 18?

Yes. According to [Wisc. Stat. 118.125\(2\)\(k\)](#), "A school board may disclose personally identifiable information from the pupil records of an adult pupil to the parents or guardian of the adult pupil, without the written consent of the adult pupil, if the adult pupil is a dependent of his or her parents or guardian under [26 USC 152](#), unless the adult pupil has informed the school, in writing, that the information may not be disclosed." [sic]

- Does the student need to do anything for that change to take place?

An adult student [over the age of 18 years], may inform the school and/or school registrar in writing that their pupil records may not be disclosed.

22. Which Director of Student Services should we email for student name changes?

The Director of Student Services or the appropriate administrator who oversees School Counselors and/or Pupil Services staff is the responsible administrator who will receive Name Change forms and other documentation related to the Gender Support Plan. During the current school year (2023-24), this person is Christi Watkinson (cwatkinson@ecasd.us).

23. Is this an easy to access document for families?

The Gender Support Plan is managed in the same way internal documents are managed. Specifically, the Gender Support Toolkit will be in the Pupil Services SharePoint site and/or in alignment with other internal documentation management practices. When public facing forms are made available, these forms will be found on the Student Services public website, as well as the Equity public website.

24. Could there be an added or extended section for information regarding athletics?

Maybe. However, there is a lot of nuance regarding athletics. The Athletic Directors would be the correct resource to consult for details regarding GSP supports in athletics, intramural sports, and some of the other extra-curricular activities within athletics.

25. Can we create a GSP at a glance, similar to the 504 plan?

The GSP includes an At-a-Glance page that the student can distribute, as appropriate.

26. Student ID's

- How do we make a request to change the Student ID?

Updates to Student ID's are made on the "Change to Name & Gender Identity Form."

- If a student is not making a formal change to their name or gender marker in the Student Information System (i.e. Skyward), can they still change to their affirmed name on their Student ID?

No. A student may only request an updated Student ID that reflects their affirmed name once they have a formal GSP on file with this request identified in the GSP. This is for the student's safety. A student ID change should not be a reason why a student was inadvertently outed.

27. Is there a way to communicate this information with Substitute teachers?

Thanks for this important question. We're working on that.

28. Where does a substitute teacher learn about the GSP plan details?

Great question. We're working on identifying methods to help substitute teachers know about GSP's, as needed.

29. The GSP implies we can refer students and family members to resources if they have additional questions or needs beyond the school. Can the district provide a list of some resources that we can use to share with students or families?

Parents, families, and students can be referred to the district's [School Based Mental Health](#) pages and resources, as well as the [ECASD Equity website](#) for updated resources.

Online Resources for Families of LGBTQ Youth

- i. Child Welfare Information Gateway. <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/diverse-populations/lgbtq/lgbt-families/>
- ii. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US Department of Health & Human Services) <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/pep14-lgbtkids.pdf>
- iii. LGBTQ Youth Resources (Center for Disease Control & Prevention, CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth-resources.htm>
- iv. LGBTQ Family Acceptance Organization. <https://lgbtqfamilyacceptance.org/>
- v. Resources for Parents & Families of LGBTQ Individuals (American Library Association) <https://www.ala.org/rt/sites/ala.org/rt/files/content/professionaltools/ResourcesforParentsandFamiliesofLGBTQIndividuals.pdf>

30. What is the process of sharing with classmates if the student wants to? Do we educate students? Do we communicate with families?

The district currently does not have specific guidance for this scenario. However, it should be noted that the information found in

the Gender Support Plan, as well as any information gathered to implement the supportive measures in the GSP are all considered private student information, and FERPA guidelines apply to this information in the same manner as any other private student info.

31. Is there ever an instance where we would revoke supports in the GPS?

Supports in the GSP would not necessarily be “revoked.” However, these supports could be “updated,” which may include the change or discontinuation of a specific *support* or *component of a support*, based on new information regarding the student’s needs and experiences. Discontinuing a support should not be used as a consequence of inappropriate behavior.

32. The GSP does not specify who in the school/district can know about the plan details.

That’s correct. Each GSP will be unique, and each student’s level of comfort and safety will vary. Generally, the people who need to know about the GSP supports would be any adult who will be providing the support outlined in the GSP. For instance, if a student will be receiving keys to access an All-Gender Changing Room, the key controller may need to know the name of the student receiving a key.

33. Who knows or who should know about the GSP?

Generally, the GSP forms and any information gathered or collected to identify the student’s needs should be treated in the same manner as any other private student information. Moreover, the information should be shared in a manner that is in alignment with FERPA and other federal and state privacy laws and guidelines.

A note from Dang Yang, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion & Title IX Coordinator, dyang1@ecasd.us.

DATE: October 25, 2023

TO: ECASD Pupil Services Staff & Principals

FROM: Dang Yang, Director of EDI & Title IX Coordinator, dyang1@ecasd.us

RE: Supporting Our Students through the Gender Support Plan

Our district has consistently affirmed our commitment to meeting the needs of all our students, especially those from historically underserved populations and identities. Our policies ensure that students have equal access to district-sponsored programs, services, and activities. Our School Board’s adopted [Equity Statement](#) (March 2021) calls for us to actively address all forms of oppression including “racism, sexism, homophobia...transphobia...and other forms of systemic and social exclusion.” Moreover, this statement serves as the [school board’s preamble](#) (see *Board Docs*). Among our Teaching & Learning Strategic Priorities, we have identified the need to create and sustain a *safe and supportive learning environment*, which in turn will help our students focus on their academic, social, emotional, and behavioral goals. Finally, in our district’s EDI Strategic Priorities (see [Equity Annual Report](#), pg. 31), we have also identified the need to create a *positive culture and climate* throughout our district and in our schools.

I want to assure you that the work that you do through the Gender Support Plan is in alignment with our district policies, guidelines, strategic priorities, and our district messaging. In my role as the *Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion & Title IX Coordinator*, I am one of the numerous system leaders accountable for defining these guidelines and supporting you as you carry out these practices.

I am appreciative of your efforts and commitment as we navigate these guidelines and practices together. The questions that you bring up are important opportunities for all of us to learn, unlearn, and relearn. There is a lot of work to do, and I’m eager to do this work alongside all of you—in support of our students. Thank you so much.