

## Transgender Practices & FAQ

The Shawnee Mission School District is committed to (1) fostering an educational environment that is safe, welcoming, and free from stigma and discrimination for all students, regardless of gender identity or expression; (2) facilitating compliance with local, state and federal laws concerning bullying, harassment, discrimination, and privacy; and (3) ensuring that all students have the opportunity to express themselves and live authentically. All of our students, including transgender and non-binary students, must feel safe and supported in schools and have equal access to education and educational facilities.

Like everything we do, developing and maintaining a strong relationship with the student and their family will be key to any plan's implementation and success. Please be sure your Counselors, Social Workers and School Nurse are part of the conversation as well.

### **Q: What is the current transgender policy in the SMSD?**

- A. The SMSD Board of Education has not adopted a transgender-specific policy. The current practice in SMSD is for administration to evaluate requests for accommodations on a case-by-case basis, and to develop an individual plan for each student. In the same way that every student is different, every request should be treated in its own unique way.

Board of Education Policy AC, the District's non-discrimination/non-harassment policy, strictly prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment toward students, staff, or visitors based on a protected classification, including gender identity. Policy AC confirms the District's commitment to comply with Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on gender identity.

### **Q. Can we add a student's preferred name in Skyward?**

- A. Yes. [Use the process below](#):
1. Upon receipt/approval of a signed [Request to Add a Preferred Student Name in Skyward and Certain Education Records](#) form (also available in [Spanish](#)), the *Student Name* field can be changed to reflect the student's preferred name.
    - a. The *Student Name* field will serve as the default for class rosters, ID cards, student publications (student yearbook and newspaper), and all other systems/platforms (food service, eHall Pass, Class Link, Google) that pull the student's name from Skyward.
    - b. Maintain a copy of the signed/approved form in the student's cumulative and/or digital records
  2. Upon receipt/approval of a signed [Request to Add a Preferred Student Name in Skyward and Certain Education Records](#) form, the student's legal name must be maintained in the *Legal Name* field under the *Identity* tab.
    - a. Only add the information being changed (typically the student's first name)
    - b. IEPs, 504s, state assessments and official transcripts will pull information from the *Legal Name* field under the *Identity* tab.

3. Once the change has been made in Skyward:
  - a. Enter *NMP-Name Preferred* in Student Profile > Categories Tab > District Category. An “N” will appear in the student alert field.
  - b. Notify appropriate staff: all building administration, nurse, social worker, counselor, and teachers
  - c. Remove any names from the “Other Name” field
  - d. Changes to platforms outside Skyward may require 24-72 hours to change.

**Q. Can we call a student by their preferred name and/or pronouns?**

- A. Yes. All students have the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond to the gender identity they assert at school. School staff and peers are expected to respect a student’s name and pronouns once they have been made aware. The building Administrator, in consultation first with the student, will be responsible for ensuring that the student’s request is honored while working to engage and include the family.
- **Note:** To ensure building administration are aware of and can adequately support the student’s request, school staff should immediately notify the Administrator of any gender-specific name and/or pronoun change requests. This will ensure the student’s request is implemented with fidelity and enable the Administrator to provide additional support to the student and staff member as needed.

**Flowchart for gender-specific name/pronoun change requests:**

- Teacher/Staff member becomes aware of a student’s gender-specific request to change name and/or pronouns
- Teacher shares the process with the student
  - Thank you for letting me know.
  - Teacher informs the student that they, the teacher, will need to let the building administration know so he/she can ensure the request is supported building-wide.
  - Teacher can also let the student know that the administration will schedule a meeting with the student ASAP.
  - Ask the student: Is there anything you need right now?
  - Immediately refer to a building administrator, so that the administration can work with the student and family to develop an individualized plan and ensure that need-to-know staff are aware of the plan.
- **Note:** For a preferred name request to be formalized in the Skyward Student Management System, the student’s family would need to complete a [“Request to Add a Preferred Student Name in Skyward and Certain Education Records”](#) form.

**Q. Can teachers issue a survey or poll to students requesting information about students’ preferred pronouns or preferred names?**

- A. No, the SMSD does not support this practice. Staff members should not, using a survey, poll, or similar device, solicit (request or ask) students to share their pronouns or preferred names. As outlined above, the District has a specific process for transgender students and their families to request and cooperatively develop an individualized plan appropriate for their student, and this process should be used rather than soliciting preferred pronoun/name information from students in a group setting. The

process that SMSD has developed ensures respect for the privacy of our transgender students and allows the sharing of this important, personal information in an environment of the student's choosing.

**Q. Can a student use the restroom consistent with the gender identity asserted at school?**

A. Yes. Transgender and gender expansive students must be provided access to facilities (restrooms, locker rooms, or changing rooms) consistent with their gender identity asserted at school. A transgender or gender expansive student may not be required to use a single-gender facility or a facility that conflicts with the student's gender identity asserted at school. However, schools must provide reasonable alternative arrangements for any student who expresses a need or desire for increased privacy. Reasonable alternative arrangements may include a single occupancy restroom, use of a private area, or a separate changing schedule.

- **Note:** Alternative arrangements must be made available to students who request them, but must never be forced upon students, nor presented as the only option. Furthermore, any arrangements must be provided in a non-stigmatizing manner that protects student privacy and is not marginalizing or disruptive for the student.

**Q. Can we change a student's name in Google platforms?**

A. Yes. Upon receipt and approval of a "Request to Add a Preferred Student Name in Skyward and Certain Education Records" form, the student's preferred name will appear in Google platforms.

**Q. Can we identify a student by their preferred name in the school yearbook, newspaper, etc.**

A. Yes. Upon receipt and approval of a "Request to Add a Preferred Student Name in Skyward and Certain Education Records" form, the student's preferred name will appear in the school yearbook and newspaper.

**Q. Can we change the student's gender marker in Skyward?**

A. No. Students/Families with questions about the gender reflected in Skyward should contact their building administration.

**Q. Can we change a student's name in Canvas?**

A. Yes. Students can change their name in Canvas under Settings under "Display Name."

**Q. Can a student's name in the E-Hall Pass system be changed?**

A. Yes. Upon receipt and approval of a "Request to Add a Preferred Student Name in Skyward and Certain Education Records" form, the student's preferred name will appear in the E-Hall Pass system.

**Q. Can we change a student's name in WebEx?**

A. Yes. As long as they use their [studentnumber@smsd.org](mailto:studentnumber@smsd.org) to create the account, students can edit their display name @ smsd.webex.com

**Q. How do schools address field trips that require an overnight stay?**

A. As required by Kansas law, K.S.A. 72-1431, and so long as the statute is not pre-empted by the protections for transgender students under Title IX, during District-sponsored travel that requires overnight stays by students, separate overnight accommodations will be provided for students of each

biological sex, as that term is defined under the statute. This policy will be provided to parents prior to a student's participation in such travel.

### **Guidelines for Student Diplomas & Transcripts:**

1. Is the diploma a legal document?
  - The diploma is not a legal document and a student's legal name does not have to appear on the diploma.
2. Is changing the name on a diploma a parent decision?
  - Students who are 18 or older have FERPA rights and can make the decision about what name appears on their diploma. Ideally, any changes will be agreed on by both parents/guardians and students. In the event of a dispute between a parent and student that cannot be resolved, the student's request will be honored a) where the student is 18 and/or b) where the student identifies as transgender.
3. Is the transcript a legal document?
  - Yes, the student's transcript is a legal document and must reflect the student's legal/birth name.

### **Athletics:**

The SMSD will follow [KSHSAA policy](#).

- [House Bill 2238](#)

### **Resources:**

- [SMSD Notice of Non Discrimination](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Resources for LGBTQI+ Students](#)