



Mission:

The National Coalition of Girls' Schools is a leading advocate for girls' education with a distinct commitment to the transformative power of all-girls schools.

The Coalition acts at the forefront of educational thought, collaborating and connecting globally with individuals, schools, and organizations dedicated to empowering girls to be influential contributors to the world.

I. Background:

The National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS) provides a vast network of best practices for educating girls to its diverse membership of more than 200 public, charter, international, independent and religiously-affiliated all-girls schools. In fall 2014, the NCGS Board of Trustees established a task force to develop a position statement and member resources addressing the unique issues facing all-girls schools related to transgender persons.

Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression, or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth. Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, or something else; gender expression refers to the way a person communicates gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, voice, or body characteristics.

The below Position Statement (Section II) uses "transgender" as an umbrella term to also take into consideration the following terms*, which are increasingly addressed by schools and are very closely related:

Gender Binary

The classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite, and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine.

Gender Identity

One's internal, deeply held sense of one's gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices. Unlike gender expression, gender identity is not visible to others.

Gender Non-Conforming

A term used to describe some people whose gender expression is different from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. Please note that not all gender non-conforming people identify as transgender; nor are all transgender people gender non-conforming. Many people have gender expressions that are not entirely conventional—that fact alone does not make them transgender. Many transgender men and women have gender expressions that are conventionally masculine or feminine. Simply being transgender does not make someone gender non-conforming. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as gender non-conforming.

Transgender Boy/Man

People who were assigned female at birth but identify and live as a man may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten it to trans man. (Note: trans man, not "transman.") Some may also use FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male. Some may prefer to simply be called men, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

Transgender Girl/Woman

People who were assigned male at birth but identify and live as a woman may use this term to describe themselves. They may shorten to trans woman. (Note: trans woman, not "transwoman.") Some may also use MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female. Some may prefer to simply be called women, without any modifier. It is best to ask which term an individual prefers.

The Position Statement takes into consideration students who are questioning their identity as well as those who have confirmed their gender identity.

**Definitions from GLAAD*

II. Transgender Position Statement:

The National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS) believes the education of girls must ensure intellectual and social safety. Forging strong communities built on supportive relationships are hallmarks of all-girls schools. NCGS recognizes that when students transition—or begin to question their gender identity—they remain at the core young people with whom our schools have built trusting and safe relationships. Therefore, NCGS encourages our schools to consider, at every point, the importance of working in a supportive way with students and families **on a case-by-case basis** during enrollment processes and as students identify as transgender within their school communities.

Our schools are also committed to creating a safe and secure environment for all students and protecting each and every student from harassment, bullying, and negative behaviors, based on a student's gender questioning or transgender identity.

As such, NCGS recommends:

- Our schools recognize that each student is an individual with unique needs, skills, and personalities.
- Our schools consider the needs and concerns of each transgender student on an individual basis, as each transgender student is unique.
- Our schools create and maintain an academic community that ensures the healthy development of all students.
- Our schools provide a safe environment where our students may feel comfortable to express their gender identity.
- Our schools approach transgender issues in a way that reflects “seeking to know and understand.”
- Our schools understand that the legal terrain is changing quickly as regards transgender youth and varies state by state, and securing up to date legal opinions relevant for a school’s locale is highly recommended.
- Our schools make decisions, policies, and procedures related to transgender students in alignment and consistent with their mission and diversity statements.
- Our schools communicate with and assist transgender and gender questioning students to monitor and address any bullying or harassment they may be experiencing.
- Our schools familiarize themselves and keep current on the best practices in the industry when working with transgender students, their families, and the school community.
- Our schools consult NCGS resources, read reports, materials, and other articles and participate in professional development activities to remain current on best practices for working with transgender students, their families, and the school community.
- Our schools schedule in-service programs to educate all community members, including staff, students, parents, alumnae, and trustees, on issues related to the questioning of gender identity, transgender issues, and the challenges faced by transgender individuals, including bullying.

When developing student enrollment policies, NCGS recommends:

- Our schools consider whether a student who consistently expresses a gender identity as a girl should be considered for enrollment, regardless of sex assigned at birth (trans girl).
- Our schools consider whether a student who identified as a girl when enrolled who later identifies as a male can remain at the school, and if not, how the school will support and assist him in finding educational alternatives (trans boy).
- Our schools consider and then determine whether a student who expresses a non-binary gender identity can remain enrolled at the school (neither girl nor boy).

When developing alumnae name and identity policies, NCGS recommends:

- Our schools develop policies and procedures for working with alumnae who request changes to their gender and/or name on official school documents, such as transcripts, diplomas, charitable gift receipts, etc.