

## Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students

Webb has established guidelines and practices to support transgender students. These guidelines do not anticipate every circumstance; they aim to describe common situations that may be relevant. Ultimately, the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming students must be assessed on a case by case basis, and these guidelines set out a practice to facilitate dialogue between individual students and school administration.

**Useful Definitions.** Language to understand the complexity of gender continues to evolve. Some useful terms are included here, with an understanding that this vocabulary is fluid. Definitions are adapted from NAIS's *The Transgender Student* (April 2014).

**Cisgender:** refers to people whose sex assignment at birth corresponds to their gender identity and expression.

**Gender:** For many people the terms “gender” and “sex” are used interchangeably. However, biological sex and gender are not the same, and gender is not inherently connected to one’s physical anatomy. “Gender” refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex.

**Gender Identity:** A person’s deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender which may or may not correspond to the person’s body or designated sex at birth (meaning what sex was originally listed on a person’s birth certificate.)

**Gender Expression:** The manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms. Readers should note that often social or cultural norms vary, and some characteristics that may be accepted as feminine, masculine, or neutral in one culture may not be assessed similarly in another culture.

**Gender Nonconforming:** A term for people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as “feminine” boys, “masculine” girls, and those who are perceived as androgynous.

**Sex:** Refers to a person's biological status as male, female or intersex. Intersex is the atypical combination of features that usually distinguish male from female. There are a number of indicators of sex which include sex chromosomes, gonads, internal reproductive organs, and external genitalia.

**Sexual Orientation:** Sexual orientation refers to the sex of those to whom someone is sexually or romantically attracted. Categories of sexual orientation typically include (1) gay men or lesbians - people attracted to members of one's own sex; (2) heterosexuals - attraction to members of the other sex; and (3) bisexual - attraction to members of both sexes. A person's sexual orientation is distinct from a person's gender identity and expression. Like anyone else, a transgender person can be homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual.

**Transgender:** refers to a person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with an assigned sex at birth. Other similar terms include transsexual and trans. It may also be an umbrella term that includes people who are transsexual, crossdressers, or otherwise gender nonconforming. Not all people who consider themselves, or may be considered by others as, transgender will undergo a gender transition. A person who is assigned male at birth and then openly expresses female gender is a transgender woman.

Webb believes that a student's determination of gender identity rests with the student. As such, students are assigned to the Vivian Webb School and Webb School of California based on the gender identity indicated by the student and their parents during the application process. In keeping with the structure of the two schools, this gender identity will be utilized to assign students to school-based residential and academic programs.

When a student seeks support in addressing issues related to gender, an administrative team consisting of the dean of students, director of counseling & health education, director of studies, and assistant head of schools will work with that student to craft a gender support plan and a gender communication plan. Potential areas for discussion include but are not limited to the following:

**Names/Pronouns.** Students have the right to be addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to the gender identity to which they identify. A student's requested name shall be included in the electronic student record system along with the student's legal name in order to inform teachers of the name and pronoun to use when addressing the student. While inadvertent slips or honest mistakes in the use of preferred names or pronouns may occur, Webb does not tolerate intentional and persistent refusal to respect a student's gender identity by using the wrong name and/or pronoun.

**Official School Records.** Webb will change a student’s official record to reflect a change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation, such as a court order or an amendment to a state or federally-issued identification. To the extent that Webb is not legally required to use a students’ legal name and gender on school records or documents, Webb will use the name and gender by which the student identifies.

**Restroom Accessibility.** Students are allowed to use the restroom that corresponds to the gender with which they identify. Gender-neutral bathrooms are available in Fawcett Library, the Administration Building, Chandler East and West, South Hutch Dormitory, Alamo Dormitory, and the Ruddick Room and are available to all students. No student will be required to use an alternative restroom because of gender identification.

**Dress Code.** Webb’s academic dress code is gender neutral. For formal occasions, such as those involving the Vivian Webb School or Webb School of California uniform, students may work with the school to adjust the uniform so as to dress in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression.

**Athletics.** The California Interscholastic Federation’s “Guidelines for Gender Identity Participation” sets out a clear procedure for students to request to participate in interscholastic sports in a gender not in keeping with their sex assigned at birth.

**Dormitories and Overnight Trips.** Webb maintains separate dormitories and sleeping arrangements on overnight trips for boys and girls. Transitioning transgender students may request a move to be housed in keeping with their gender identity. Parental support, availability of rooms, and well-being of the student are all factors that may be weighed in assessing a request.

## **Harassment and Discrimination Policy**

The Webb Schools are committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and maintain a strict policy prohibiting all forms of unlawful harassment and discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected class. As members of this community, we strive to develop meaningful relationships based on respect and consideration for one another. We consider how our words and actions may affect others as well as reflect on ourselves. As a diverse community, we aim to foster an environment that genuinely encourages respectful expression of differing ideas and values.

Discriminatory and/or harassing conduct, whether on or off school campus, in person or via social media, is a major school offense. Such behavior can range from the subtle to the overt and can include, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Actions or words degrading the race, ethnic or national origins, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical characteristics of others.
- Uninvited physical advances, whether sexual or threatening.
- Behavior which interferes with the emotional, physical, economic, or educational well-being of the recipient.

It should be noted that the perceptions of the recipient, not simply the intentions of the author of such behavior, will be relevant in determining whether a situation warrants disciplinary review. In all such encounters of this behavior, the school will endeavor to initiate dialogue with the individuals involved with the goal of increasing our understanding of one another and the issues involved. In our efforts to build community, it is the schools' expectation that when behavior injurious to others occurs in their presence, students will seek to take reasonable action to stop that behavior and support an environment of mutual respect.

## Rules and Regulations

### School Jurisdiction

Boarding students are under the jurisdiction of the school when they arrive on campus at the beginning of the school year until they leave at the conclusion of the school year—except when they travel off-campus with their parents or legal guardians. Students who take day or evening permissions, such as a six-hour pass, remain under school jurisdiction even when off-campus.

A day student is under school jurisdiction at all times when on campus. The same holds true when a day student is in the company of a boarding student under school jurisdiction, and is subject to all Webb school rules and standards.

The school reserves the right to apply any of its rules and to impose disciplinary measures upon students even during times that the school normally does not exercise jurisdiction if a student behaves in a manner that is determined to be in violation of the school's Honor Code.