



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
School Psychologists

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NASP Applauds Obama Administration Decree on Civil Rights Protections for Transgender Students

Bethesda, Maryland—The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) applauds President Obama’s actions to protect the rights of transgender students as part of U.S. public schools’ obligations under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The Administration’s new guidance affirms NASP’s long-standing position on necessary policies and practices to support the safety and well-being of all students, including those who are transgender and gender diverse. We are hopeful that this guidance and the accompanying resources regarding emerging practices will result in all school districts adopting the essential policies and practices that ultimately contribute to safe and supportive school environments for all students.

The letter—signed by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U. S. Department of Education and sent to every public school in the country—requires all schools to allow students to use facilities that match their chosen gender identity or face possible lawsuits and loss of federal aid. The letter further states that, “The desire to accommodate others’ discomfort cannot justify a policy that singles out and disadvantages a particular class of students.” NASP strongly concurs.

As stated in our official position statement on “Safe Schools for Transgender and Gender Diverse Students” (2014): “[NASP] supports efforts to ensure that schools are safe and inclusive learning environments for all students, family members, and school staff, including those who are transgender or gender diverse. NASP respects a person’s right to express gender identity, and the right to modify gender expression when necessary for individual well-being. In addition, NASP supports all students’ right to explore and question their gender identity. NASP is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and the promotion of equal opportunity, fairness, justice, and respect for all persons.”

“School psychologists regularly work with students who are struggling with issues related to bullying or victimization, social–emotional concerns, and mental health issues that arise for various reasons, including those related to sexuality and gender identity,” says NASP President Todd Savage, PhD, NCSP. “All children and youth have the right to a safe, supportive, and equal public education and the Administration’s guidance represents a positive, appropriate move to ensure that right.”

NASP looks forward to supporting school psychologists, other school leaders, and public officials in developing and implementing policies and practices that respect the rights of transgender and gender diverse students. Resources to help in this effort are available at www.nasponline.org/resources/transgender-youth.

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NASP empowers school psychologists by advancing effective practices to improve students’ learning, behavior, and mental health. Further information is available at www.nasponline.org.

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