

GET THE FACTS: WHAT GUSD STUDENTS LEARN AT SCHOOL

Message from Interim Superintendent Darneika Watson, Ph.D.

In Glendale Unified School District, we are committed to providing **safe, inclusive** environments where **every** child can learn and thrive. We **follow all laws and policies** established by the California legislature and the Department of Education.



We know that **kids do better when their parents are involved** in their education. We work with parents as partners and encourage all parents and other caregivers to **be inquisitive and to engage with us in a civil manner** about what is going on in our school community.

In this document, you will find information to help understand our curriculum and policies, how our decisions are guided by California law and our core values, and the options parents/guardians have to **ask questions, address concerns, or opt out** of certain educational opportunities. We will continue to add new topics and information to this document.

Let's continue to work together, commit to having difficult conversations, ask questions, and maintain a civil discourse for the benefit of all students.

Topics Included in This Document

[Curriculum and Instructional Materials](#)

[Teen Development and Sex Education](#)

[Gender Identity and Transgender Students](#)

[Student Discipline](#)

See Something, Say Something, Do Something!

If you see something concerning on campus, in the community, or on social media reach out immediately!

1. Talk to your teacher or principal
2. Contact the district office (818) 241-3111
 - Elementary Instruction, Executive Director Dr. Brook Reynolds, Ext. 1224
 - Middle and High School Instruction, Executive Director Dr. Chris Coulter, Ext. 1214
 - School Safety, Director Hagop Eulmessekian, Ext. 1243
3. Submit a tip at www.gusd.net/TipLine (tips can be submitted anonymously)

Curriculum and Instructional Materials

Key Points

- GUSD has a process for selecting curriculum and instructional materials.
- We intentionally include diverse voices and lessons in our curriculum, supplemental materials, and library books so all children can see themselves in the curriculum and understand the diversity of their peers.
- Elementary curriculum related to diversity, including LGBTQ+ issues, is focused on highlighting all different types of families. Elementary curriculum does not include specific information about LGBTQ+ or gender identity.
- History and social science materials are aligned to the CA History Social Science Framework and CA Senate Bill 48 (The FAIR Education Act).
- Administrators and teachers are trusted to use professional judgment when deciding if a particular topic is suitable for study or discussion in accordance with CA Education Code and state law.
- GUSD has a process for parents/guardians to report concerns about what is being taught in their child's classroom. The first step is to address any concerns with the school principal.
- Parents/guardians can contact their principal to get a tour of their child's library, talk about the curriculum selection process, and address concerns.

More Information

- [Frequently Asked Questions about CA Senate Bill 48 \(the FAIR Education Act\)](#)
 - The FAIR Education Act was signed into law in 2011. It requires that California public schools provide Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful representations of our diverse ethnic and cultural population in the K-12 grade history and social studies curriculum.
 - According to the FAIR Education Act, instruction in history/ social science shall include the following ethnic and cultural populations in the teaching California and United States history: both men and women; Native Americans; African Americans; Mexican Americans; Asian Americans; Pacific Islanders; European Americans; Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans; and Persons with disabilities.
- [California History Social Science Framework](#)
 - On July 14, 2016, the CA State Board of Education adopted an updated History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools that includes new guidance for how to integrate the content required by the FAIR Education Act into classroom instruction.
- GUSD Board Policies and Administrative Regulations aligned to curriculum and instruction:
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 6141: Curriculum Development and Evaluation
 - [Board Policy](#) 6144: Instruction on Topics of Political and Socio-Cultural Importance
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 6161.1: Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials
 - [Board Policy](#) 6161.11: Supplementary Instructional Materials
 - [Board Policy](#) 6163.1: Library Media Centers (including selection and evaluation of library materials)

Teen Development and Sex Education

Addressing Disinformation

- Sex education is not taught to young children. Students learn about changes that happen during puberty in grade 5. They receive sex education, including STD/HIV prevention, in grades 7 and 9.
- Sex education does not include descriptions or instruction about sexual positions.

Key Points

- In GUSD, health instruction related to teen development and sexual health education is taught in grades 5 (development/maturation), 7 and 9 (sex education/ HIV prevention).
- Parents/guardians may review the materials for development/maturation and sex education curriculum in advance and opt their child out of these lessons if they choose.
- The option to opt out pertains only to certain curriculum, including development/maturation and sex education. Parents/guardians **may not** opt their child out of any lesson referencing LGBTQ+ individuals and history, as dictated by the FAIR act.
- Grade 5 development/maturation instruction:
 - Focuses on body changes that occur during puberty.
 - Boys and girls are separated into two different rooms and shown a 16–20-minute video, typically by the school nurse.
 - Some schools provide a video link to parents to show at home in lieu of watching the video at school.
- Grade 7 and 9 sex education instruction
 - Aligned to the California Healthy Youth Act
 - Taught in 7th grade science (spring) and 9th grade health classes

More Information

- [CA Assembly Bill 329 Pupil instruction: sexual health education](#)
- [California Healthy Youth Act, California Education Code sections 51930–51939](#)
 - “Each school district shall ensure that all pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education from instructors trained in the appropriate courses. Each pupil shall receive this instruction at least once in junior high or middle school and at least once in high school.”
- [CA Department of Education: Comprehensive Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Instruction](#)

Transgender Students

Addressing Disinformation

- GUSD employees welcome every student regardless of their gender or gender identity. Employees do not proactively encourage students to come out as transgender.
- GUSD employees are not medical doctors. Employees do not refer students for medical treatment or perform medical procedures on students.
- GUSD employees do not administer any medications to students without expressed written permission from a parent or guardian.
- No student has ever been disciplined – much less suspended or expelled – for accidentally using the incorrect pronoun to refer to another person.
- Ray Shelton was not fired from GUSD for speaking out about transgender policies. He submitted retirement paperwork on March 3, 2023, and his retirement was approved by the Board of Education on April 18, 2023 – prior to him ever attending a board meeting to speak about transgender policies.

Key Points

Gender Identity and Pronouns

- GUSD's policies follow the law and require the signature of a parent or guardian before an official school record is changed.
- Since 2013, state law has mandated that students have a right to ask to be referred to by a name or pronoun that might be different from that on their official record. A school may not question the student's asserted gender identity.
- Disclosing a student is transgender without the student's permission may violate California antidiscrimination laws.
- A school must protect children from being teased for failing to conform to sex stereotypes, including being deliberately referred to by the name and/or pronouns associated with the student's assigned sex at birth.

Locker Rooms

- California law requires that, "students shall have access to the restroom and locker room that corresponds to their gender identity asserted at school."
- All GUSD locker rooms are equipped with private changing facilities for any student who wishes to use them.
- No student is ever forced to disrobe or change clothes in front of any adult at school.

More Information

Federal Law

- Title IX prohibits sexual harassment and discrimination based on gender or sex stereotypes in every jurisdiction. While Title IX does not specifically use the terms "transgender" or "gender

identity or expression,” courts have held that harassment and other discrimination against transgender and gender nonconforming people constitutes sex discrimination.

- This position has also been supported by the U.S. Department of Education. These rights were clarified in the October 26, 2010, “Dear Colleague Letter” and the April 29, 2014, guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

CA Ed Code 220

- No person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution that receives, or benefits from, state financial assistance, or enrolls pupils who receive state student financial aid.

Laws pertaining to students who have changed their gender in their official record:

- [California Department of Education FAQ: What steps should a school or school district take to protect a transgender or gender nonconforming student’s right to privacy?](#)
 - To prevent accidental disclosure of a student’s transgender status, it is strongly recommended that schools keep records that reflect a transgender student’s birth name and assigned sex (e.g., copy of the birth certificate) apart from the student’s school records.
 - Schools should consider placing physical documents in a locked file cabinet in the principal’s or nurse’s office.

Laws pertaining to a students’ gender identity expressed at school:

- [Ed Source Article, July 13, 2023: Judge rejects suit to force California schools to report students’ gender identity to parents](#)
- [CA Assembly Bill 1266 \(2013\)](#)
 - Requires that a pupil be permitted to participate in sex-segregated school programs and activities, including athletic teams and competitions, and use facilities consistent with his or her gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on the pupil’s records.
- [CA School Boards Association \(CSBA\) Analysis of State Law](#)
 - An LEA should accept a student’s asserted gender and treat the student in a manner consistent with that student’s gender identity, especially where the student either: (1) expresses that identity at school or (2) where there is other evidence that this is a sincerely held part of the student’s core identity.
 - If either criterion is met, then **a school may not question the student’s asserted gender identity** except in the rare circumstance where school personnel have a credible basis for believing that the student is making that assertion for some improper purpose.
 - Schools cannot require a student to provide any particular type of diagnosis, proof of medical treatment or meet an age requirement as a condition to receiving the protections afforded under California’s anti-discrimination statutes.

- [California Department of Education FAQ: How should school districts and schools address harassment, bullying and abuse of transgender students?](#)
 - California law requires that schools provide all students with a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment, free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
 - Examples of harassment and abuse commonly experienced by transgender students include, but are not limited to:
 - being teased for failing to conform to sex stereotypes,
 - **being deliberately referred to by the name and/or pronouns associated with the student's assigned sex at birth,**
 - being deliberately excluded from peer activities, and
 - having personal items stolen or damaged.
 - School district efforts to prevent and address harassment **must include:**
 - strong local policies and procedures for handling complaints of harassment.
 - consistent and effective implementation of those policies, and
 - encouraging members of the school community to report incidents of harassment.
 - Beyond investigating incidents, schools should implement **appropriate corrective action to end the harassment** and monitor the effectiveness of those actions.
- [California Department of Education FAQ: How does a school or school district determine the appropriate facilities, programs, and activities for transgender students?](#)
 - A school may maintain separate restroom and locker room facilities for male and female students. However, students shall have access to the restroom and locker room that corresponds to their gender identity asserted at school.
 - A "gender neutral" restroom or private changing area may be used by any student who desires increased privacy, regardless of the underlying reason.
 - **Schools cannot require a transgender student to use those alternatives.**
 - Some students (or parents) may feel uncomfortable with a transgender student using the same sex-segregated restroom or locker room. This discomfort is not a reason to deny access to the transgender student. School administrators and counseling staff should work with students and parents to address the discomfort and to foster understanding of gender identity, to create a school culture that respects and values all students.

Student Discipline

Addressing Disinformation

- No student would ever be suspended for simply using the incorrect pronoun unless the action escalated to the point that it would be categorized as harassment or bullying based on CA Ed. Code and GUSD Board Policy.

Key Points

- Freedom of speech does not mean freedom from consequences. If a student or employee chooses to use their words to harass, bully, or belittle another person on campus they may be subject to discipline in accordance with GUSD Board Policy.
- Students facing suspension or expulsion have a right to due process.
- GUSD schools commonly mandate that students participate in restorative practices upon returning from suspension. It helps to address the root of the incident and ensure the incident does not happen again.

More Information

- GUSD Board Policies and Administrative Regulations aligned to student discipline:
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 5131.2: Bullying
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 5131.4: Student Disturbances
 - [Board Policy](#) 5137: Positive School Climate
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 5144: Discipline
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 5144.1: Suspension and Expulsion/ Due Process
 - [Admin. Regulation](#) 5144.2: (Students with Disabilities)
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 5145.3: Nondiscrimination/ Harassment
 - [Board Policy](#) and [Admin. Regulation](#) 5145.7: Sexual Harassment
 - [Board Policy](#) 5145.9: Hate Speech and Hate Motivated Conduct