



WHERE DIFFERENCES ARE OUR STRENGTH

LGBTQ Policy Guidelines

Town & Country School Non-Discrimination and Civil Rights Policy

Town & Country School is committed to providing all students, employees, and members of the public with a safe and respectful school and workplace environment. The school prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on real or perceived race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, age or any other classification protected by applicable laws.

This prohibition applies to students, employees, vendors and board members in any aspect of the school's programs, including during school hours, extracurricular activities, school-sponsored events, or outside of school hours if the conduct affects the education or working environment.

Town & Country School's Non-Discrimination Statement

Town & Country School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, age or any other classification protected by applicable law with respect to employment, programs and activities.

The school prohibits discrimination. The school also prohibits retaliation, intimidation, threats, or coercion against any individual who complains about discrimination or participates in the district's discrimination complaint process.

Research

- Research has demonstrated the positive impact that safe and inclusive learning environments can have on student success.
- Research has also shown that LGBTQ students experience unsafe school climates at a higher rate than their peers, leading to greater risk of missed school days, lower GPAs, and higher dropout rates. This includes higher rates of suicide and self harm.

Schools and districts have a significant opportunity – and responsibility– to ensure policies and practices that create safe and inclusive learning environments for all students.

Town & Country School & Staff Guidelines

- Town & Country School is a non-denominational, non-political, private, non-profit school for students with learning disabilities, ADHD, and High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders. This is our primary mission.
- It is Town & Country School's job to teach students how to be open, life-long learners, and formulate their own opinions and beliefs. It is not our job to teach students what our personal beliefs are; that is a job for their parents.
- While we support LGBTQ staff and students, we also recognize that not all families, staff, or students are comfortable with these concepts. We ask that all staff respond with kindness and refrain from sharing individual opinions or beliefs. It is our job to support all students.
- Staff will discourage any class discussions that do not align with the class goals/standards you are teaching.
- Classrooms should display decorations which represent the subject they are teaching. This means, you would not display a pride flag in your classroom unless it pertains directly to a lesson you are teaching as part of your subject.
- The counselor may post items representing the individuals they serve. This includes information on all mental health disorders, grief, relationships, LGBTQ information, social skills, life skills, or any other supportive information.
- Allow staff/students to use their chosen name, gender, and pronouns. Please correct yourself when you make a mistake and apologize. Please let the individual know, we will do our absolute best but might make mistakes.
- If a student wants to discuss topics related to their LGBTQ status outside of class, respond with kindness. Thank them for sharing, recognize how brave they were for sharing, ask if there is anything they need right now. Then move on! Please inform the counselor. The counselor will visit with them and determine if there are any mental health issues, self-harm concerns, and follow up with administration and the parents.
- If any LGBTQ youth need to discuss issues more in depth, that is the job for a counselor, administrator, or their parents. If you are unsure of where to refer them to, ask your administrator.
- As a school, abiding by the guidelines listed, should keep staff from being in the position to discuss these topics with parents. It leaves these discussions in the hands of the administration and counselors.
- If you staff member has a situation in which they are unsure how to proceed, let the student know you will need to give it some thought and will come back to them. This gives you time to discuss it with an administrator or counselor before proceeding.

Town & Country School will

- Allow students to use their chosen name and gender. The counselor or administrator will discuss with the student how they want to be addressed in class, and in school communication with the student's parents or guardians.
- This will look different for each age group.
- Lower school teachers will work with administration to determine the best course of action on a case-by-case basis.
- If students request a name change, pronoun change, or come out to a teacher, please pass this information on to the administrator and counselor. They will address it and produce the best course of action.
- Once the counselor and administrator have gathered information and come to a conclusion, whatever is decided, is the final decision.
- Ensure access to non-gender specific restroom.
- Allow all students to participate in physical education classes and sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity. However, Town & Country School hosts all coed sports, at this time.
- Have a gender-neutral dress code.
- Ensure that all personally identifiable and medical information relating to transgender and gender nonconforming students, like all students, is kept confidential.
- Provide professional development to all staff on LGBTQ awareness, current information/trends, non-discrimination policy, and protocols for supporting LGBTQ youth.
- During the years we have interest, we will host a Gay/Straight Alliance aka LGBTQ+ racial and gender justice organization.