

LGBTQIA+ Resource & Support Guide for Students & Families

Tucson Unified School District

School Year 2023-2024



Table of Contents

TUSD's Commitment to Non-Discrimination	2
TUSD Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness mission	2
Concepts of Identity and Expression	3
Pride Flag Guide	11
TUSD Resources	12
Local Resources and Organizations	13
National Resources and Organizations	15

TUSD's Commitment to Non-Discrimination

TUSD's Governing Board has made clear the expectations of all employees in the publicly accessible Non-Discrimination Policy. Here are some highlights from the Non-Discrimination and Gender Identity Policy:

- In order to ensure a safe school environment, schools must respond promptly and effectively to harassment of all students, including harassment based on a student's actual or perceived gender identity, transgender status, or gender transition.
- Every student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronouns that correspond to the student's gender identity.
- Schools must make a reasonable effort to protect information such as a transgender student's birth name or sex assigned at birth in order to protect that student's privacy.
- A school may not require transgender students to have a medical diagnosis, undergo any medical treatment, or produce a birth certificate or other identification document before treating them consistent with their gender identity.
- When a school provides sex-segregated activities and facilities, transgender students must be allowed to participate in such activities and access such facilities consistent with their gender identity.

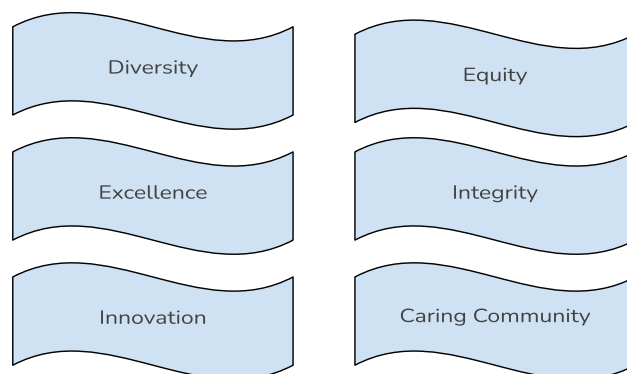
See more on this policy [here](#).

TUSD Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness mission

To serve our students and families to the highest potential, ensuring the learning, development, and academic success for every student.

We will achieve our mission by pursuing diversity through desegregation, integration, and equity of opportunity districtwide, and by eliminating the manifestations of racism, discrimination, and prejudice.

Core Values





Concepts of Identity and Expression

1. Agender

Agender is defined as not having a gender. Some agender people describe it as having a “lack of gender,” while others describe themselves as being gender neutral.

2. Aromantic

'Aro' is an umbrella term used to express a spectrum of feeling little to no romantic attraction. People who identify as aro can exist anywhere on this spectrum and have any sexual orientation.

3. Asexual

People who identify as asexual experience little or no sexual attraction to others. Asexual people, or “aces,” often identify somewhere on a spectrum that includes their emotional, spiritual and romantic attraction to other people. Ace can have any romantic orientation.

4. AFAB

“Assigned female at birth”. Since babies do not self-identify, they are assigned a gender based solely on external genitalia that is visible at birth.

5. Ally

A person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group; typically a member of a dominant or privileged group standing beside member(s) of a group being oppressed, discriminated against, or treated unjustly.

Being an ally is more than being sympathetic towards those who experience discrimination. It is more than simply believing in equality. Being an ally means being willing to act with and for others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equity.

6. AMAB

“Assigned male at birth”. Since babies do not self-identify, they are assigned a gender based solely on external genitalia that is visible at birth.

7. Bigender

Bigender is a gender identity that refers to a person who has two gender identities or a combination of two gender identities, e.g., identifying as both male and female or identifying as agender and female.

8. Bisexual

Bisexual is a sexual orientation that expresses sexual attraction to more than one gender. The "bi" refers to attraction to the binary of my gender - different from my gender. In short, bisexual refers to an attraction to all genders.

Societally, there is a lot of conversation around the overlap between the orientations of bisexual and [pansexual](#).

9. Cisgender

Cisgender describes a person whose [gender identity](#) corresponds to their [sex assigned at birth](#).

10. Deadname

Deadnaming is the act of referring to a [transgender](#) or [non-binary](#) person by a name they used prior to transitioning, such as their birth name. When deadnaming is an intentional attempt to deny, mock or invalidate a person's gender identity, it is considered a [microaggression](#).

Deadnaming can be accidental. In this case, acknowledge your mistake, apologize, and use the person's correct name (verify with compassion if needed).

11. Discrimination

Discrimination is the act of making unjustified distinctions between people based on the groups, classes, or other categories to which they belong or are perceived to belong. People may be discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, as well as other categories.

12. Gay

People usually describe themselves as gay when they find themselves emotionally and sexually attracted exclusively to people of their own gender. Many gay women refer to themselves as [lesbian](#). Gay is a sexual orientation.

13. Gender Binary

The gender binary (also known as gender binarism) is the classification of gender into two distinct, opposite forms of masculine and feminine, whether by social system, cultural belief, or both simultaneously.

The word “binary” limits the possible options within a group to 2. By definition, a gender binary acknowledges only 2 genders.

14. Gender Expression

Gender expression refers to the way a person communicates gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, voice or body characteristics.

Since gender is a social construct, interpretations of expression are impacted by the culture in which the interpretation is occurring even though the expression itself is determined by individuals for themselves.

15. Gender Identity

Gender identity refers to a person’s internal sense of being male, female or something else. Because this is an internal sense, it can only be determined by individuals for themselves.

16. Gender Non-Conforming

Gender nonconforming refers to people who do not follow other people's ideas or stereotypes about how they should look or act based on the female or male [sex they were assigned at birth](#).

17. Gender Spectrum

The Gender Spectrum is a visual tool used to help people apply words to their internal sense of their [gender identity](#) and communicate with others about it.

This spectrum is a continuous scale typically represented with male on one end and female on the other. These boundaries are based on a [gender binary](#).

Other models that reject a foundational assumption of a gender binary present gender in multidimensional models that better represent [gender fluidity](#).

18. Genderfluid

Gender fluidity refers to change over time in a person's [gender expression](#) or [gender identity](#), or both. There is no time requirement for when a person may feel their gender has shifted.

19. Genderqueer

The term genderqueer means someone who does not follow binary gender norms. They may identify as [non-binary](#), [agender](#), pangender, [genderfluid](#), or another gender identity.

20. GSA

GSAs are student-run clubs that serve as Safe Spaces for LGBTQ+ and allied youth to build community and have evolved over the years to provide space to engage in social change related to racial, gender, and educational justice.

GSAs were formally known as Gay-Straight Alliances and are now known as Genders and Sexualities Alliances to reflect the greater spectrum of queerness. Many GSAs do not use this label at all, and instead create their own name and identity.

Research consistently shows that the presence of a GSA in school has a positive and lasting effect on student health, wellness, and academic performance. It can also protect students from harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, and improve school climates for all students in the long-term.

The right for students to create and engage in GSAs is federally protected.

If students want to formalize their clubs and do fundraising, they can request student club paperwork packet at their school office.

21. Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of [discrimination](#) and [oppression](#) and we must consider everything and anything that can marginalize people (gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc.)

When a person is a member of multiple marginalized groups, the intersections of those roles can exponentially magnify experiences of oppression.

Exercising appreciation for diversity can foster compassion for intersectionality.

22. Intersex

Intersex is an umbrella term for differences in sex traits or reproductive anatomy. About 1.7% of the population is born intersex. Some intersex traits are noticed at birth while others don't show up until puberty or later in life.

23. Lesbian

A woman who is sexually or romantically attracted exclusively to other women; a [gay](#) woman.

24. Microaggression

Microaggression is a term used for commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental slights, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups.

25. Misgendering

Misgendering refers to using a word, especially a [pronoun](#) or form of address, that does not correctly reflect the gender with which that person—especially a [transgender](#) person—identifies.

It is important to consider the variety of gendered terms a language uses, which extends beyond pronouns, such as Mr./Mrs./Ms. or familial relationships like son/aunt/grandpa/sister.

When misgendering is an intentional attempt to deny, mock or invalidate a person's [gender identity](#), it is considered a [microaggression](#).

Avoid misgendering to show respect for a person's pronouns, and their identity as a whole. If you accidentally misgender someone, acknowledge your mistake, apologize, and use the person's correct pronouns (verify with compassion if needed).

26. Non-Binary (NB or Enby)

Non-binary is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with the [gender binary](#) of 'man' or 'woman'.

Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

Some gender identities include: [genderqueer](#), [agender](#), bigender, [cisgender](#), [transgender](#), [non-binary](#), [genderfluid](#), pangender, [2 spirit](#)

27. Oppression

Oppression is malicious or unjust treatment or exercise of power, often under the guise of governmental authority or cultural criticism. Oppression may be overt or covert, depending on how it is practiced.

28. Pansexual

Pansexuality is sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction towards people *regardless* of their sex or gender identity. Some use “panromantic” to delineate between romantic and sexual attraction.

Pansexual people may refer to themselves as gender-blind, asserting that gender and sex are not determining factors in their romantic or sexual attraction to others.

29. Pronouns

Pronouns take the place of nouns. In regards to person pronouns, all refer to people in the third person, used when you talk about someone who is not participating in the conversation.

A person's pronouns convey their [gender identity](#). LGBTQ+ people use a wide variety of pronouns that affirm who they are. Using someone's self-defined pronouns respects all identities on the spectrum.

Avoid [misgendering](#) to show respect for a person's designated pronouns, and their identity as a whole. If you accidentally misgender someone, acknowledge your mistake, apologize, and use the person's correct pronouns (verify with compassion if needed).

30. Queer

Denoting or relating to a sexual or gender identity that does not correspond to heterosexual or [cisgender](#) assumptions of sexuality and gender.

Originally meaning strange and used pejoratively against those who expressed same sex desires, the term was reclaimed as an umbrella identity for those proud to deviate from heterosexual or cisgender assumptions of sexuality and gender.

Queer identities are often recognized and celebrated with the common initialization of LGBTQ+. The current full list of initials that represents the queer community is LGBTQQIP2SAA. It stands for [lesbian](#), [gay](#), [bisexual](#), [transgender](#), [queer](#), [questioning](#), [intersex](#), [pansexual](#), [two-spirit](#), [asexual](#), and [ally](#).

31. Questioning

A term used to describe those who are in a process of discovery and exploration about their sexual orientation, [gender identity](#), [gender expression](#), or a combination thereof.

32. Sex Assigned at Birth

Sex assigned at birth refers to the label a medical professional gives to a baby when it is born. Babies are typically Assigned Female at Birth ([AFAB](#)) or Assigned Male at Birth ([AMAB](#)) based on genitals. This visual-based [gender binary](#) excludes intersex people and other genetic make-ups of sex.

[Transgender](#) people *do not* identify with their sex assigned at birth. [Cisgender](#) people *do* identify with their sex assigned at birth.

33. Transgender

Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose [gender identity](#), [gender expression](#) or behavior does not conform to what is typically associated with the [sex to which they were assigned at birth](#) ([AFAB / AMAB](#)).

34. Two Spirit

Two Spirit is a term used within some Indigenous communities, encompassing cultural, spiritual, sexual and [gender identity](#). The term reflects complex Indigenous understandings of gender roles, spirituality, and the long history of sexual and gender diversity in Indigenous cultures.

Two Spirit acknowledges the continuum and fluidity of gender identity and expression as these people have both a male and female spirit within them that allow them to engage with the world from these two perspectives.

LGBTQQIP**2S**A+ includes **2S** to acknowledge this unique, Indigenous queer identity.

Pride Flag Guide



Gilbert Baker's original 1977 Pride Flag. Stripes (from top): Sex, Life, Healing, Sunlight, Nature, Magic/Art, Serenity, Spirit.



Common LGBT+ Pride Flag. The community adopted this 6-color version in 1979 and hung them from lampposts in SF.



Philly's more recent version added black & brown stripes to explicitly include queer people of color.



Lesbian



Bisexual



Pansexual



Polysexual



Asexual



Aromantic



Transgender



Nonbinary



Genderfluid



Genderqueer



Intersex

TUSD Resources

1. TUSD Non-Discrimination policies

Tucson Unified School District is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination based on disability, race, color, religion/religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, or national origin, as well as retaliation for opposition to such discrimination.

The Board believes in fostering a safe educational environment in which every student has equal access to all school programs and activities. To that end, the Board is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in regard to gender identity. This policy will prevail in all matters concerning staff members, students, the public, educational programs and services, and individuals with whom the Board does business.

Inquiries concerning Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, and Americans With Disabilities Act may be referred to the TUSD EEO Compliance Officer at (520) 225-6444; or to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, Colorado 80204-3582.

For more information, see:

[TUSD Non-Discrimination Policy](#)

[TUSD Non-Discrimination and Gender Identity Policy](#)

2. TalkSpace App

TUSD offers free therapy by text through the TalkSpace app. Just download the app on your phone to sign up and start receiving services immediately.

[Click here for the TUSD Talkspace website](#)

3. Talk It Out Counseling Through UofA

TUSD offers free therapy by Counseling Graduate Students through Talk it Out.

[Click here for the Talk it Out website](#)

Phone: 1-520-594-7455

4. School Counselors

Did you know that school counselors have similar college education as therapists? They aren't limited to making class schedules.

School counselors are a great resource if you need someone to talk to, or want assistance connecting with local programs and resources.

Local Resources and Organizations

1. Thornhill Lopez Center on 4th

The Thornhill Lopez Center on 4th (TLC4) is a SAAF place for LGBTQIA+ and allied youth ages 13-24 to visit in order to access a variety of services to support their health and well-being. It is also the site of the **EON Youth Lounge**, a gathering place for LGBTQIA+ students.

[Click here for the SAAF website](#)

Address: 526 N. 4th Ave. Tucson, AZ 85705

2. Valid USA: Gender-Affirming Youth Resources

An Affirming Wardrobe provides free gender-affirming clothing, undergarments, and resources to transgender youth up to the age of 24.

[Click here for the Valid USA website](#)

3. Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA)

Southern Arizona Gender Alliance envisions a society in which transgender people are ensured of their basic rights and can be open, honest, and safe at home, at work, and in the community.

SAGA organizes educational, social, and advocacy programs for gender-diverse people and their significant others, friends, families, and allies. SAGA offers information, support services and social opportunities for transgender people while educating businesses and health and human services providers about transgender issues.

[Click here for the SAGA Tucson website](#)

4. Tucson Pride, Inc.

Tucson Pride, Inc. produces and promotes cultural, educational and recreational events for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community in Tucson, Arizona including the annual Pride celebration and parade in October of every year.

[Click here for the Tucson Pride website](#)

5. El Rio Health

El Rio provides affirming, respectful, and quality healthcare to the Pediatric and Adult Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming communities.

Services provided: Primary care, gender confirming hormone therapy, puberty blockers and sensitive referrals. They are dedicated to providing gender-affirming, patient centered care.

[Click here for the El Rio website](#)

6. Equality Arizona

Equality Arizona is Arizona's only statewide LGBTIA+ civil rights organization working to secure, protect and defend the rights and welfare of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Arizona.

[Click here for the Equality Arizona website](#)

7. UNIDAS Teen Program

UNIDAS is a semester-long after school program for women and gender-expansive youth offered by the Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona. During weekly meetings, members have a chance to create community, practice self-care, and discuss social justice issues important to them.

[Click here for the UNIDAS website](#)

National Resources and Organizations

1. Federal Non-Discrimination Law

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, and Americans With Disabilities Act. Title IX refers to protections for students based on sex:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. A recipient institution that receives (federal) Department funds must operate its education program or activity in a nondiscriminatory manner free of discrimination based on sex, including sexual orientation and gender identity. Also, no recipient or other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX. Some key issue areas in which recipients have Title IX obligations are: recruitment, admissions, and counseling; financial assistance; athletics; sex-based harassment, which encompasses sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence; treatment of pregnant and parenting students; treatment of LGBTQI+ students; discipline; single-sex education; and employment.

[Click here for more about Title IX and Sex Discrimination](#)

2. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC)

An organization with over 3 million members, HRC has a host of online resources for LGBTQIA+ youth and allies. HRC also conducts a lot of advocacy work and provides direct support programming.

[Visit HRC.org for more information](#)

3. The Trevor Project

The Trevor project is non-profit organization that works to end suicide in the LGBTQ population. They offer a 24/7 hotline, crisis counseling, educational resources and advocacy to help reduce risk factors for suicidal youth.

[Visit TheTrevorProject.org for more information](#)

Support Hotline: 1-866-488-7386

4. National Suicide Prevention Hotline

988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors who will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary.

[Visit the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website here](#)

Phone: 988

* the old number is still accessible: 1-800-273-8255

5. Parents Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

The United States first and largest organization supporting LGBTQIA+ individuals, their families, and their friends. PFLAG oversees a host of programs and advocacy efforts and has launched the Cultivating Respect: Safe Schools for All program to improve school climates for LGBTQIA+ students.

[Click here to visit PFLAG.org for more information](#)

6. True Colors Fund

The True Colors Fund helps to end LGBT youth homelessness. They provide programs in public policy, community organizations, youth collaborations, public education as well as research. They also offer workshops, and a map with LGBTQ friendly service providers.

[Click here to visit the True Colors United website for more information](#)

7. Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

GLSEN is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students. Established in 1990, GLSEN envisions a world in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. GLSEN seeks to develop school climates where difference is valued for the positive contribution it makes to creating a more vibrant and diverse community.

[Visit the GLSEN website by clicking here](#)

[Review the 2019 GLSEN National School Climate Survey results here](#)