

Walker Creek Ranch Policy **Student Gender Identity**

The Walker Creek Ranch Program Staff will Respect all Students' Gender Identity

All students have the right to assert their own gender identity regardless of their gender presentation. It is not necessary for any medical diagnosis or treatment in order to have an individual's identity recognized at Walker Creek Ranch.

Privacy

All students have the right to keep their gender identity private, which means that Ranch staff cannot share this information with anyone without the student's permission (including other students, cabin leaders, Ranch staff, school staff, the student's own parents or guardians, or anyone else). It is also noted that these same privacy rules apply to the visiting schools—therefore it is likely that Ranch staff may not be informed when a transgender student is on campus. It is **not** appropriate for Ranch staff to actively seek out this confidential information.

All Students Have the Right to be Themselves

Students have the right to be out about their gender identity while at Walker Creek Ranch.

All Students have the Right to be Free from Discrimination and Harassment

All students have the right to be treated equally and to be free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination, regardless of gender identity or gender expression.

Activities

While Ranch activities are generally gender neutral. Students will always be able to participate in activities that are consistent with their own gender identities.

Names and pronouns

Students have the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond with their gender identity. This is true even if a student's name and gender are not legally changed. Walker Creek Ranch will use students' chosen names and pronouns on everything possible— class attendance rosters, nametags, and more. A student's legal name may appear along with the student's chosen name on the student's health form if the student's home school has made this arrangement. In the event of an emergency Ranch staff will need to quickly correlate a student's health form with that student—to identify any allergies, medicine taken, etc. This paperwork is also essential should a student need to be transported to a hospital for any reason.

Cabin Assignments

Visiting schools organize students into their cabin groups prior to arrival at Walker Creek Ranch. Such cabin assignments will be made by the visiting schools following each of their specific policies regarding student gender. On those occasions when Walker Creek Ranch is informed by a visiting school regarding a student who is

transgender or whose gender identity may be different than that student's gender presentation, we will accommodate the cabin assignment into the cabin wherein the student self-identifies.

Restrooms

Walker Creek Ranch allows students to use restrooms that align with their gender identity. If a student desires more privacy and prefers to use a more private restroom or changing area, accommodations will be made. Students will not be forced to use a private restroom (such as in the Infirmary) against their wishes.

Dress code

Students have the right to wear clothing that expresses their own gender identity. Walker Creek Ranch will not require students to dress based on stereotypes about what some people think boys or girls should wear. It is noted, however, that there will be times when all students are required to wear closed-toed shoes and a long skirt or long pants to properly insulate them from potential accidental poison oak exposure.

Background:

The policies outlined above are adapted from information available on the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) website. At their site the ACLU provides information for citizens regarding their legal rights relative to appropriate laws governing gender identity.

The precise language from the ACLU website follows (it is noted that the following statements are relative to school sites and does not cover all considerations in an outdoor school setting. Where information was not applicable it was removed from the above draft policy. When additional information was needed--i.e. cabin assignments-- it was added):

From the ACLU (<https://www.aclunc.org/our-work/know-your-rights/transgender-student-rights-school>)

Respect for your gender identity

You have the right to assert your gender identity at school, regardless of your gender presentation. You do not need any medical diagnosis or treatment to have your identity recognized by your school. However, we recommend talking to and working with your school if possible, especially if you transition while in school.

The right to be you

You have the right to be out about your gender identity at school.

Discrimination and harassment of transgender students

All students have the right to be treated equally and to be free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination, regardless of gender identity or gender expression.

Privacy and outing students

You have the right to keep your gender identity private, which means that school staff cannot out you without your permission to other students or other school staff. Schools should also not out you to your parents or guardians, but be aware that schools have done this in the past.

Sports

Your school must allow you to participate in PE classes and sports that are consistent with your gender identity.

Names and pronouns

You have the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond with your gender identity. This is true even if your name and gender are not legally changed. Your school should use your chosen name and pronouns on everything possible—your student ID, class attendance rosters, yearbook, and more. Your legal name should only appear on your official file.

Restrooms and locker rooms

Your school must allow you to use restrooms and locker rooms that align with your gender identity. If you desire more privacy and prefer to use a more private restroom or changing area, your school should accommodate that. Your school cannot force you to use a private restroom (such as in the nurse's office) if that is not what you prefer.

Dress code and uniform policies

You have the right to wear clothing that expresses your gender identity. If your school has a policy that says what boys and girls may wear to school or for special events, then your school must allow you to wear the clothing that corresponds to your gender identity. It's even better if school dress codes are gender-neutral and do not tell students what to wear based on stereotypes about what some people think boys or girls should wear.