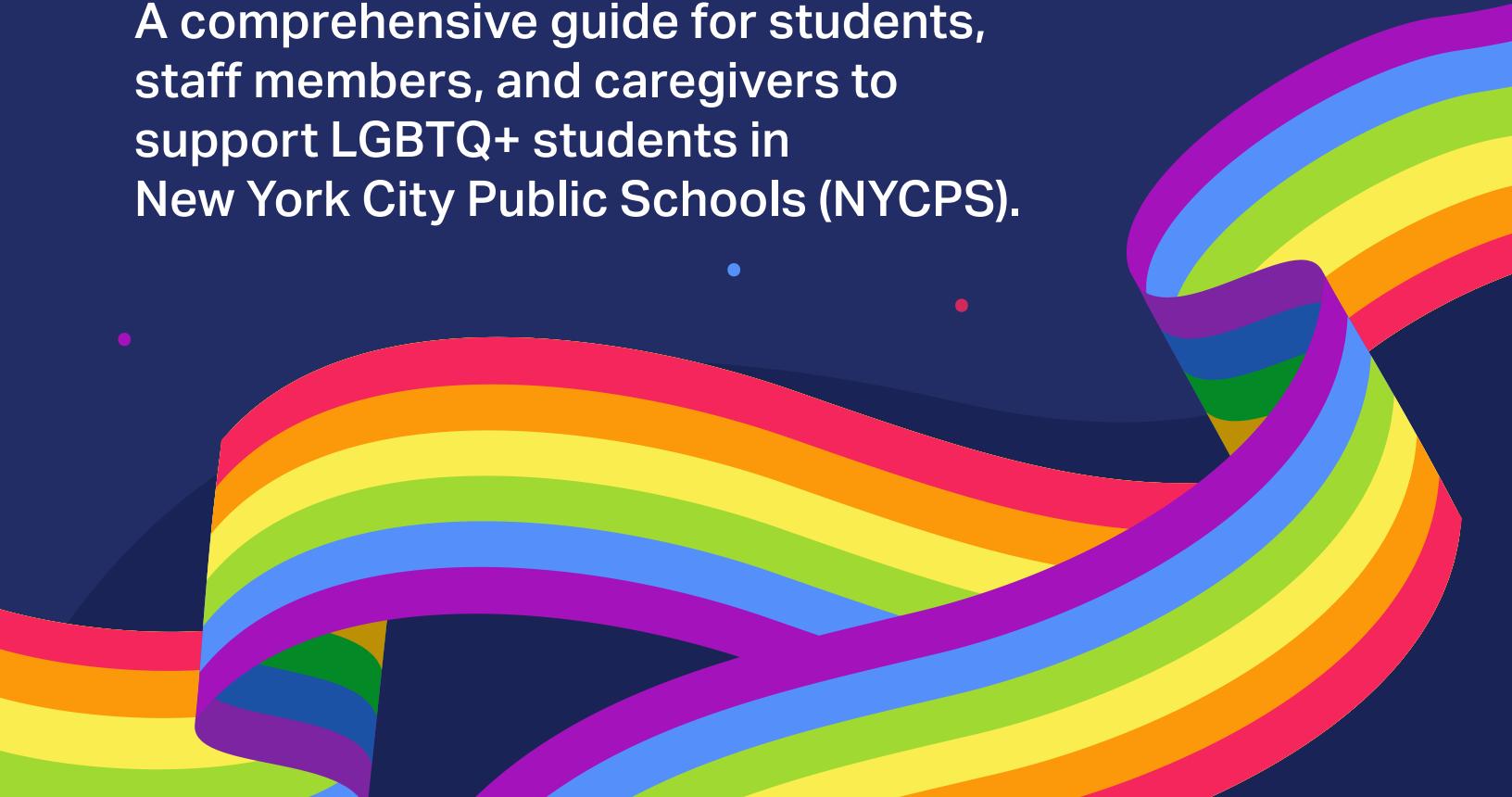




2025-2026

LGBTQ+ Resource Guide

A comprehensive guide for students, staff members, and caregivers to support LGBTQ+ students in New York City Public Schools (NYCPS).



Guide Contents

New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) is proud to support and work with many organizations across the City that serve our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) youth. To assist students and families in finding the resources they need, this guide has three comprehensive parts:

4

PART 1

Supporting LGBTQ+ Students in Our Schools

Resources provided at/by NYCPS for LGBTQ+ students related to:

LBGTQ+ Support Team

Ensuring Student Privacy

Physical Education and Sports

Facilities and Restrooms

Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs)

Student Scholarships

7

PART 2

Community Supports for LGBTQ+ Youth and Families

Resources provided at/by partners of NYCPS for LGBTQ+ youth and their families, such as:

Mental Health Providers and Supports

Housing Resources

LGBTQ+ Community Centers

10

PART 3

Policies and Regulations

Federal, state, and local legal requirements and policy protections for NYCPS students, including:

Process for Name and Gender Changes

Dress Code Policies

Student Privacy Rights

Filing Harassment and Discrimination Complaints

Supporting LGBTQ+ Students in Our Schools

NYCPS is committed to supporting LGBTQ+ students, families, and staff members through inclusive policies and programs that span all five boroughs. These resources are available to any student seeking support at their school as part of our ongoing efforts to foster safe, welcoming, and affirming learning environments for all students.



LGBTQ+ Support Team

The NYCPS LGBTQ+ Support Team can help students and families with:

- 1 Connecting families with resources and opportunities for peer support.
- 2 Planning citywide events for students and families.
- 3 Supporting identity-based clubs, such as Gender and Sexuality Alliances, with centralized funding.
- 4 Coordinating scholarship initiatives, such as the Yankees-Stonewall Scholarship.

They are also a resource to help your school get connected with programming and additional supports.

If you have questions or need these supports at your school, you can reach out to the NYCPS LGBTQ+ Support Team at LGBTQ@schools.nyc.gov.

Ensuring Student Privacy

All NYCPS students may discuss and express their gender openly and decide when, with whom, and how much of their private information to share with others.

NYCPS must follow federal, state, and local privacy laws such as the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Chancellor's Regulation A-820. This means staff members must have a legitimate educational interest in order to access a student's education records. Furthermore, schools may not share information from a student's education record, including information about their gender identity, except in very limited circumstances.

To learn more about FERPA, visit schools.nyc.gov/FERPA. Read more about NYCPS students' privacy rights in Part 3: Policies and Regulations of this guide.

Physical Education and Sports

NYCPS is committed to ensuring that all student athletes have equitable access to physical education, intramural sports, and competitive athletic activities that align with their gender identity.

Generally, students must be permitted to participate in all school activities, including physical education, competitive athletic activities, and sports in accordance with the gender identity they assert at school.

Students who have questions or concerns related to participation in school sports or athletic programs—particularly regarding inclusion, eligibility, or safety—are encouraged to reach out to the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) for support at PSAL@schools.nyc.gov or, for activities outside of PSAL, contact LGBTQ@schools.nyc.gov.

Facilities and Restrooms

NYCPS affirms the right of all students—including transgender and gender expansive students—to access facilities, such as restrooms, locker rooms, or changing rooms, that align with their gender identity asserted at school. Schools must also provide reasonable alternative arrangements for any student who expresses a need or desire for increased privacy.

Schools should have at least one single-occupancy gender-neutral restroom per building designated for students. If your school's building does not have a gender-neutral restroom designated for students, please email your district office (find their contact information at schools.nyc.gov/Superintendents) and send a copy of your message to Facilities@schools.nyc.gov.

Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA) Student Clubs

A GSA is a type of student club where students can meet, support each other, and speak openly about LGBTQ+ experiences and identities. It's a place for all students—including allies and children of LGBTQ+ parents or guardians—to come together to receive support, connect with others, and work to end harassment or discrimination.

If your school does not already have a GSA, students can speak with a trusted adult in their school building—such as your guidance counselor, Respect for All liaison, principal, or a supportive teacher—about the process to create one. For help, please email LGBTQ@schools.nyc.gov.

LGBTQ+ Student Scholarships

Graduating high school students may apply for the Yankees-Stonewall Scholarship Initiative, a \$10,000 scholarship created to commemorate the anniversary of the Stonewall Inn uprising.

The scholarship, which is a partnership between NYCPS, the New York Yankees, and the Stonewall Inn, is awarded each spring to one graduating senior from each borough who has demonstrated academic achievement and impactful support of the LGBTQ+ community in recognition of their achievements. Learn more, including how to apply at schools.nyc.gov/LGBTQSupport.

PART 2

Community Resources for Families and Students

NYCPS is proud to partner with organizations across all five boroughs in providing support to LGBTQ+ youth and families in a variety of areas.



Mental Health Resources

Data shows that many LGBTQ+ students face mental health challenges and that 50% of LGBTQ+ young people who wanted mental healthcare faced barriers to receiving it. Support is available—both in school and through the community organizations below, which offer counseling, crisis help, and guidance tailored to LGBTQ+ youth. Remember: you are not alone.

Support Groups, Therapy, and Counseling

- ▶ PFLAG NYC (pflagnyc.org) is a nonprofit organization that works to support LGBTQ+ youth in NYC. They collaborate with families, schools, and communities to create accepting and supportive environments, allowing youth to thrive and have equal opportunities. They also deliver educational programs to raise awareness and develop support for LGBTQ+ people and their loved ones.
 - Contact: support@pflagnyc.org or 646-240-4288
- ▶ Callen Lorde Behavioral Health (callen-lorde.org/behavioral-health) offers individual and group counseling to support students' emotional and physical well-being. Visit callen-lorde.org/contact to find the location most convenient for you and the various ways to get in touch.
- ▶ The Ackerman Institute for the Family (ackerman.org/research/gfp) provides innovative couple and family therapy services through its on-site clinic, which is licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health. They also offer state-of-the-art training programs for mental health professionals and engage in cutting-edge research initiatives (ackerman.org/about-us).
 - Register for family counseling and therapy at ackerman.org/clinical-services/start-here.
 - For questions, contact info@ackerman.org or 212-879-4900, ext. 100.
- ▶ The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center (The Center) (gaycenter.org/health/counseling) in Manhattan provides counseling and support options for youth and families. For questions, contact 212-620-7310.

Crisis Support Lines

The following crisis support lines are available 24/7 if you need to talk. If you are in danger or in need of immediate medical attention, please call 911.

- ▶ Trans Lifeline (translifeline.org): 877-565-8860
- ▶ The Trevor Project (thetrevorproject.org): 1-866-488-7386
- ▶ NYC Health (nyc988.cityofnewyork.us): Call or Text 988

Housing LGBTQ+ Youth

- ▶ The Ali Forney Center (aliforneycenter.org) provides emergency and transitional housing for LGBTQ+ youth, in addition to 24-hour support services for LGBTQ+ homeless youth.
- ▶ The Door (door.org) provides free, comprehensive health and mental health care, legal assistance, housing support, and more to young people in NYC aged 12 to 24.

LGBTQ+ Community Centers to Support Youth and their Families

Across all five boroughs, community centers offer welcoming safe spaces, resources, and connection for LGBTQ+ youth and their families. Whether you're looking for peer support, youth and family programs, or guidance navigating challenges at home or school, these centers serve as hubs for education, empowerment, and belonging.

Bronx

Destination Tomorrow, South Bronx

- Website: destinationtomorrow.org
- Email: info@destinationtomorrow.org
- Phone: 646-723-3325

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Community Pride Center, Crown Heights

- Website: lgbtbrooklyn.org
- Email: info@lgbtbrooklyn.org
- Phone: 347-889-7719

Manhattan

LGBT Community Center, West Village

- Website: gaycenter.org
- Email: pkarys@gaycenter.org
- Phone: 212-620-7310

Hetrick-Martin Institute, NoHo

- Website: hmi.org
- Email: pmathur@hmi.org
- Phone: 212-674-2400

Queens

LGBT Network, Astoria

- Website: lgbtnetwork.org
- Email: acastillo@lgbtnetwork.org
- Phone: 718-514-2155

Queens Community House, **Generation Q Youth Center**, Forest Hills

- Website: qchnyc.org/programs/lgbtq-services/generation-q-youth-center
- Email: BBogats@qchnyc.org
- Phone: 718-592-5757

Staten Island

Pride Center of Staten Island

- Website: pridecentersi.org
- Email: smieden@pridecentersi.org
- Phone: 718-808-1365

Policies and Regulations

NYCPS must follow federal, state, and local non-discrimination policies to ensure a safe and supportive school environment for all students. Review frequently asked questions about local policy as well as State- and federal-level protections for LGBTQ+ students.



NYCPS Policies - Frequently Asked Questions

How can I update my name and gender in my student records?

For non-permanent records (like yearbooks, student ID cards, sports rosters, homework, or graduation programs), families can request a name change directly with their school, or reach out to LGBTQ@schools.nyc.gov for help. No documentation or parental consent is needed to update these records.

For permanent records (like report cards, transcripts, diplomas, attendance records, or IEPs), parents and guardians, or students over the age of 18, can either:

- ▶ Submit legal documents showing a name change (like a court order, updated birth certificate, or government ID)
- ▶ Submit a Name and Gender Change Request Form (available at schools.nyc.gov/SupportingTransgenderStudents) if the student has not obtained a legal name change, or they wish to update their gender marker.

Because permanent records are shared with families, the form asks for a parent or guardian's signature to make sure students are okay with their family knowing about the name change.

Note: Students are entitled to be called by the name and pronouns that correspond to the gender identity they assert in school, regardless of whether a Name and Gender Change Request Form has been submitted.

What rights do I have regarding dress code and self-expression?

School dress codes must be neutral and applied uniformly. Dress codes may not prohibit students of a specific gender from wearing certain attire or require gender-specific attire. For example, dress codes may not:

- ▶ Prohibit students who identify as male from wearing skirts, jewelry, or nail polish.
- ▶ Require only students who identify as female to wear dresses to school sponsored programs, events, or activities.

Schools are also not permitted to prohibit "distracting" clothing that is stereotypically associated with one gender. However, they may choose to prohibit all students from wearing revealing clothing that does not provide full coverage of private body parts.

For more information about dress code policies, visit schools.nyc.gov/DressCode.

Are LGBTQ+ students entitled to certain privacy rights?

Students have the right to express their gender identity openly and choose when, how, and with whom they share personal information. By law, schools must keep student education records private and cannot share details about a student's transgender or gender-expansive identity except in rare cases, including:

- If the student (if 18 years old or older or enrolled in postsecondary education) or their parent or guardian provides written consent for disclosure;
- In a health or safety emergency, where disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals;
- If it is required by a court order or legal subpoena;
- When otherwise authorized by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

School health staff members—including nurses and doctors—must use the name and pronouns consistent with a student's gender identity asserted at school, and students' medical records must be kept confidential. A student's legal name or gender marker should only be used when necessary for medical care, working with other providers, or filing insurance claims.

Records required for a student's participation in PSAL activities which may identify the student's legal name or other information must also be kept confidential by their coach or athletic director.

How do I file a harassment or discrimination complaint?

Students, parents, and guardians can file a complaint of student-on-student harassment, discrimination, bullying, and/or intimidation by telling any school staff member, emailing RespectforAll@schools.nyc.gov, calling 311, calling 718-935-2288, or submitting an online form (nycenet.edu/bullyingreporting). When a complaint is filed, the school must promptly investigate and follow-up as appropriate per Chancellor's Regulation A-832.

Students, parents, and guardians may make a report of staff-on-student harassment or discrimination directly to the Office of Equal Opportunity using the online form at nycenet.edu/OEO or using the other methods described in Chancellor's Regulation A-830.

These regulations can be found in Volume A of the NYCPS Chancellor's Regulations (schools.nyc.gov/VolumeA).

It is important to note that when supporting a student who is the alleged victim of a harassment or discrimination incident, the student may express concerns about their parent knowing about their gender identity. These situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Where can I learn more?

For more information on the rights LGBTQ+ students have in our schools, visit:

- Guidelines to Support Transgender and Gender Expansive Students: schools.nyc.gov/SupportingTransgenderStudents
- Guidelines on Gender Inclusion: schools.nyc.gov/GenderGuidelines
- LGBTQ+ Supports: schools.nyc.gov/LGBTQSupport
- Respect for All: schools.nyc.gov/RespectForAll

New York State Policies and Guidance

- Dignity for All Students Act (DASA): Seeks to provide public elementary and middle school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying at school. Learn more at p12.nysesd.gov/DignityAct.
- Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA): Prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression in all areas covered by the New York State Human Rights Law. Learn more at nytag.org/genda-know-your-rights.
- Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA): Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in educational settings. Learn more at ag.ny.gov/resources/individuals/civil-rights/sexual-orientation-non-discrimination-act-sonda
- State Guidance for Transgender and Gender Expansive Students: A framework and legal update to support schools in fostering an educational environment that is safe and affirming for transgender and gender expansive students. Learn more at nysesd.gov/student-support-services/LGBTQ.

Federal Policies

- Equal Access Act: Ensures that all student groups are permitted to use school facilities for extracurriculars, regardless of the focus of the group or club. Learn more at law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/4071.
- Title IX: Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs and activities. Learn more at schools.nyc.gov/TitleIX.
 - To file a Title IX complaint, please contact the Title IX Coordinator by phone at 718-935-4987, by email at [Title_IX_Inquiries@schools.nyc.gov](mailto>Title_IX_Inquiries@schools.nyc.gov), or by mail at:

Title IX Coordinator
110 William Street, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10038

