



## PRONOUNS – INTRODUCTIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

We have received numerous reports from parents across Minnesota that students are being compelled by school staff members to publicly identify/introduce themselves by stating their pronouns and/or complete private questionnaires asking which pronouns they prefer and whether they would like to engage in private conversations about sex and gender with a staff member. Teachers have also expressed their concerns about some of the policies and practices that have been adopted that “keep secrets” from parents.

Parents are reporting that their students are feeling uncomfortable, anxious, confused or otherwise upset by this recent trend. They are concerned these inquiries are not age-appropriate and/or appropriate at all. Parents are also justifiably concerned that under these policies and practices, they may be excluded from or denied access to essential facts about the health and well-being of their student.

Here are few things to consider about this issue:

1. Though soliciting this information from students has become more common, **not every teacher or every school has a policy or practice of doing it**. If this issue is concerning to you, the first step in protecting and advocating for your student is to find out specifically what your child’s teacher(s) is or is not doing with respect to soliciting information about their sexuality and gender. That means **you have to ask**. Do this kindly, respectfully and assuming positive intent.
2. Sample language for an email, phone call or conversation is as simple as:

*“I was recently made aware that there is a trend toward students being asked to publicly introduce and identify themselves to staff and classmates using their pronouns and/or to communicate their preferences privately to a teacher via questionnaire. Do you ask students for that information?”*

You may follow their response with:

*“I am raising this concern because (name of child) does not want to be asked to identify themselves in that way. My request is that you refrain from asking them about their pronouns either verbally or in written form or requiring an answer on electronic surveys in order to move on to the next question. I hope you can respect and be sensitive to their feelings and the feelings of other students in the class who do not want to respond to these inquiries and will consider removing sexuality and gender topics from classroom introductions or conversation so there is no judgement or prejudice based on how students respond or don’t respond. I feel strongly about partnering with you to support (name of child) so my expectation is that I am included and involved in any conversations you have with (name of child) about their health and physical and mental well-being.”*

Confirm that they understand your concerns and agree to be on the same team with you when it comes to supporting your child and disclosing any/all information related to your child's identity and performance at school.

3. **Your child does NOT need to respond to these inquiries.** You can and should make it clear to your child that they do not need to provide this information and they should inform you if/when they are being asked for it.
4. **Find out what your school policy is on disclosing information regarding student health (mental and physical, including gender identity and preferences) to parents.** Reach out to your building principal and ask them to confirm that information for you. Review your school district policies (typically accessible on the district website – and often found in the 500 series) regarding gender, student privacy and when/if district personnel can or should keep a student's gender identity/status hidden from parents. Click for examples from [ISD 196](#) and [St. Paul Public Schools](#).

If you have concerns with your district's policy, reach out to your school board members. Encourage them to remove or revise objectionable provisions and/or adopt a policy that is centered in supporting students through parent-teacher partnership and parental involvement.

**Clear, calm, constructive communication is critical.** Please engage respectfully with your child's teacher and building principal and/or district superintendent to understand what is and is not happening in your school community related to asking students for information about their sexuality and gender and sharing or not sharing that with parents. Assume positive intentions and be solutions focused!

If your concerns are not resolved by staff and district leadership, please reach out to us at [info@minnesotaparents.org](mailto:info@minnesotaparents.org) and we will support you in taking additional steps to advocate for your student and yourself.

Preferred Names/Pronouns

Name and Pronouns

What is your legal name?  
What is your preferred name?  
What are your preferred pronouns?  
What name would you prefer I use with parents/ guardians?  
What pronouns would you prefer I use with parents/ guardians?  
Is there anything else I should know pronouns?

Anoka-Hennepin Parents Alliance

As an Anoka-Hennepin teacher, I'm speaking anonymously for fear of retaliation, but feel parents need to know what is going on inside the schools. There are good parents intentionally being kept in the dark while schools affirm their child's gender transition.

At my school, teachers and administrators call a young student by a different name and pronouns at school, and don't inform the parents. The parents should be involved and I don't feel comfortable going behind their backs. There is a huge amount of pressure to go along with a child's gender confusion, and most teachers do.

When speaking to the student's parents, staff use the child's given name and biological pronouns, hiding what is happening at school. Unfortunately, my experience is not an isolated incident in the Anoka-Hennepin district. As a parent myself, I know this is wrong. This secret needs to be told.

Where can I use your preferred pronouns? Check all that apply. \*

In Private Emails/Conversations just between us

In class where other students can hear

With other teachers/admin

In parent/guardian communications (emails, conferences, etc)

N/A

Other

Anything else you think I should know about you?

Your answer

Tell Me About You

Your name: [redacted]

What name should I call you? (what is your nickname): [redacted]

Pronouns: he/him / she/her / they/them / other: NA/they

Please circle your answer choice for the following in regards to your pronoun/preferred name use

★ Please use these in front of the class/other students YES NO

★ Please use these when you contact home YES NO

★ Please use these in front of other teachers/staff YES NO

★ Would you like to have a follow up conversation about this with me? YES NO

Pronouns to be used when contacting home

he/him

she/her

they/them

Pronouns to be used when calling home

he/him

she/her

they/them