

SCHSL TRANSGENDER GUIDELINES

Philosophy of Gender Identity Participation:

The SCHSL allows participation for all students regardless of their gender identity **OR** expression. The purpose of these guidelines is to designate a set of criteria in which student-athletes are able to compete on a level playing field in a safe, competitive and friendly environment, free of discrimination. Fundamental fairness, as well as some local, state, and federal rules and regulations require schools to provide transgender student-athletes with equal opportunities to participate in athletics. These guidelines are designed to create a framework in which the participation may occur in a safe and healthy manner that is fair to all competitors.

Gender Identity Guidelines/Procedure:

All students should have the opportunity to participate in SCHSL activities in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on a student's records. Once the student has been granted eligibility to participate in the sport consistent with his/her gender identity, the eligibility is granted for the duration of the student's participation and does not need to be renewed every sports season or school year.

Privacy Statement:

To the extent permitted by law, all discussions and documents at all levels of the process either by a member school and/or the SCHSL shall be kept confidential, and the proceeding will be sealed unless the student and family make a specific request.

Definitions:

1. **Transgender Person** – A person whose gender identity does not match the sex assigned at birth.
2. **Gender Identity** – A person's deeply-felt internal sense of being male, female, both or neither.
3. **Gender Expression** – A person's external characteristics and behaviors that are socially defined as either masculine, feminine, androgynous (dress, speech, mannerisms, social interactions, etc.)

Steps Required for Consideration to Participate:

1. Notice to the School:

The student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) shall contact the administration at their member school indicating that the student has a consistent gender identity different than listed on the student's school registration records or birth certificate and that the student desires to participate in athletics in a manner consistent with his/her gender identity. The member school shall determine if the student meets the eligibility standards for participation established by the SCHSL and whether the student meets the requirements of participation established by the member school.

2. Notice to the SCHSL:

If the member school deems it appropriate, the member school administration shall contact the SCHSL office by way of hardship application in preparation and completion of the SCHSL Gender Identity Eligibility Process.

3. Necessary Documentation:

The member school shall assist in collecting the following information:

- A. Current transcript and school registration information;
- B. Documentation from individuals such as, but not limited to, parent(s)/guardian(s), friends, and/or teachers which affirm that the action, attitudes, dress, and manner demonstrate the student's consistent gender identification and expression;
- C. Documentation from the member school administration outlining specific accommodations that have been made for the student;
- D. Written verification from an appropriate licensed health care professional (i.e. doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist) of the student's consistent gender identification and expression; and
- E. Any other pertinent documentation or information.

4. Referral to Gender Identity Eligibility Advisory Board:

Upon receipt of the required documentation from the member school, the Commissioner will refer all necessary documentation to the SCHSL Gender Identity Eligibility Advisory Board (GIEAB) for consideration. The GIEAB will be selected by the SCHSL and will make a recommendation to the Commissioner on the gender eligibility of the student from the member school. The GIEAB will be comprised of a minimum of three of the following individuals:

- A. Physician with experience in gender identity health care and/or the World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care;
- B. Psychiatrist, psychologist, or licensed mental health professional familiar with the WPATH;
- C. Advocate familiar with Gender Identity and Expression issues.

5. Notification:

Written notification of the decision will be rendered to the member school administration by the Commissioner.

6. Appeals:

- A. A member school desiring to appeal the decision on behalf of a denied student shall file a “written notice of appeal” with the Commissioner.
- B. All appeals will be to the SCHSL Executive Committee.
- C. The SCHSL Executive Committee will have the authority to require that additional specified information be submitted.
- D. The SCHSL Executive Committee shall hear appeals during their next regularly scheduled meeting.
- E. Written notification of the decision of the SCHSL Executive Committee will be rendered to the member school administration by the Commissioner.
- F. The decision of the SCHSL Executive Committee may be appealed to the Appellate Panel.
- G. The Appellate Panel will have the authority to require that additional specified information be submitted.
- H. The Appellate Panel shall hear appeals during their next regularly scheduled meeting.
- I. Written notification of the decision of the Appellate Panel will be rendered to the member school administration by the Commissioner.
- J. The decision of the Appellate Panel shall be final.