

Transgender Participation Policy

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) has developed this policy to address the participation and eligibility of transgender athletes in WIAA sponsored athletics. The policy is derived in part from the already-existing policies of the Washington Interscholastic Athletic Association, Colorado High School Activities Association, and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). It seeks to balance the important goals of: 1) equity (since providing equal opportunities in all aspects of school programming is a core value in education), 2) physical safety (since biological males or androgen-supplemented biological females are typically stronger and faster than biological females) and 3) competitive equity (since the ideal of a “level playing field” is an inherent expectation at all levels of sport competition). Guiding principles for this policy are as follows:

1. The WIAA is committed to ensuring that transgender students have opportunities to participate in WIAA sponsored athletics.
2. Member schools shall ensure that all students have access and opportunities to participate in athletics without discrimination based on disability, race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, age, national origin, or ancestry.
3. Policies governing sports participation for transgender students should be informed by sound medical knowledge and scientific validity.
4. The medical privacy of transgender students should be preserved.

The following definitions apply to this policy:

1. “Transgender” means having a gender identity or gender expression that differs from societal expectations based on gender assigned at birth.
 - a. Female-to-Male (FTM) transgender person means one who was assigned female at birth but who identifies as a boy or man.
 - b. Male-to-Female (MTF) transgender person means one who was assigned male at birth but who identifies as a girl or woman.
2. “Gender identity” means an innate sense of one’s own gender.
3. “Gender expression” means external appearance, characteristics or behaviors typically associated with a specific gender.

Privacy Statement:

Protecting the privacy of transgender student athletes must be a priority for all athletic department and affiliated school personnel. All medical information shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable state, local and federal privacy laws. All discussions and documentation in each level of the process by the member school, appeals panel and the WIAA shall be kept confidential unless the student and family make a specific request otherwise.

Procedures:

1. The student’s member school will be the point of contact for determining the student’s eligibility to participate in WIAA sponsored interscholastic

athletics. The student and parents/guardian must notify the school in writing that the student is a transgender individual, having a consistent gender identity different than the gender of the student's birth certificate, and list the WIAA sport(s) in which the student would like to participate. The following criteria should be used to determine participation:

- a. Current school registration information
 - b. A written statement from **the student** affirming the consistent gender identity and expression to which the student self-relates
 - c. Documentation from individuals such as, but not limited to, parents, friends, and/or teachers, which affirm the actions, attitudes, dress and manner and demonstrate the student's consistent gender identification and expression
 - d. Written verification from an appropriate health-care professional (physician, psychologist) of the student's consistent gender identification and expression
 - e. Medical documentation (hormonal therapy, sexual re-assignment surgery, counseling, etc.)
 - i. An FTM student who has started hormone therapy (example: testosterone) is only eligible for male teams. Hormone supplementation is allowable in this situation consistent with WIAA policy. Note that a FTM student who has NOT started hormone therapy may participate on female teams if desired by the student, as there would be no concern about safety or competitive equity without biological interventions having been implemented.
 - ii. An MTF student must have one calendar year of medically documented testosterone suppression therapy to be eligible to participate on a female team, consistent with WIAA policy. Note that a MTF student who has NOT started testosterone suppression therapy may participate on male teams if desired by the student, as there would be no concern about safety or competitive equity without biological interventions having been implemented.
 - iii. The allowances for transgender students who have not yet started hormone therapy apply even if the students are dressing in accordance with the opposite gender or using names/pronouns of the opposite gender.
 - iv. Hormone supplementation/suppression therapy under the supervision of a licensed physician when taken as prescribed does not violate WIAA Performance Enhancing Supplement policy.
2. Once the member school has rendered a decision, a school administrator shall communicate with the WIAA office in writing of the decision. The school shall list the student's classified gender and WIAA sport(s) in which the student-participant intends to participate if he/she meets all WIAA eligibility requirements and is selected through the team try-out process.

3. If a school approves participation as a transgender student athlete in WIAA sport(s), the student may not return to his/her gender identified on the birth certificate for athletics participation purposes unless another evaluation is undertaken by the member school because of a change in circumstances.
4. If a school denies participation as a transgender student athlete in WIAA sport(s), the student's eligibility remains with the school's teams as determined by birth gender.

Appeal:

If denied participation as a transgender student athlete in WIAA sport(s), the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s), may file an appeal in writing with the school within the time period specified and in the manner dictated by school appeal policy.

The WIAA recommends that each school have the ability to convene an appeals panel when determining the eligibility of transgender students. Ideally, this panel should include a licensed physician or psychologist and a school administrator. Ideally all are familiar with transgender, gender identity and gender expression issues. The student-participant with his/her parents/guardians should be provided the opportunity to address the appeals panel. All documentation submitted on behalf of the student-participant and documents used in the decision making process by the school shall be available for review by the appeals panel. The appeals panel must send a written decision to the WIAA and to participants in the appeal process within three business days.

Areas of Awareness for Schools:

- Have a plan written, accessible and in place
- Use preferred names/pronouns according to the student's self-identification
- Ensure gender appropriate, equitable locker room and restroom accessibility
- Educate teacher, counselors, coaches, administrators, parents, and students on transgender sensitivity in relation to students. Also, educate booster clubs as needed with regards to potential funding issues.
- Permit the student to dress according to gender identity. This includes dress codes for athletic teams when traveling or during a game day at school.