

FCCPTA Statement on the Proposed Virginia Department of Education Guidance Document

The proposed document from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), called the [Model Policies for the Privacy, Dignity and Respect for all Students and Parents in Virginia Public Schools](#), also known as *2022 Model Policies*, was released on Friday September 16. This proposal withdraws the Model Policies on the Treatment of Transgender Students in Virginia Schools currently in place.

The mission, values, and principles of PTA are clear: to support every child with one voice, to be the leading advocates for children, to make every child's potential a reality, and to be a powerful voice for all children. We believe in collaboration, commitment, accountability, respect, inclusivity, diversity, differences, and in integrity.¹

All children and youth should be able to attend school in a safe and inclusive environment free from discrimination, and history has shown that civil rights laws are effective in contributing to such environments.

The proposed policy is inconsistent with the [National PTA Resolution on the Recognition of LGBTQ Individuals as a Protected Class](#), and the resources for supporting LGBTQ students and their families that are provided by the National PTA:

“The lack of awareness and understanding of issues facing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning children and youth has contributed to a higher rate of isolation, depression, and suicidal ideations or attempts; *and*

Education regarding LGBTQ issues increases understanding and cultivates acceptance of and respect for LGBTQ children and youth; *and*

Harassment and bullying policies that specifically mention sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are associated with: students feeling more safe; lower levels of bullying; decreased incidents of harassment related to sexual orientation; increased teacher/staff intervention; and a greater reporting of incidents.”

As such, the Executive Board of the Fairfax County Council PTA (FCCPTA) opposes the 2022 Model Policy on the Privacy, Dignity, and Respect for all Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools. FCCPTA encourages Local PTA Units in FCCPTA to engage in this issue as outlined in the appendix.

Signed,
Larry Mills, FCCPTA President on behalf of the FCCPTA Executive Board
September 23, 2022

APPENDIX

Background information for FCPS:

Fairfax County Public Schools currently has a regulation supporting Transgender and Gender-Expansive students. This regulation ([R2603.2](#)) is still in effect for Fairfax County Public Schools. R2603 is based on FCPS Policy 1450, [Non-Discrimination](#).¹ The proposed Model Policy will not become official any earlier than October 27, 2022.

Who decides what happens next in FCPS?

The short answer is the Superintendent, Dr Reid, with the school board, is able to change the policies upon which the Superintendent bases her actions. With the [2021 Model Policies](#) (which remain in effect until at least October 27), FCPS itself in fact did NOT actually adopt the model policies in 2021. [The law](#) requires that school boards have policies that are “consistent with or stronger than” the [VDOE 2021 Model Policy](#). FCPS determined that its [Policy 1450 \(non discrimination\)](#) combined with an October 9, 2020 [Regulation 2603](#), in combination, were “consistent with” the law, and therefore satisfied the law. FCPS legal team will decide what to do, but it is far from a determined thing that they have to do anything at all.

There is much doubt that the VDOE has been granted the ability to modify or issue a new Model Policy. So FCPS does not necessarily “have to” adapt the VDOEs. [Here's the full text of the legislation](#). Only the state legislature can change laws, and they have not done so (thus far).

Guidance for Fairfax County Local Unit PTA Leaders and PTA Members:

PTA leaders and members should believe in and remember our mission, values, and principles. There are several opportunities for local PTA units and members to be engaged and advocate:

- 1) Read the National PTA page on [PTA and the LGBTQ Community](#) and take a look at the resources linked to ensure safe, welcoming and supportive schools for all students, including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer/Questioning students (LGBTQ) students. In addition, National PTA has excellent resources on the general [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion page](#).
- 2) [Comment in writing](#) on the proposed state model policy between September 26 and October 26, 2022.
- 3) Speak at the Fairfax County School Board meeting on October 6, 2022. Registration for the lottery at the school board opens on September 30, 2022 and closes 48 hours before the meeting at 7 p.m. on October 4, 2022; you may [register here](#), beginning 9/30/22 and ending Tuesday 10/4/22. There are usually not walk-in opportunities to speak at regular school board meetings. When you register you may choose to speak virtually, in-person or by pre-recorded video. Current FCPS students have some priority in speaking.
- 4) Learn more about advocacy to the FCPS School Board by watching the [FCCPTA School Board 101 presentation on demand](#).

For more information, questions or requests, contact:

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¹ III. POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION No student, employee, or applicant for employment in the Fairfax County Public Schools shall, on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, genetic information, pregnancy status, childbirth or related medical conditions, marital status, veteran status or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, as required by law. It is the express intent of the School Board that every policy, practice, and procedure shall conform to all applicable requirements of federal and state law.