



**Celebrating and Supporting
Trans and Gender Diverse
Students in the Music Classroom**
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**The Midwest Clinic International Band and
Orchestra Festival
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The Basics about Trans and Gender Diverse Identities

“As I pondered a pronoun change, I began to think of gender less as a scale and more as a landscape. Some people are born in the mountains, while others are born by the sea. Some people are happy to live in the place they were born, while others must make a journey to reach the climate in which they can flourish and grow. Between the ocean and the mountains is a wild forest. That is where I want to make my home.”

– Maia Kobabe

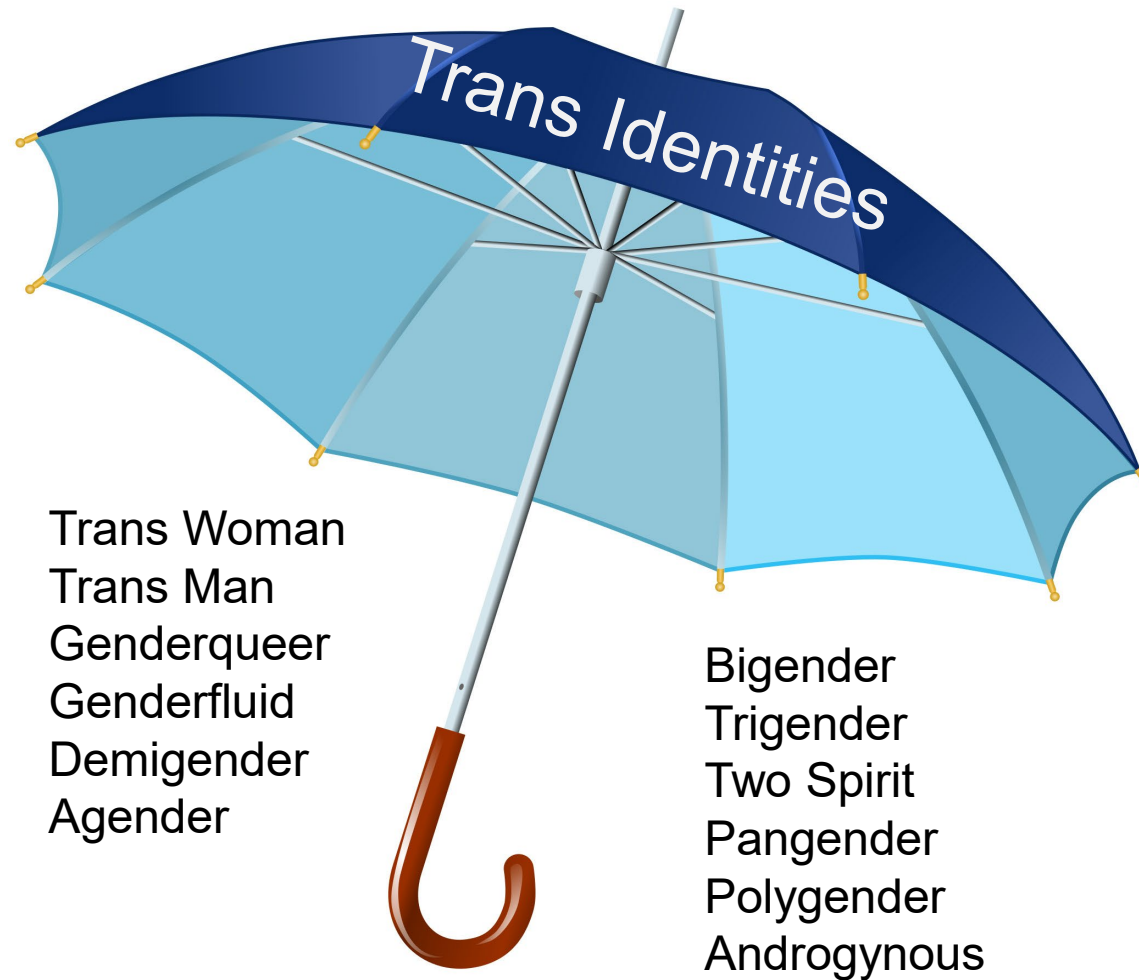
Definitions

“Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth.” (American Psychology Association)

Cisgender is a term for “an individual whose gender identity and gender expression align with the sex assigned at birth.” (American Psychology Association)



Trans and Gender Diverse Identities





The Impacts of Suppressing my Trans Identity

- **Shame was a constant in my life**
- **I became increasingly disconnected from my body**
- **Connecting with men was especially challenging because I just felt different**
- **Dissociation came easy to me and I sought out distractions frequently**
- **I felt like I was always lying about myself because if people found out who I actually was, they would reject me. Connection is challenging under those circumstances**
- **My positive emotions grew dimmer over time, leaving only sadness and anger**

Facts about Transgender Identities

- **The trans experience is not a monolith**
- **Gender identities emerge and evolve over time**
- **Trans people have always existed**
- **Trans people deserve privacy**
- **Gender is not the same as sexuality, but both influence each other**
- **Trans and gender diverse identities are beautiful and natural**



Understanding your Trans and Gender Diverse Students

“The more I hold myself close and fully embrace who I am, the more I thrive.” – Elliot Page



The Early Parts of My Trans Experience

- Embracing my true self was equally calming and terrifying
- Because I had chosen to isolate myself out of fear of rejection, letting others in was challenging
- Imposter syndrome was frequent, but the positive feelings of moving towards authenticity helped me know I was on the right path
- As I moved forward, the mental struggles I lived with my entire life started to feel more manageable
- I began to understand the effects of gender dysphoria on my life and how I could push past those feelings

What is Gender Dysphoria

Gender dysphoria is defined as a “marked incongruence between [a trans person’s] experienced or expressed gender and the one they were assigned at birth.” (DSM 5). Gender dysphoria looks different for each trans person. For some, it can lead to issues with body image, addiction, depression, anxiety, loneliness, and suicidal thoughts. For others, gender dysphoria is manageable or even non-existent.



What is Gender Affirming Care?

Gender Affirming Care affects everyone. Cisgender people affirm their gender identities in many ways every day. Trans and gender diverse people do the same, but the care we require doesn't coincide with the gender we're assigned at birth.

Language	Personalization	Inclusion	Mental Wellness	Medical Care	Surgical Care
Chosen Name	Clothing	Gendered Spaces	Support Systems	Puberty Blockers	Gender Affirmation Surgery (Bottom Surgery)
Pronouns	Possessions	Gendered Activities	Therapy	Hormones	Top Surgery
Descriptions	Physical Embodiment				Elective Surgery

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Adapted from ccrweb.ca

@sylviaaduckworth

How to Be a Better Ally

“When I was younger, I wish I would have been told more often that I was right and nothing was wrong with me, that I was deserving of everything this world has to offer, and that my visions for my future were worthy of pursuit.” – Janet Mock

In the Classroom

- **Use correct names and pronouns**
- **Rethink Gendered Language and Expectations in Rehearsals and Concerts**
- **Invite diversity into your repertoire selection**
- **Invite clinicians of diverse backgrounds into your classroom**
- **Cultivate an environment of mutual respect and kindness**





Building trust with your trans and gender diverse students

- Adorn your music classroom with celebrations of diversity
- Display a pride flag
- Hand out a questionnaire at the beginning of the semester asking for pronouns, chosen names, and the names your students need to be printed in concert programs
- Misgendering happens, correct yourself, apologize and do better in the future
- Let students come to you
- Respect confidentiality



In your School

- **Advocate for gender inclusive bathrooms and/or policies**
- **Push for inclusive language in all school communications**
- **Ask your administration to program 2SLGBTQIA+ training sessions**
- **Consider supervising a 2SLGBTQIA+ advocacy club for students (i.e. Gender-Sexuality Alliance)**
- **Know your school board**
- **Stand up to bigotry**

Feeling Support in My Life

- **Conversations imbued with kindness and curiosity helped me feel more comfortable and seen**
- **Every affirmation of my gender by my friends, family, and colleagues filled me strength and joy**
- **Being invited into feminine spaces and activities helped me to figure out my own female identity**
- **I appreciated every effort made by my dean and other administrators at my school to affirm my identity**



Being an Ally during the Second Trump Administration

“I genuinely hope that... anti-trans folks someday experience the joy and liberation of being comfortable in your own skin enough to know that the liberation of others is no threat to you. Equality is not a pie; there is more than enough for everyone.” – Charlotte Clymer

Quotes from Donald Trump and the GOP

"On Day 1, I will sign an executive order instructing every federal agency to cease the promotion of sex or gender transition at any age. They're not going to do it anymore," Donald Trump at a Mom's for Liberty event in August 2024

"Cut Federal Funding for any school pushing critical race theory, radical gender ideology, and other inappropriate racial, sexual, or political content on our children." 2024 GOP Platform

"Pornography, manifested today in the omnipresent propagation of transgender ideology and sexualization of children, for instance, is not a political Gordian knot inextricably binding up disparate claims about free speech, property rights, sexual liberation, and child welfare. It has no claim to First Amendment protection. Its purveyors are child predators and misogynistic exploiters of women. Their product is as addictive as any illicit drug and as psychologically destructive as any crime. Pornography should be outlawed. The people who produce and distribute it should be imprisoned. Educators and public librarians who purvey it should be classed as registered sex offenders. And telecommunications and technology firms that facilitate its spread should be shuttered." Project 2025, page 5





Potential Changes Coming to Title IX

- **Reversal of all protections afforded to trans students granted by the Biden Administration**
- **A return to President Trump's 2020 Title IX language inhibiting investigations into and disciplinary actions resulting from discrimination**
- **Defining gender in binary terms**
- **Limitations or bans surrounding pronouns and names**
- **Prohibit trans participation in sports**

Protecting Trans and Gender Diverse Kids in Challenging Times

- **Build community around your 2SLGBTQIA+ students**
- **Be a vocal and visible ally in your community**
- **Help all students to become better human beings**
- **Encourage positive masculinity**
- **Empower diverse femininity**
- **Talk to friends and family about 2SLGBTQIA+ issues**



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