



Walker Creek Ranch Protocol: Gender Identity

Walker Creek Ranch (WCR) is an outdoor educational program of the Marin County Office of Education. As a California public education entity, WCR is required to adhere to the laws and regulations that govern public schools, including anti-discrimination and safe learning environment laws.

Therefore, this protocol is intended to provide information to the public regarding WCR's implementation of the various laws and regulations - specifically related to gender identity and gender diversity. As an outdoor education program, WCR recognizes the unique factors inherent with such a program (e.g. overnight stays, cabin sharing) and wants to be transparent about implementation of the laws and regulations.

Relevant Laws and Regulations (this is not an exhaustive list):

- EDC 201. (a) All pupils have the right to participate fully in the educational process, free from discrimination and harassment. (b) California's public schools have an affirmative obligation to combat racism, sexism, and other forms of bias, and a responsibility to provide equal educational opportunity.
- Education Code Section 221.5: Specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex with regard to enrollment in classes or courses, career counseling and availability of physical education activities or sports to both sexes.
- Education Code Section 234.1, as amended by AB 9 (Ch. 728, Statutes of 2011), and Section 235, mandate that school districts ("districts"), including charter or alternative schools, adopt a policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, intimidation and bullying based on several protected characteristics, including but not limited to, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics at school or in any school activity related to school attendance or under the authority of the district.
- Education Code Section 234.1 requires districts to adopt a process requiring school personnel to immediately intervene, when it is safe to do so, whenever they witness acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying based on the characteristics specified in Education Code sections 220 or 234.1 or Penal Code Section 422.55, including gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.
- AB 1266- School Success and Opportunity Act (2014): Districts must allow equal access to programs, facilities and activities consistent with their gender identity.
- SB48 - Fair Education Act (2012): The curriculum must represent the contribution of LGBTQ individuals and may not promote any discriminatory bias based on gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.
- Title VII - Civil Rights Act: Gender expansive individuals are a protected class.
- Title IX - Sex Discrimination in Educational Institutions: A recipient institution that receives Department funds must operate its education program or activity in a nondiscriminatory manner free of discrimination based on sex, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

Implementation of Laws and Regulations at Walker Creek Ranch:

The Walker Creek Ranch Program Staff will Respect all Students' Gender Identity

All students and staff have the right to assert their own gender identity. WCR takes our legal responsibilities seriously and works hard to create a safe, welcoming, affirming, and discrimination-free learning environment.

Privacy

All students and staff have the right to keep their gender identity private. Therefore, WCR staff cannot share gender identity information about a student with others, even when asked, without the student's permission. This includes sharing information with other students, cabin leaders, WCR staff, school staff, the student's own parents or guardians, or anyone else.

It is important to note that WCR cannot request, nor require, advanced notice of gender identity of students prior to attending WCR. Additionally, WCR cannot request, nor require, gender identity disclosure of staff. Therefore, gender diversity is likely represented at WCR, just as there are other protected classes represented.

All Students Have the Right to be Themselves

Students have the right to be out about their gender identity while at WCR.

All Students have the Right to be Free from Discrimination and Harassment

All students have the right to be treated equally and to be free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination, regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. This is true for all protected classes at WCR.

Activities

While WCR activities are generally gender neutral, students will always be able to participate in activities that are consistent with their gender identities.

Names and Pronouns

Students have the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond with their gender identity. This is true even if a student's name and gender are not legally changed. WCR will use students' chosen names and pronouns on everything possible— class attendance rosters, nametags, and more. A student's legal name may appear along with the student's chosen name on the student's health form if the student's home school has made this arrangement. In the event of an emergency Ranch staff will need to quickly correlate a student's health form with that student—to identify any allergies, medicine taken, etc. This paperwork is also essential should a student need to be transported to a hospital for any reason. Health forms are confidential, and information contained on them will be shared on a need-to-know basis for protection of the student.

Cabin Assignments

Visiting schools organize students into their cabin groups prior to arrival at WCR. On those occasions when WCR is informed by a visiting school that one or more of their students is transgender, or a student's gender identity is different than the student's gender expression, the student will be allowed to choose a cabin assignment consistent with their gender identity.

Restrooms

WCR allows students to use restrooms that align with their gender identity. If any student, regardless of their gender or gender identity, desires more privacy and prefers to use a more private restroom or

changing area, accommodations will be made. Students will not be forced to use a private restroom (such as in the health center) against their wishes.

Dress code

Students have the right to wear clothing that expresses their own gender identity. WCR will not require students to dress based on gender stereotypes. It is noted, however, that there will be times when all students are required to wear closed-toed shoes and a long skirt or long pants to properly insulate them from potential accidental poison oak exposure. WCR dress expectations are gender neutral.