

Dear Principal,

March 31st was Transgender Day of Visibility, which is a day to promote recognition and celebration of gender diversity.

If this was any other year, I would have written in March to ask you to celebrate Trans Day of Visibility with posters and teaching lesson plans about gender diversity and responding to bias-based bullying.

But it's 2020, and in March, you were flat out dealing with enormous extra workloads, working out how to deliver our children's education in previously unimagined circumstances.

Thank you. We needed you, and you were there for us and our kids.

Now that there is space to think about issues other than coronavirus, I'm writing to tell you how important it is to me that our school is a safer, more welcoming place for trans, gender diverse and non-binary (TGDNB) students.

I understand that affirming and supporting trans, gender diverse and non-binary students at school involves considering and changing a number of policies and procedures, including those around name documentation, pronouns, toilets, changing rooms, uniforms and sporting teams. This takes time.

Which is why many schools do not begin these changes until they are asked to do so by a TGDNB student or their family. But it doesn't have to be that way. The majority of the work involved can actually be done with the general needs of TGDNB students in mind, and then tweaked according to the wishes and needs of particular students.

Waiting for a student to ask for these accommodations puts a huge amount of stress on the student and their family, who are often put in the position of driving the change process and educating the school about TGDNB issues and necessary accommodations. Meanwhile the student is required to function everyday within a school that is not set up for their needs.

Waiting to be asked to make changes for TGDNB students also assumes that the first TGDNB student to ask for these changes is actually the first TGDNB student to attend the school. Statistically, the chances of that are almost zero.

So please don't wait to be asked. Please start to make these changes to policies and procedures as soon as possible, so that our school is a safe and welcoming place for all students.

Yours,