

Advocating for Inclusive Schools and Honest Education

SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES AND YOUR RIGHTS

School boards are accountable to the residents of the district. [Click to read](#) the ELC fact sheet about board authority and advocating to your school board.

School boards are required to post their policies and meeting agendas on their public websites. The first place to look for the policies is on the “school board” section of your district’s website. Here, you should find a link to the policies and agendas—many districts house these documents through a website called BoardDocs.

WHAT POLICIES ARE SCHOOL BOARDS CHANGING?

Boards have been rewriting policies in several areas, so look for these policy numbers:

- Curriculum and parental consent for curriculum: section 105
- Book review policies and resource materials: section 109
- Human development and sex education: section 109
- Teacher censorship policies (sometimes called “advocacy policies”): section 321
- Transgender sports discrimination: section 123
- Name/pronoun policies: districts are considering informal policies

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS

[RIGHTS OF LGBTQ, NONBINARY, AND GENDER-NONCONFORMING STUDENTS](#)

Schools have a duty to intervene and correct policies or practices that discriminate against students based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.

[RIGHTS REGARDING BOOK BANS](#)

While school districts have the power to select and, in some cases, remove books from public schools, there are important limitations on a school board’s ability to ban books.

[STUDENT RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION](#)

The First Amendment protects the rights of students to express themselves in public schools.

REPORTING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

- Individual incidents of bullying or harassment should be reported to your school. Schools are required to have a reporting process, investigate, and address complaints. ELC has [short](#) and [longer](#) resources about reporting bullying and harassment. Contact ELC at 215-238-6970, intake@elc-pa.org
- Each school district must have a Title IX Coordinator to receive reports about incidents of discrimination or harassment based on sex, gender identity/expression, or sexual orientation.
- Complaints of individual or systemic discrimination and harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or race can be submitted to the [U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights](#).