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Protect Trans Rights for Trans Freedom Micro Syllabus

Dale Melchert, a staff attorney at the Transgender Law Center, leads participants in this youth-friendly webinar to learn about the rights and resources that protect trans students in the United States. Dale provides an overview of both the laws and resources that can support trans youth to live their authentic selves at school. Currently, many forms of anti-trans laws are being pushed by lawmakers across the United States. Transgender people are facing a historical year of legislation looking to erode trans rights by unfairly targeting trans young people and the adults who support them. This micro syllabus holds an array of resources that may prove useful to students and educators looking to learn more about transgender rights and how best to aid trans students. Transgender and gender-nonconforming students must have the right to be safe and to be themselves, especially at school. You have the right to be trans!

Guiding Questions

- How can we advocate for transgender students?
- What legal rights do transgender students have in U.S. schools?
- What challenges are trans children and youth currently facing in the United States?
- How can knowing more about our rights help us to imagine a future with trans freedom?





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Resources

Short Videos

- [Gender Justice Leadership Programs: Show Up For Trans Youth](#) (2021) - Transgender Law Center
- [We are transforming the world. Join us.](#) (2021) - Transgender Law Center
- [How to Respond to Trans Misinformation | Tough Conversations](#) (2022) - American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- [3 things to know about the record number of anti-trans bills in the U.S.](#) (2021) - PBS NewsHour
- [2022 Could See Sweeping Anti-Trans Bills | Zerlina.](#) (2022) - MSNBC
- [How ID laws can put trans people in danger](#) (2018)- Vox

Must-Watch

- [Kai Shappley: A Trans Girl Growing Up In Texas | Emmy-Winning Documentary](#) (2018) - them.
- [MAJOR!](#) (2015) - Annalise Ophelian
- [Transhood](#) (2020) - Sharon Liese

Listen to

- [The war on trans people.](#) Vox Conversations: Jun 9, 2022
- [Manifest with Transgender Law Center.](#) Out Of The Margins: Sep 16, 2021
- [Episode 105: Chase Strangio.](#) Gender Reveal: Nov 22, 2021

Youth Books

- [Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource by and for Transgender Communities](#) by [Laura Erickson-Schroth](#)
- [The Trans Self-Care Workbook: A Coloring Book and Journal for Trans and Non-Binary People & The Trans Affirmation Coloring Book](#) by [Theo Nicole Lorenz](#)
- [Where's MY Book?: A Guide for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth, Their Parents, & Everyone Else](#) by [Linda Gromko](#)





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Resources

Know Your Rights

- [Know Your Rights: A Guide For Trans And Gender Nonconforming Students](#) - American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- [Know Your Rights | Schools](#) - National Center for Transgender Equality
- [Know Your Rights: Students & Lgbtq Rights At School](#) - Southern Poverty Law Center
- [Free to Be Me: A Toolkit to Protect LGBTQIA+ Students' Rights](#) - TX Trans Kids

Lesson Plans & Kits

- [Lesson Plan: Myths and Facts About Transgender Issues](#) - POV on PBS
- [New Trans Rights Lesson Plan For Teachers](#) - Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
- [Trans Action Kit](#) - GLSEN
- [Resource Guide: Transgender Identities and Rights](#) - Brown University
- [Lesson Plans to Create Gender Expansive Classrooms and Support Transgender and Non-Binary Students](#) - HRC Foundation's Welcoming Schools

Children's Books

- [Sylvia and Marsha Start a Revolution!](#) by Joy Michael Ellison
- [Call Me Max](#) by Kyle Lukoff
- [If You're a Kid Like Gavin](#) by Gavin Grimm & Kyle Lukoff

Read

- Gira Grant, Melissa (2022). [Republicans Are Already Trying to Pass as Many Anti-Trans Bills as Possible in 2022](#). New Republic
- Bailey, Phillip M. (2022). [Exclusive: 2022 could be most anti-trans legislative years in history, report says](#). USA Today
- Aswell, Sarah (2022). [If You Have A Trans Or Nonbinary Child, Here's How To Protect Their Rights](#). Scary Mommy
- Diaz, Devan (2022). [This Girl's Life: On Growing Up Trans in Texas](#). Vogue
- Carlisle, Madeleine (2022). [Kid of the Year Finalist Kai Shappley, 11, Takes on Lawmakers in Her Fight for Trans Rights](#). TIME





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Follow

- Transgender Law Center [@TransLawCenter](#)
- TGI Justice Project [@tgijp](#)
- Chase Strangio [@chasestrangio](#)
- Raquel Willis [@RaquelWillis](#)

Additional Legal Materials & Examples

- An attorney, Brian Klosterboer, at the ACLU of Texas wrote the following critical information, “Given the hostile climate in Texas, we encourage students and families to maintain as much privacy as possible, and for teachers and educators to be cautious about what they write down and document given the possibility of public records requests. Despite this cautious approach, I still encourage people to promptly report bullying, discrimination, and harassment if they feel safe doing so...”

I would not share any medical information with the Title IX coordinator or anyone who does not need to know—particularly regarding treatment for gender dysphoria—but school officials would arguably violate Title IX if they report a student simply for being transgender.”

If anyone in Texas faces discrimination they can contact:

- [ACLU of Texas](#)
- [Lambda Legal Help Desk](#)
- [Texas Association of School Boards \(TASB\)](#):

Under Section 11, which addresses district employees’ obligations, it states that “school officials may want to remind staff that the legal standard for child abuse reporting is unchanged” and reminding employees of their obligations to comply with federal non discrimination law. at p. 12 (emphasis added). In other words, school officials should NOT report to DFPS if they are aware a student is trans or receiving gender affirming care and if they do they are likely violating Title IX.

Section 12 on pages 12-13 of this resource addresses school employees’ obligations when dealing with unsupportive parents.





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Additional Legal Materials & Examples Cont'd

- [Essential Medical Care for Transgender Youth in Texas: What You Need to Know1](#)
- [Letter by the ACLU of Texas on Names and Pronouns directed at school leadership](#)

Resources for Families in Texas

Lambda Legal and ACLU of Texas are part of a coordinated effort with TENT, Equality Texas, TLDEF and others to stay abreast of all investigations happening to stop them from progressing. In addition to their lawsuits challenging Governor Abbott's directive to DFPS, these orgs are doing some behind the scenes work including connecting families who either are under investigation or fear they will be with pro bono family defense attorneys that they have trained. Even if families have not been approached by a CPS worker they should reach out to Lambda's helpdesk which will connect them to all these efforts [here](#). If a family has a retained attorney, it's harder for CPS to investigate.

Families in rural areas are facing the most risk right now, as child welfare law differs greatly from district to district.

The attorneys involved in this effort are encouraging families to join the National PFLAG which costs \$50 because while PFLAG members are not currently protected by the injunction in the case they expect a decision from the court ruling whether the injunction extends to PFLAG members in the next week or so. They recommend joining the national PFLAG rather than a local chapter because some chapters are not as good at keeping records, and records are helpful for proving membership. If families wish to join their local chapter they are advising families to get a receipt to prove membership.

They are also directing teachers and other school staff that, per the Texas Supreme Court's decision, Governor Abbott's directive is NOT legally binding, and they should not report when they suspect students are receiving gender affirming care. The law remains unchanged.

