

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

August 24, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Monifa B. McKnight, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: StudentVue Platform (06-28-2022-01-E)

**Question**

Ms. O’Looney requested information regarding the possibility of fixing the StudentVue platform to include a field that students can use to enter their preferred name and/or pronoun

**Response**

As stated in the [Guidelines for Student Gender Identity in Montgomery County Public Schools](#), we are committed to ensuring our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) students can express their gender identity free from discrimination, bullying, or harassment as we learn together in our schools. Students of the LGBTQ+ community who wish to change their names and/or pronouns meet with trained school counselors, discuss the implications of these changes at the school level, and complete [Form 560-80, Intake Form: Supporting Student Gender Identity](#). The form includes pertinent information that helps establish support systems for restroom use, and extracurricular activities, including a qualitative level of support the student receives at home. These changes are made at the school level, through the Synergy platform. A copy of the form is forwarded to the Student Welfare and Compliance Unit for record keeping as supporting documentation.

Student names are a part of the formal student record and are aligned with state testing, state student data submissions, Individual Education Program, Section 504 Plan, and other processes that may require legal names. Synergy has a **First Name** field that is used to display the student name throughout the internal system. If a student requests a change in name, that change will be reflected in the **First Name** field on the Demographic tab in the program. There also is a Protected Information tab that is updated with the **Legal First Name** in order not to lose that record and it can be used for other processes that require the legal name. The Protected Information tab only is available to a limited number of school staff. It is used to keep confidential information about the student’s legal identity, protected under the law and supported by legal documentation. Typically, this tab is used when a student is identified by a first name other than the legal first name. The student’s identified first name is used throughout Synergy, including on screens, reports, and the gradebook.

The Protected Information tab also is used to document first name changes for gender transitioning students. Before the transition, the student's first name at birth is entered on this tab and the student's preferred name on the Demographics tab. After the transition, the legal identity information is removed from this tab to disassociate the student from the birth name.

After benchmarking with other districts and meeting with an internal team it was agreed not to allow students to have their own access to change their identified name in StudentVue. In addition to the fact that there is a supported process for students to change their preferred first name through their school counselor, there are significant implications to allowing students to make changes to their information at any time without proper monitoring. This could cause significant issues in maintaining accuracy of student records. It also could create attendance discrepancies and classroom disruption if the student's identified name is changed without notification to staff members as well as impacting testing rosters and other processes such as report cards that use the student's *First Name*.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Stephanie S. Sheron, chief of strategic initiatives, via email.

MBM:MBH:SSS:lgp

Copy to:  
Executive Staff  
Mrs. Webb