

DELAWARE STONEWALL PAC

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Delaware Stonewall is a political organization created to promote the rights of LGBT Delawareans. In addition to other laws passed since 2009, Stonewall was involved in the enactment of Gender Identity Protections that are a subject of the proposed amendments to DOE Regulation 225.

Delaware Stonewall appreciated the hard work and good intentions that led to the earlier proposed amendments to this regulation and recognize the same in the latest proposed amendment. Realizing that the DOE received over 1,000 comments, **many from out of State**, on the original proposed amendment, and assuming there will be a similar high number of comments now, we will limit our comment to the specific areas effecting the rights and protection of students who desire to be identified as their personal gender identity.

Section 1.1 prohibits discrimination and exclusion of students based on that gender identity. However, proposed section 3.0 requires a student to agree to parental notification and parental assent before the request to have gender identity changes recognized. This section further states that a student's request for this recognition will be denied without the student's assent to parental notification. While the respect for the parental right to be informed and to assent to a major change at school for their child is understandable in an ideal world. This is not such a world, especially for children struggling with their realized gender identity and seeking to be recognized for who they really are...and to be the recipients of equal treatment and respect. For such children, this is

not a world where all children have **understanding** parents who support the child's desire to live at school recognized as a member of the gender they realize they are, no matter what was assigned at birth or what physical characteristic may say otherwise.

Requiring that child to "come out" to a parent may subject that child to emotional or physical abuse, or both. This abuse and the fear of such abuse force too many to suppress their identity for years, all too often resulting in a life of depression and self-hatred, or, sadly, a life cut short.

Delaware Stonewall **wants to protect these children and** recommends that this section be further amended to allow a student to reject parental notification and consent **if they fear parental rejection or show other compelling reason** and to create a mechanism where that child can make a case to a school-appointed professional who can ascertain the whether or not the desire change of status is genuine and well-founded.

Respectfully,

Peter Schott, President

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