



**Testimony for the Baltimore City Public Schools Board of Commissioners**  
Policy JBB: Sex Based Discrimination - Students  
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**Position: SUPPORT**

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Good evening Chair Casciani, Dr. Santelises, and members of the Board. My name is Nicole McCann and I am with the ACLU of Maryland.

I am here tonight because transgender and gender non-conforming children deserve the right to be themselves, be treated with dignity, and be protected from discrimination. The ACLU strongly supports the rights of transgender and gender non-conforming students to be supported and accommodated by their schools. We've legally defended the rights of transgender students in Frederick and Talbot counties, where local schools were forced by the courts to protect transgender students, as they should. These policies include transgender students as equal members of the school community while still protecting the privacy of all students.

The ACLU supports Proposed Policy JBB and asks that the Board votes to adopt it as soon as possible. Having a local protection policy in place not only helps set an example, but also makes it easier for trans and gender non-conforming children and their families to turn to for support if they experience discrimination. Proposed Policy JBB will give students and their families the opportunity to defend themselves against any shameful attempts to isolate and stigmatize them.

Schools have a duty to ensure that all students can learn in a welcoming and harassment-free environment, including transgender students, who are especially vulnerable to harassment and discrimination. Hundreds of school districts around the country allow transgender and gender non-conforming students to use facilities based on who they are.

Additionally, we are encouraged by included guidance in Proposed Policy JBB for use of pronouns and names, dress codes, access to gender-segregated facilities, athletics and physical education, student records, and requesting a name or gender change.

In a recent Baltimore Sun article, Kimberly Mooney, Roland Park Elementary/Middle's Gay Straight Alliance adviser said it well, "The policy is 'really needed right now. If the federal government won't protect them, we need to step up and do it ourselves.'"

Thank you.