



POLICY AGENDA

PROTECT STUDENT SAFETY AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

All students deserve schools that are safe, supportive, and affirming of their identity. But [recent attacks](#) on [students' rights](#), [health and well-being](#), and [public education itself](#) build on decades of unfair and discriminatory policies that prevent equal access to education for young people. For example, sex harassment, including sexual violence, pushes many survivors out of K-12 schools and higher education, and [girls](#) and [women of color](#), [LGBTQ+ students](#), [pregnant and parenting students](#), and [disabled students](#) are often more likely to be harassed than their peers and/or more likely to be disbelieved or punished by their schools. [LGBTQIA+ students face escalating attacks](#), including forced outing by schools to those students' families and the exclusion of transgender and nonbinary students from gender-separated sports and facilities. Discrimination against [pregnant and parenting students](#), including denial of basic accommodations, also prevents many students from remaining and succeeding in school. Many young people also face barriers to accessing sexual and reproductive health care and [information](#)—especially after the Supreme Court eliminated the federal constitutional right to abortion—[forcing many students to leave school](#) and plunging them into years of economic hardship. Furthermore, harsh, [discriminatory discipline policies](#), including dress code policies, have pushed Black, Indigenous, Pacific Islander, and Latine students of all genders out of school, starting as early as preschool, with long-lasting effects on their futures. Finally, [censorship of books and learning materials that address topics like gender and race promotes more discrimination in schools](#), and conservative extremist groups have sought to expand a [2025 Supreme Court](#) decision beyond its scope to broaden censorship and anti-transgender policies.

PEOPLE WANT SCHOOLS THAT ARE SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND AFFIRMING OF ALL STUDENTS

June 2025 [polling shows](#) that 98% of U.S. adults consider initiatives that make students feel like they belong as part of the school community to be somewhat or very important, with over 60% saying diversity, equity, and inclusion is somewhat or very important. In April 2026, an [overwhelming majority](#) of Americans thought that schools should be safe and

welcoming for transgender students (75%) and that schools should protect transgender students from discrimination (68%). More than ever, state and local policymakers must help eliminate barriers in education by centering young people who need support the most and putting forward a policy agenda that creates safe and inclusive schools so that all students have a chance to thrive.

Policies that will work together to support opportunities for all students include:

- [Stopping sex harassment in PK-12 schools & higher education](#)
- [Keeping LGBTQIA+ youth safe from harassment and exclusion in schools](#)
- [Supporting pregnant and parenting students](#)
- [Ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health care and information](#)
- [Ending discriminatory discipline policies and dress codes](#)
- [Teaching affirming and accurate curricula](#)