

# OurSCHOOL Survey Update: Gender Identity

## Parent Information Letter

### What is changing?

The Learning Bar and the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development have collaborated to revise the gender identity questions available in the elementary and secondary OurSCHOOL surveys.

### Why the change?

The OurSCHOOL Survey asks students to respond to a number of demographic questions, including sex assigned at birth. These questions are used to determine how different groups of students respond to the same questions and allow schools to more accurately target support or resources where needed. We received feedback from students that a focus solely on sex assigned at birth can be distressing. For this reason, we have designed these questions to be more inclusive and representative of the student population.

### Why is this so important for students?

Gender identity and sexual orientation are common sources of discrimination and bullying in the school environment (Savin-Williams, 1994). Students who identify their gender differently than their sex assigned at birth often feel isolated and excluded and can become disengaged at school. A student's success relies on their engagement and creating an inclusive school climate is essential to achieving this.

### What does this mean for your child?

The gender question on the New Brunswick survey will be worded as follows:

Gender Identity (Elementary Survey)
Do you think of yourself as:
a) A boy
b) A girl
c) In another way
d) I prefer not to respond

Gender Identity (Secondary Survey)
Do you think of yourself as:
a) Male
b) Female
c) In another way
d) I prefer not to respond

This terminology is consistent with the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's approach to promoting safe, affirming school environments.

Participation in the survey is voluntary; your child can skip any question they do not feel comfortable answering. Any responses that your child does provide are anonymous and confidential and will not be used to identify them in any way. All results are reported as group totals only.

### Questions or concerns can be directed to:

*The Learning Bar:* [inquiry@thelearningbar.com](mailto:inquiry@thelearningbar.com)

*Department of Education and Early Childhood Development:* [edcommunication@qnb.ca](mailto:edcommunication@qnb.ca)