

HB 119  
SB 199

I oppose HB 119, it seeks to remove control from local school districts and boards of education and give away this authority to the state. Local school districts and boards of education are comprised of parents and teachers locally who know their children best.

Inclusion of gender ideology in public school curricula is linked to negative mental and physiological health outcomes for students. Parents have the fundamental right to insist that content of public-school curricula is factually sound and inclusion of new content is based on new research and methodology which presents evidence-based facts and demonstrably leads to positive outcomes. The curricula can not be the most recent, trendiest, ideology or methodology without concrete positive outcomes.

Inclusion of gender ideology into curricula ensures it will be throughout the entire social structure of school systems. Believing the choice to opt out will allow parents to choose sexual and mental health curriculum is naïve. Students will be exposed to sexual and gender ideology and freely share it with their classmates. Many times, the curriculum is woven into many studies such as history and writing which requires the students to memorize and write about gender ideology.

Curriculum and teaching must focus on basic education to ensure each child is performing at grade level in reading and mathematics.

The 2022 NAEP results showed only 31% of Maryland 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored at or above the proficient level in reading and mathematics, and only 25% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders scored as proficient in mathematics and 31% proficient in reading.

“Lowering legal barriers to make it easier for minors to undergo cross-sex medical interventions without parental consent does not reduce suicide rates—in fact, it likely leads to higher rates of suicide among young people in states that adopt these changes. States should instead adopt parental bills of rights that affirm the fact that parents have primary responsibility for their children’s education and health, and that require school officials and health professionals to receive permission from parents before administering health services, including medication and “gender-affirming” counseling, to children under 18. States should also tighten the criteria for receiving cross-sex treatments, including raising the minimum eligibility age.”

Jay P. Greene, “Puberty Blockers, Cross-Sex Hormones, and Youth Suicide,” Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 3712, June 13, 2022, <https://www.heritage.org/gender/report/puberty-blockers-cross-sex-hormones-and-youth-suicide>.

Julian Vigo, “The Myth of the ‘Desistance Myth,’” Public Discourse, July 2, 2018, <https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2018/07/21972/> (accessed December 5, 2022). (While the numbers vary, there is a general consensus among the various studies that anywhere between 60 percent and 90 percent of children with gender dysphoria who receive no medical interventions desist when they reach adulthood.)

Florida Department of Health, "Treatment of Gender Dysphoria for Children and Adolescents," April 20, 2022, [https://www.floridahealth.gov/\\_documents/newsroom/press-releases/2022/04/20220420-gender-dysphoria-guidance.pdf?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.floridahealth.gov/_documents/newsroom/press-releases/2022/04/20220420-gender-dysphoria-guidance.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) (accessed December 5, 2022).

After a California kindergarten teacher read the children's story "I Am Jazz" to students, they become anxious and upset because they feared that they could be involuntarily changed into the opposite sex. The U.S. Congress is also considering the Equality Act, which could lead to further infusion of gender ideology into school curricula and policies.

Greene, "Puberty Blockers, Cross-Sex Hormones, and Youth Suicide."

Emilie Kao, "No, President Biden, Children Don't Belong to the Government," Newsweek, May 6, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/no-president-biden-children-dont-belong-government-opinion-1703558> (accessed August 22, 2022).

Adding gender identity will redefine "hostile environment harassment," which the NPRM defines as: "unwelcome sex-based conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive, that, based on the totality of the circumstances and evaluated subjectively and objectively, denies or limits a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient's education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment)." (Emphasis added.) The NPRM further defines "unwelcome conduct" as conduct that is "undesirable or offensive." A threshold question is whether the conduct causes "mental or emotional distress." According to this standard, schools may view parents who prefer "watchful waiting" rather than gender affirmation as engaging in "unwelcome sex-based conduct."

Alliance Defending Freedom, "Gender Dysphoria Expert Discusses the Science Regarding Gender Identity," revised August 31, 2022, <https://adflegal.org/blog/gender-dysphoria-expert-discusses-science-regarding-gender-identity> (accessed December 5, 2022).

Emilie Kao, "Yes, Schools Are Secretly Trying to Gender Transition Kids and It Must Be Stopped," The Daily Signal, March 22, 2022, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2022/03/22/yes-schools-are-secretly-trying-to-gender-transition-kids-and-it-must-be-stopped/>.