



**American School Counselor Association Issues Statement of Support for
Obama Administration Guidance on Transgender Access to School
Restrooms**

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ALEXANDRIA, VA. – The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) strongly supports President Obama’s courageous actions to protect the rights of transgender students and encourages all school districts to comply with President Obama’s letter to prevent discrimination of transgender students. The letter signed by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education requires every public school district in the country to allow students to use facilities that match their gender identity or face possible lawsuits and loss of federal aid. Students should be treated according to their sexual identity as soon as their parent or legal guardian asserts their gender identity, without any requirement for a medical diagnosis or birth certificate.

“School counselors are often students’ first resource for addressing social/emotional issues, particularly regarding relationships and identity. Exploration of gender and sexual identity is difficult enough for children and adolescents without the additional burden of restrictive school policies that tend to impede rather than support student growth,” said Richard Wong, Ed.D., ASCA executive director. “All students, regardless of their race or ethnicity, religion, age, economic class, gender or sexual identity, deserve a safe and supportive school climate that fosters academic achievement and college and career readiness. Students cannot perform to their highest levels when the school environment creates barriers to learning, instead of removing barriers.”

ASCA applauds President Obama, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education for taking this initiative to protect the rights of America's students.

The American School Counselor Association (www.schoolcounselor.org) is a worldwide nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Va., and the school counseling division of the American Counseling Association. Founded in 1952, ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they not only achieve success in school but are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. The association provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to school counselors around the globe.

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