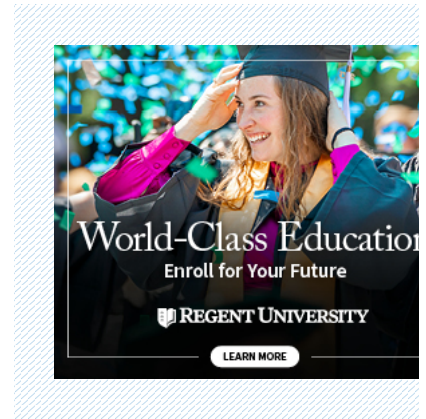




VIRGINIA BEACH

Virginia Beach School Board fails to pass resolution to adopt new transgender student policies

The vote, following a resolution introduced by board member Victoria Manning, comes as school boards across Virginia are beginning to vote on the adoption.



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Published: 11:48 PM EDT August 22, 2023
Updated: 7:06 AM EDT August 23, 2023



VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — Members of the Virginia Beach School Board failed to pass a resolution to adopt recently updated transgender "model policies" Tuesday night, after months of public comments in the city and across other school boards in the Commonwealth.

The vote, following a resolution introduced by board member Victoria Manning, comes as school boards across Virginia are beginning to vote on the adoption of the newly released guidelines by the Virginia Department of Education.



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Five school board members voted in favor of adopting the policies, five voted against it, and one member abstained, causing the motion to fail.

According to Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, the policies titled "[Ensuring Privacy, Dignity and Respect](#)", were written with a focus on empowering parents to have better knowledge of their child's education and experience.

LGBTQ advocates and organizations have criticized the policies, over language that they say is discriminatory against transgender youth, some of which include passages related to a parent's knowledge of their child's gender identity:

"No policy, guidance, training, or other written material issued by the [School Division] may encourage or instruct teachers to conceal material information about a student from the student's parent, including information related to gender. Provided, however, that [School Division] will comply with all laws that prohibit disclosure of information to parents, including but not limited to Code of Virginia § 22.1-272.1(B) (prohibiting parental contact where student is at imminent risk of suicide related to parental abuse or neglect).

The policies also include language directing school staff to only identify students using pronouns that align with their birth sex.

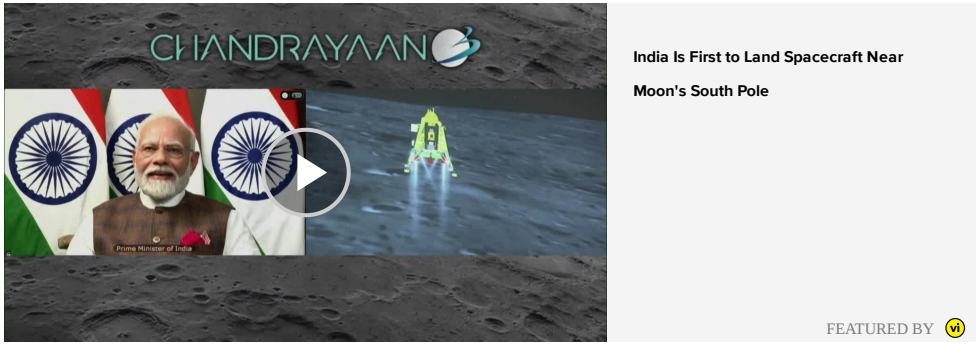
"When I'm out of school in the real world, I don't want to be treated differently based on the fact I'm transgender. Want to be treated with the same level of respect," incoming Virginia Beach senior Jae Cook said ahead of the vote.

"It's disguised in this way that it's supposed to be a good thing."

In a recent television interview, Governor Youngkin said "it's the law" for school divisions to adopt these model policies, as school districts are now either adopting or rejecting the adoption of the guidelines.

Prince William County Public Schools [announced Thursday](#) it would continue to adhere to its own policies prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, arguing that denying a transgender student the right to access school programs and facilities violate Title IX and the U.S. Constitution.





"The parents rights argument really only benefits parents trying to raise the trans-ness out of their kids," Natalie Gonzalez said, who also spoke at the meeting.

13News Now reached out to the offices of Youngkin and Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares for comment. A spokesperson for Miyares replied by saying, "The Attorney General expects the school boards to follow the law."

What do the other school divisions look like?

Divisions in Newport News, Hampton and Portsmouth all still follow previous model policies adopted in 2021 under the previous Ralph Northam administration. Those policies vary in language, but all contain information and procedural steps accommodating to a student's gender identity in an educational setting.

Norfolk Public Schools does not have an explicitly written out transgender policy available in their student handbook, but their website links to LGBTQ+ youth resources. In Chesapeake, a spokesperson for the division says the protections are built into its non-discriminatory policies.

Suffolk's [school board has also recently discussed](#) how to update its policies to reflect the updated guidelines.

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