

**From:** Ben Kelly McAlister  
**Sent:** Thu, 10 Jun 2021 20:23:43 +0000  
**To:** T9PublicHearing  
**Subject:** Written Comment: Title IX Public Hearing (In Support of Title IX Protections for LGBTQ+ Students)

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My name is Kelly McAlister, and I am a teacher and parent from (b)(6) I'm writing in regard to the Department of Education's comprehensive review of Title IX protections and notice of proposed rulemaking.

In my work as a middle school educator, I am keenly aware of the importance of supportive communities for adolescents. Feeling like they belong and are welcome in a safe place with both peers and adults is a protective factor in safeguarding teens' mental health and increasing their resistance to illegal substance use and abuse.

Sadly, in our society, LGBTQ students face harassment, unequal discipline for public displays of affection, being turned away from events like prom when they bring a same-sex date, and punishment for identifying as LGBTQ.

No transgender child should be denied access to a facility or program consistent with their gender identity, denied the opportunity to update their name or pronouns in school systems, or face unequal enforcement of dress and grooming codes — yet these instances of discrimination and others are common in schools nationwide.

I plead with you, as a teacher and as a parent, to include protections for ALL our youth in your considerations.

Sincerely,  
Kelly McAlister

(b)(6)