

What you need to know:

Parental Rights and Education Transparency

What are parental rights?

Parental rights is a concept enshrined in many Supreme Court decisions, as well as state and federal law. Generally, it means that able parents have the right to direct the care and upbringing of their children. This issue is closely tied with education transparency. Parents and taxpayers should have access to what public schools teach students. Schools should publicize curricula, learning materials, and information about how they are using taxpayer dollars. Schools should not hide personal information about a minor child, such as the child's decision to live as another gender identity, from his or her parents.

Why are parental rights in education important?

Parental rights are under attack across our country. Nearly 11 million American school children attend school districts with [policies that say that schools may be able to hide a student's gender identity from his or her parents](#), according to our partner organization, Parents Defending Education. Schools have silenced and sidelined parents who speak up about classroom politicization.

When they say...	You can say...
Shouldn't education be left to the experts?	Teachers certainly are trained in classroom management, and many are subject matter experts in their fields. But parents do not forgo the right to raise their children once he or she enters school.
Teachers can act <i>in loco parentis</i> (in place of parents).	Teachers are trustworthy members of the community and they are certified to handle issues that arise day-to-day in a classroom setting. Certainly, parents cannot control every minute decision that involves their child at school. But parents, not schools, are first and foremost responsible for directing matters of a child's healthcare, mental healthcare, wellbeing, religious or moral upbringing, and yes, education.
Parents have rights. This seems like a fabricated issue.	Parents have been repeatedly excluded from their child's life at school—including in sensitive matters like their gender identity. Parents are rightly concerned about school policies and practices that exclude them from aspects of their child's life.
Wouldn't transparency requirements burden teachers?	Teachers do have a lot on their plates, but that doesn't mean transparency isn't important. It may save teachers time in the long run for schools to establish curriculum and financial transparency policies, so parents know when and how they're able to access the information they need.
Parental rights advocates hide their bigotry under the term "parental rights."	Parental rights advocates span the political spectrum and come from various backgrounds. Most registered voters—Republicans, Independents, and Democrats alike—support legislation that would require schools to inform parents if their child decides to live as another gender identity at school, according to polling from Parents Defending Education. It's wrong to cast all parents as "bigots" in order to dismiss very real concerns they have about their children.

For more information, check out Parents Defending Education's [map](#).