



SWAMPSCOTT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Stanley Community,

I am writing to share some personal news of a significant change in my life, while asking for your understanding and support.

I have struggled with gender identity since I was in elementary school. I did my best to suppress those feelings for more than 40 years, and while I was successful to a degree, I have never felt completely happy or at peace. I got to the point that I thought I would never be able to reveal my true self. Frankly, the prospect of doing so was terrifying.

That has changed. After confronting a series of challenges last fall, I let myself imagine the possibility of being completely honest with myself and those around me. I can now say it: I am transgender. For me, that means I identify as both a male and female, and I plan to move toward presenting myself and identifying as female.

I will be using my middle name, Shannon, as my new first name. An Irish name meaning "wise river," it is used by both males and females, perfectly denoting my fluid gender identity. I would respectfully ask that I be called Principal Daniels. When using pronouns to refer to me, "he," "she" and "they" are all acceptable.

As I nurture my new identity, I will most likely be presenting myself differently. While my decision is intensely personal, I realize I play a public role in the community. I know there will be questions, and I am aware of the likelihood that my transition won't necessarily be easy for everyone. I will do everything in my power to ensure that there is no negative impact on our school community. I will be honest and transparent, and will keep an open line of communication with all faculty, staff and families.

One obvious issue is how my situation can best be communicated to your children. Ultimately, each family will make that decision; here is some sample language that can be used with your children:

- There are many different ways boys and girls express themselves. It is important that we accept everyone as they are.

The Swampscott Public Schools does not discriminate or tolerate harassment against students, parents/guardians, employees or the general public. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to the Swampscott Public Schools, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of the Swampscott Public Schools on grounds of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, ancestry, children, marital or civil union status, veteran status or membership in the armed services, receiving of public assistance, homeless, or disability.



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- Principal Daniels may look and sound different, but inside Principal Daniels is the same caring person.
- This doesn't change the fact that Stanley School is a great place to be and learn.

You will be hearing soon from Superintendent Pamela Angelakis on resources and opportunities for conversation and education on this topic.

The wonderful Stanley School community is incredibly warm and accepting. I am proud to be the leader of this school, and I sincerely believe that the ability to live my life openly and authentically gives me great serenity and will make me a more sensitive, empathetic and effective leader. I feel tremendous gratitude for being part of the Stanley family. I humbly ask that you support me as you would any family member going through a profound life change.

I thank you in advance for your help and understanding along this journey.

Sincerely,

Shannon Daniels, M.Ed
Principal