



Documenting Gendered Spaces: New Jersey School Districts



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The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to *practice* leadership *through* action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at <http://iwl.rutgers.edu>.



The Issue:



LGBTQ+ Safe Spaces for gender non-conforming students **lack** proper media attention and educational resources in many localized areas.

This project aims to:

- Increase public awareness of the disproportionate conditions of gendered spaces across various school districts in New Jersey by organizing a photo journal documenting the physical locations of gendered areas such as all-gender bathrooms
- Educate students and constituents on the local regulations and laws through media outlets and resources





Financing and Maintenance of Public Schools

Public School Funding:

- Many states have vague or nonexistent laws surrounding gender non-conforming restrooms in public schools
- “Top-down initiatives,” or “bottom-up strategies,” or “a combination of both” has failed to “systematically change “practices and behaviors in large numbers of schools” (Dimmock)

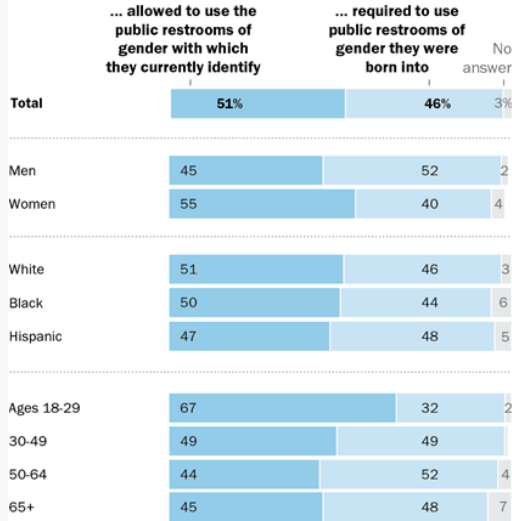
Drive for Reform:

- Driven by individual teachers/constituents
- Lack of media attention
- Vague/complex laws/regulations
- Implementation from federal/state level → local level: often incomplete and up to interpretation

Gender Neutral Bathrooms and Legislation

Most young adults favor allowing transgender people to use restrooms of their current gender identity

If you had to choose, which comes closest to your view?
Transgender people should be ...



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016.
"Where the Public Stands on Religious Liberty vs. Nondiscrimination"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

- **Federal Standards**
 - No federal standards, left to states
- **State Standards (Varies)**
 - Maine: students "must be permitted to use the toilet, locker room, and shower facilities corresponding to their gender identity," ("Restrooms and Facilities.")
 - Connecticut "may be provided access to a reasonable alternative restroom such as a single stall "unisex" restroom or the health office restroom." ("Restrooms and Facilities,")
- **New Jersey Legislation**
 - "New Jersey Law Against Discrimination ("NJLAD")", states that it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of "gender identity or expression."
 - "[a]ll students are entitled to have access to restrooms, locker rooms and changing facilities in accordance with their gender identity to allow for involvement in various school programs and activities," (Bill A3164)

[Source: Pew Research Center]



And so...

Goal

Greater awareness of the inequality of gendered spaces across school districts and possible regulation

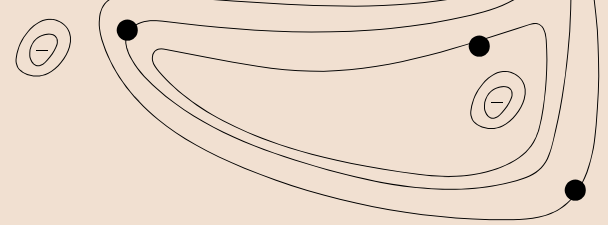
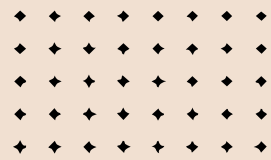


Purpose

Provide safe spaces for gender non-conforming youth to access in public schools

Product

A photo journal and articles/resources pertaining to documenting gendered spaces in schools



Timeline

Summer

September

October

November

December

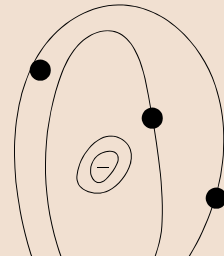
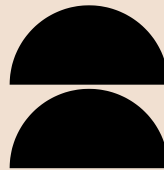
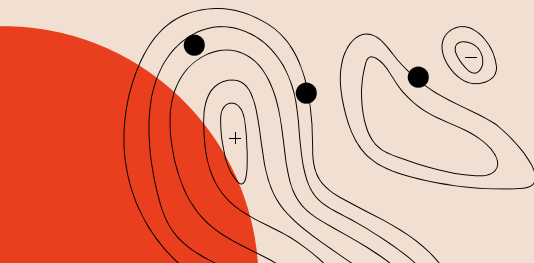
-Reach out to schools/orgs

-Organization of material/planning visitation
-Research

-School visitation/
Dissemination proposal

-Drafted final article/paper

-Completed draft
-Dissemination



Partnerships

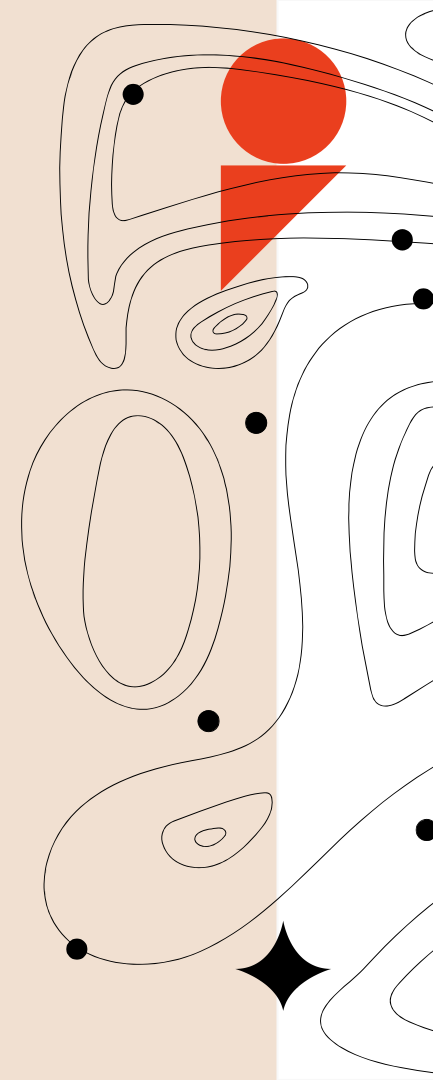




Feminist Leadership

Feminist leadership must actively work towards changing patriarchal structures and social norms that harm minorities. It is not enough to be a woman and a leader to be considered women's leadership. One must address the presumptive values that hold our society in place.

- Challenging societal norms
- Assessing governmental policy and regulation
- First-hand documentation of implementation



Conducting Research

Background

- Top level analysis
- State/local regulation
- Secondary sources

Documentation

- Primary sources
- Photography
- Interviews

Synthesis

- Research paper
- Article

“Along with...

generalized equity training given to the staff on aspects of identity among students (such as LGBTQ+ or cultural equity), there are also educational measures given to parents and students on racial and gender biases. Students have both reactionary methods of dealing with instances of mistreatment through filing a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) complaint, or preventative measures, such as communicating prospective concerns to a counselor.”



Outreach and Dissemination

Outreach to Organizations:

- The Daily Targum
- SAS
- HiTops

Dissemination:

- Website/Blog
 - <https://ec9076.wixsite.com/documenting-gendered>
- Articles



Documenting Gendered Spaces in New Jersey School Districts: Coming Soon

A blog dedicated to documenting resources for gender non-conforming and trans youth in public schools

We are almost ready to launch! Be the first to know

Enter your email *

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Let's Chat!

The Final Product

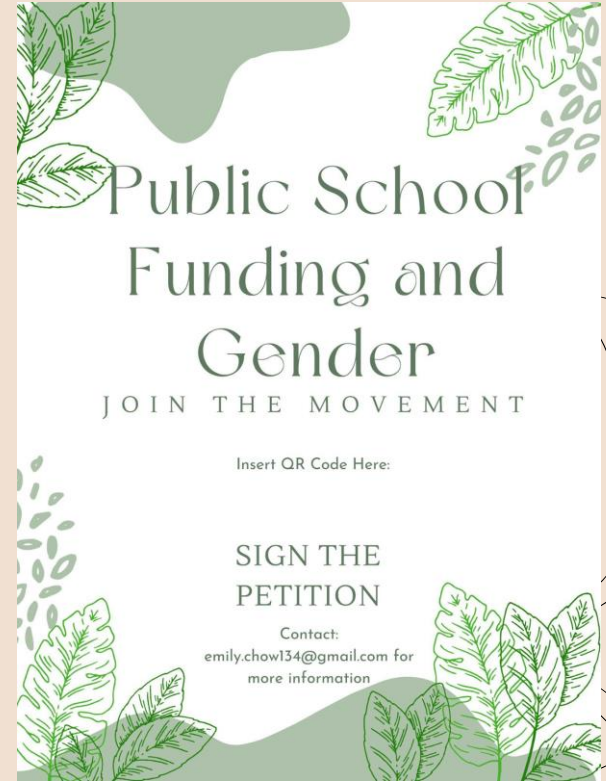
Impact:

Now:

- Articles/Research
- Mixed media and submissions
- Published blog post
 - Website
 - Speaking with community advocates

Future:

- Publication of articles
 - Resources
 - Further blog posts and outreach



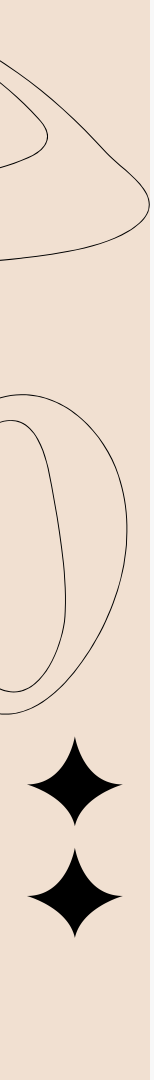


Insight and Lessons Learned

01	Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Holding government and people accountable for creating inclusive spaces and programs
02	Amplifying Voices and Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating spaces for marginalized individuals and communities• Providing spaces for representation
03	Advocacy and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocating for greater resources and education availability• Advocating for individuals and communities

Personal Lessons:

- Confidence
- Expanding my worldview
- Self-motivation



Acknowledgements

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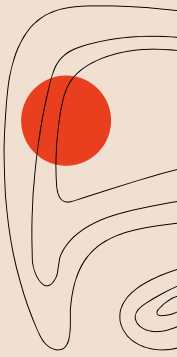
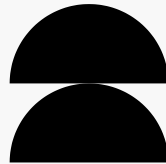
Professor Mary Trigg

Professor Zainab Alam

Professor Charlotte Bunch

The IWL cohort of 2023

The entire IWL program and all the individuals who make it run



Bibliography

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