



NSTA Position Statement

Gender Equity in Science Education

Introduction

NSTA strongly endorses instituting a policy of gender equity in all preK–12 science classrooms. Gender equity means ensuring that all boys and all girls—regardless of age, cultural or ethnic background, or disabilities—have the support they need to become successful science students and feel respected and challenged. This position is supported by the National Science Education Standards (NSES). While these declarations specifically address gender equity in preK–12 classrooms, NSTA recognizes the importance of the issue in higher education.

Declarations

NSTA makes the following declarations about how to achieve gender equity. This issue cuts across all parts of the science education system, requiring leadership support and the active participation of all stakeholders to ensure that all girls and all boys achieve scientific literacy.

In the classroom, science teachers must

- Implement varied and effective research-based teaching and assessment strategies that align with the learning styles of all students.
- Ensure that all students are in a learning environment that encourages them to participate fully in class discussions and science activities and investigations.

In developing and implementing professional development and teacher preparation programs, science teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and policy makers must

- Ensure that discussions about research-based issues related to the pedagogy of gender equity are an integral part of professional development and teacher education programs.
- Be aware of their own deep-seated beliefs so that they can ensure that their beliefs do not interfere with objective science teaching.

In selecting science curriculum, science teachers, administrators, and community members must

- Select only those curriculum materials that promote gender inclusiveness through their text, illustrations, and graphics.
- Select only those curriculum materials that present culturally diverse male and female role models working in all disciplines and at all levels of science.

In developing assessment tools, science teachers, administrators, and evaluators must

- Design and implement varied kinds of assessment models so that all students, regardless of their learning style, can be assessed fairly in science.
- Provide administrative support for the development and use of a range of assessment tools that promote gender equity.

In helping students prepare for careers, guidance counselors and science teachers must

- Encourage all students to consider science and science-related careers by exposing them to a range of school and community activities.
- Provide all students with the most recent information about the kinds of opportunities available in the sciences, as well as the preparation necessary to attain such careers.

*--Adopted by the
NSTA Board of Directors
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Additional Resources

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