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Nova Scotia Student Information System

Nova Scotia Public Education System

# Student Legal Name Changes

User Guide

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## 1 OVERVIEW

When a student or parent requests a change to a student's legal name, follow this step-by-step guide to ensure you are addressing the request properly, respectfully, and in compliance with provincial procedures.

If the student or parent is requesting to update their preferred/chosen first name, refer to the [Preferred Name in PowerSchool](#) user guide for more information.

### Understanding the Flowchart in Section 2:

The flowchart on page 4 helps determine which record-change process applies based on:

- The reason for the name change (e.g., adoption, gender name change, amended birth certificate)
- The type of legal documentation (e.g., birth certificate, court order, adoption papers)

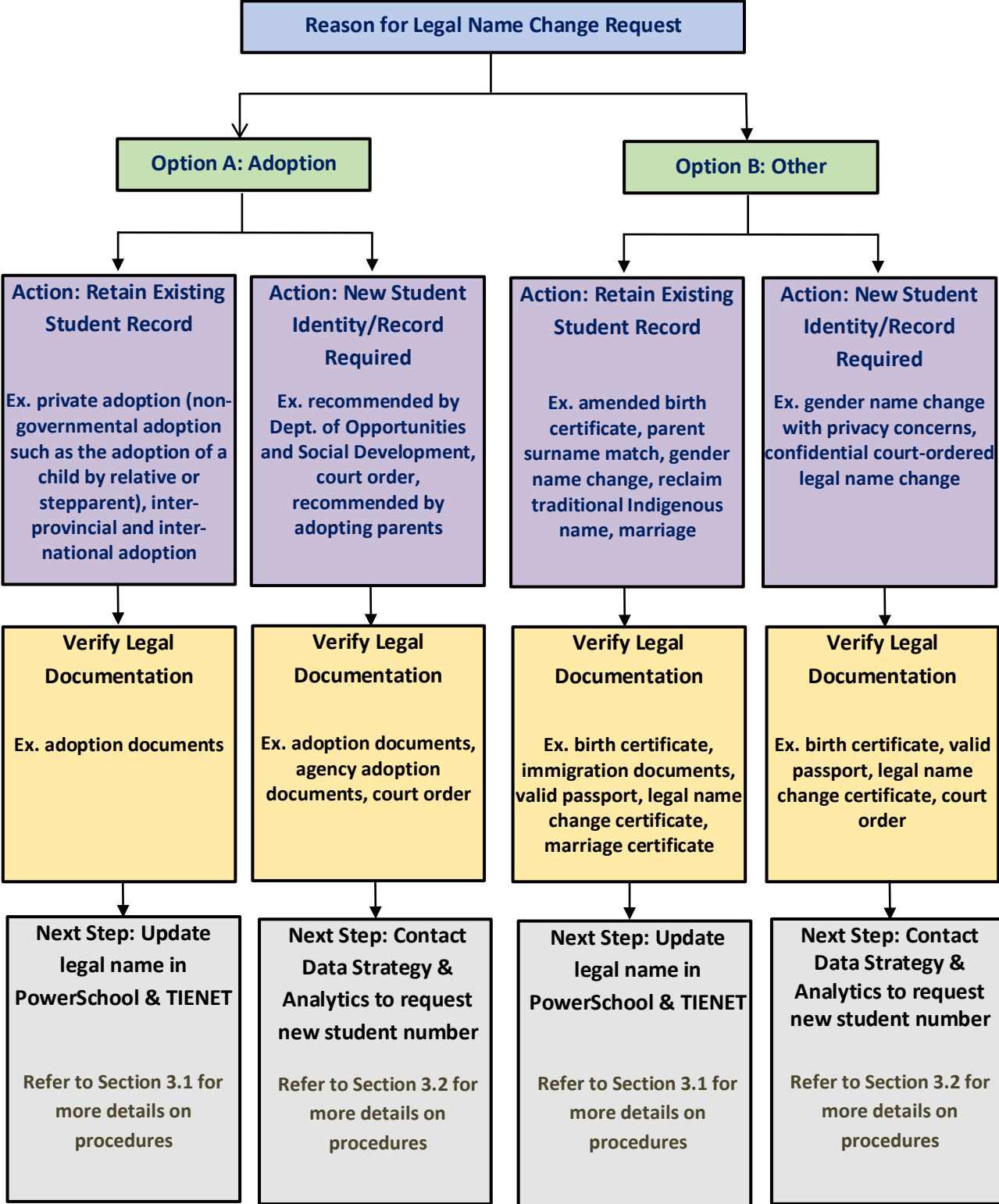
Based on the reason for the legal name change, the student and/or parent must make a key decision and choose to either:

- Retain the existing student record and student number (use when the name change is not confidential (e.g., adoption, name alignment))
- Create a new student identity/record using a new student number (use when confidentiality is required (e.g., gender name change with privacy concerns, court-ordered anonymity))

The [Legal Name Change Request Form](#) (see Appendix A) must be **reviewed and signed** by the student and/or parent to confirm that they understand the implications of their choice - whether to retain the existing student record or to create a new one. This ensures informed consent, proper documentation, and compliance with privacy and data management procedures. It also authorizes the school to make permanent changes to the student's educational records based on verified legal documentation.

The completed and signed request form must be kept in the student's cumulative record folder in accordance with the steps outlined in Section 3.

## 2 LEGAL NAME CHANGE PROCESS FLOWCHART



## 3 SUPPORTING LEGAL NAME CHANGES: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

The student/parent chooses to retain the existing student record, go to Section 3.1. If they choose to create a new student identity/record, follow all pertaining steps as outlined in Section 3.2.

### 3.1 RETAINING EXISTING STUDENT RECORD

1. Using either the student's Demographics or Registration Screen page in PowerSchool, update the student's legal name and indicate the reason for the name change. (The updated legal name will appear in TIENET the following day).
2. Use the student's existing provincial student number.
3. Confirm that all information on Demographics or Registration Screen page is accurate and up to date. Place the signed **Legal Name Change in PowerSchool Request Form** (see Appendix A) in the student's cumulative record folder.

### 3.2 NEW STUDENT IDENTITY/RECORD IS REQUIRED

#### 3.2.1 POWERSCHOOL/TIENET RECORDS

1. Contact Data Strategy and Analytics to request a new student number. Send an email to [psm@novascotia.ca](mailto:psm@novascotia.ca) and request a new Student Provincial Identification Number for the student's new name legal name. This email should include the student's original legal name, original student number, date of birth, and the student's new legal name.
2. Verify if the student has any documents in **TIENET**. Notify your school's Program Planning Team, Counsellor, Attendance Support Worker and SchoolsPlus staff of the pending name change and ask them to check the original student record for any related documents that need to be completed and finalized. Once all documents are finalized:
  - A. Download and print documents which contain recorded information related to the student's educational programming.
  - B. Following a legal name change, the student's former education records should have any identifying name, student number, and/or gender redacted prior to being filed under the new student record. Blacken out the original name, student number and pronouns (if applicable) on every page where they appear and write the new name, student number and pronoun (if applicable) that you received from Data Strategy and Analytics/PSM on every page.
  - C. Scan the blackened documents to ensure that the identifiable information is unreadable and save as digital file (PDF) in a secure location until ready to proceed with Step 7.
  - D. Shred all blackened documents from Step 2B.

3. Next, in **PowerSchool**, complete the following steps:
  - A. Print the student's cumulative record from PowerSchool (refer to the [Cumulative Record](#) user guide for more details). NOTE: The cumulative record may not print properly with Firefox, so the preferred browsers to use are Chrome or MS Edge.
  - B. Following a legal name change, the student's former education records should have any identifying name, student number, and/or gender redacted prior to being filed under the new student record. Blacken out the original name, student number, pronouns and photograph (if applicable) on every page where they appear and write the new name, student number and pronoun (if applicable) that you received from Data Strategy and Analytics/PSM on every page.
  - C. Photocopy the blackened document to ensure that the identifiable information is unreadable and save in a secure location until ready to proceed with Step 6.
  - D. Shred all blackened documents from Step 3B.
4. Place the signed **Legal Name Change in PowerSchool Request Form** (see Appendix A) in the student's cumulative record folder. **Important note:** the form must be placed in the original student record and not the new student record.
5. Transfer the student out of school in PowerSchool using the Planned Destination of **UNKN** (UNKNOWN). The original student record will remain an inactive student in your school.

**Important Note:** In PowerSchool, do not record the student's new name or new student number anywhere in the original student record. Do not create a link to the student's new record, with the exception explained in step 6B.
6. When the new student number is received, the student is enrolled in PowerSchool using the new student number.
  - A. Place the blackened photocopied cumulative record from Step 3C in the new student's cumulative record folder.
  - B. If applicable, enter all historical grades for 9-12.
  - C. Inform the student that they will receive an email indicating that their current GNSPES account will be deactivated within one year. In place of this deactivated account, they will receive a new GNSPES account that has been created under their new Student Provincial Identification Number. It is the student's/parent's responsibility to transfer information from the old account to the new account.
7. The following day, go into TIENET and upload all documents from Step 2C. Once the documents are uploaded, permanently delete the digital file/s.

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### 3.2.2 PAPER RECORDS (IF APPLICABLE)

1. If the original student record has a paper cumulative record, make a photocopy of all documents which contain recorded information related to the student's educational programming. Once photocopied, be sure to return all original documents to the original student's cumulative record. Store the original student cumulative folder in a secure location as per your school/regional procedures.
2. For all photocopied documents from Step 1, blacken out the original name, student number and pronoun and photograph (if applicable) on every page, and write the new name, student number and pronouns (if applicable) on every page.
3. Photocopy the blackened documents to ensure that the identifiable information is unreadable and save in a secure location until ready to proceed to Step 5.
4. Shred the blackened documents from Step 2.
5. Place any academic cumulative record files (from Step 3) in the new student's cumulative record folder. For all other programming and related documents, upload them to the appropriate folders in TIENET.

## Legal Name Change in PowerSchool Request Form

This form must be submitted by a parent to change a student’s name to the student’s permanent records. The term “parent” shall mean the student’s parent(s), guardian(s) or any person(s) in a parental relation or custodial relationship to the student, or the student if the student is a *mature minor* (living on their own and under their own supervision without a guardian).

<b>Provincial Student Number:</b>		
<b>Current Legal Name in PowerSchool:</b>		
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name(s)
<b>Change Legal Name to:</b>		
Last Name	First Name	Middle Name(s)

Name changes must be accompanied by legal documentation. Please check which document is used for verification.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> birth certificate          | <input type="checkbox"/> adoption document             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> change of name certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> court order document          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> valid passport             | <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify): _____ |

The student and/or parent can choose to either:

1. Retain and continue using the existing student record, or
2. Create a new identity and student record

What it means to continue using the existing record:	What it means to create a new identity and student record:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school will continue to use the existing the PowerSchool student record and update the student’s legal name in the student information system.</li> <li>■ All previous information generated by the school prior to the date of this change will reflect the student’s previous legal name and/or preferred name at that time. Previously created records in PowerSchool/TIENET that indicate the student’s previous legal name or preferred name cannot be modified to indicate the new legal name.</li> <li>■ Following the legal name change, any future documents and records generated by the school will contain the student’s new legal name (and/or preferred name, if applicable).</li> <li>■ Parents and students will continue to see all historical academic achievement information in the Student-Parent Portal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school will create a new provincial student number for the student.</li> <li>■ The student record containing the old student number and previous legal name will be transferred out of school.</li> <li>■ The school will re-enroll the student using the new student number and new legal name. Doing so creates a break between the two student records; in other words, there is no link between the two student identities.</li> <li>■ The school will redact student identifiable information (i.e., names and/or pronouns) from the student’s former cumulative record and place a copy in the student’s new cumulative record.</li> <li>■ Parents and students will only see all academic achievement information in the Student-Parent Portal as of the date when the new student record was created. Parents and students will not be able to access PowerSchool information in the Student-Parent Portal associated with the old student record.</li> </ul>

When updating the student’s legal name in PowerSchool, the student and/or parent agree to (check only one box):

- Retain and continue using the existing student record       Create a new identity and student record

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have carefully reviewed each of the considerations above and request that the school amend my child’s permanent educational records to reflect their new legal name. Signed form to be placed in student’s original cumulative record folder.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent(s) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed