

Use of Gender Neutral Pronouns in PowerTeacher Pro

In March 2019, gender X was added as a gender marker in PowerSchool allowing students to identify and/or change their gender marker to F (Female), M (Male), or X (non-binary, or another gender identity). This document outlines changes in PowerTeacher Pro for students who use gender marker X. For students who use M or F gender markers, no changes apply. This document actions the principles of the Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy and related documents in support of transgender and gender non-conforming students. For more information about gender documentation in PowerSchool, click [here](#).

At times, students or their parent(s)/guardian(s), will make a direct request of teachers to use the student's preferred name or pronoun without officially requesting to have their preferred name or pronoun changed in PowerSchool. When the student's preferred name and/or pronoun is different from what is recorded in PowerSchool, teachers will prepare report cards to align with this request to support and affirm the student.

Remember!

Self-identification is the sole measure of a student's gender identity

Gender neutral pronouns have been configured in PowerSchool to replace the female and male specific pronouns when the student identifies as gender X. In PowerTeacher Pro, gender neutral pronouns will appear as follows:

Gender Specific Pronouns	Gender Neutral Pronouns
He/She	They
he/she	they
His/Her	Their
his/her	their
him/her	them
son/daughter	child

Find Out More

[How using 'they' as a singular pronoun can change the world](#)

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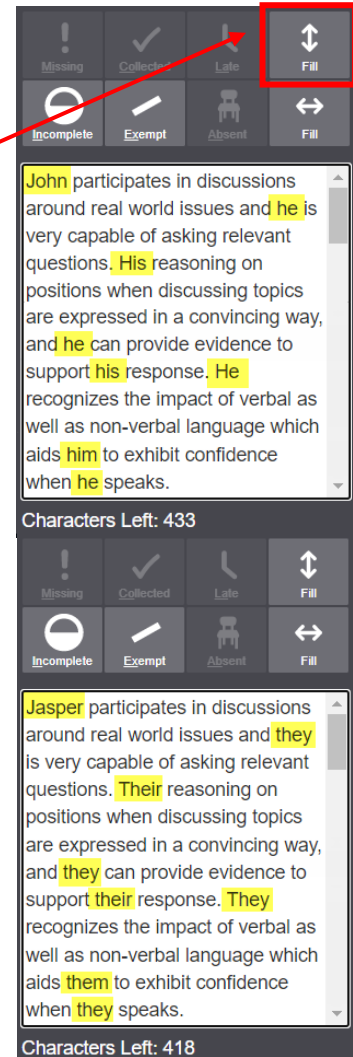
To illustrate how this feature works in PT Pro, let us look at an example. To the right, is John's English Language Arts report card comment. John identifies as a boy, which is represented by the gender marker M in Power School. Text that is highlighted in yellow represents words that can change when using the Fill feature to copy John's comment to other students having no comment. Refer to the report card [user guides](#) for more details on using the Fill feature in PT Pro.

When John's comment is filled to other students, the students' name as well as any pronouns will be updated according to the students' first (or preferred) name and their assigned gender in PowerSchool.

Jasper, one of the students in John's class, identifies as non-binary, which is represented by the gender X in PowerSchool.

When we look at Jasper's filled comment, you will notice that at the beginning of the comment, John's name has been replaced with Jasper. As well, all of John's gender specific pronouns have been replaced with gender neutral pronouns such as they and them.

It is expected practice for teachers to review report card comments for every student. During this review, teachers should review all filled comments to ensure they read as expected and without errors. PT Pro will only replace pronouns and cannot fix grammatical errors with verb forms, so teachers must manually correct any errors they encounter when reviewing comments.



For example, when reading Jasper's comment, you will notice some pronoun-verb agreement errors:

- they **is** very capable of ...
- They **recognizes** the impact ...
- exhibit confidence when they **speaks**.



1. If using the fill feature to fill comments, always choose a male student when entering the source comment that will be filled to other students. The reason being that PT Pro cannot distinguish the smart text <his/her> from <him/her> when filling a comment originating from a female student. PT Pro will always choose to use <his/her>, even if the intent is to use <him/her>. If you select a male student, then the issue can be avoided because PT Pro can differentiate 'his' and 'him' - but cannot distinguish 'her' (in <his/her>) from 'her' (in <him/her>).

- In PT Pro, it is not necessary to pick the first student listed in the class roster when filling comments (if the first student listed is a female student). PT Pro will fill a comment for all students having no comment, whether they are listed above or below the selected student.
- In order to proof your classes' comments afterwards in an easy to edit way, use the **Comment Verification** page in PT Pro (**Grading > Comment Verification**). You can also run the View My Comments report from the Start Page of PowerTeacher by clicking **View My Comments (P-6)** or **View My Comments (7-12)**.

The View My Comments report indicates a message in orange text for any student assigned the gender marker X, and a message in red text may also appear under the Issues column if potential issues with gendered pronouns exist. It is recommended to review all student comments for readability and accurateness and make any necessary changes to the comment/s in your gradebook. (In the comment depicted below, there are issues with pronoun-verb agreement that must be corrected).

Lead Teacher	Course	Course Title	Course Term	Student Name	Gender	Store Code	Grade	Comment	Length / Max	Issues
Teem, Aaron	MT10.5	MATHEMATICS 10	2022-2023	Alexander, Noah	X	Q1	86	Noah has a good understanding of the units covered this term in Mathematics 10. They is becoming comfortable using formulas to calculate surface area and volume, and their understanding of trig ratios is progressing well, and they can now apply these ratios to find angles and side length. They is encouraged to continue taking an active part in class during instruction.	372/400	- Comment may have gendered pronouns.

- When preparing comments for report cards, If smart text is not being used, teachers will need to be mindful to use the student's requested name and/or pronoun, and should diligently ensure that they have not made an error on the report card that may potentially "out" a student or cause harm.
- If you have questions about gender identity and expression, reach out to your Teaching Support Team, your Regional Student Equity Consultants, or the Youth Project to request support.