

5011: SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY (AP)

Approved: 14 01 28
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POLICY

As outlined in Policy 101 – Diversity and Inclusion, the Board of Education celebrates the diversity of our School District and identifies inclusion as a core District value. Policy 101 and associated Administrative Procedures address protected grounds covered by the Human Rights Code of BC and ensure that all employees reflect on how their actions and interactions create a respectful, accepting, safe and supportive environment for all members of our school communities.

Specific to this Administrative Procedure, the Board believes our school community is stronger through its diversity and will strive to ensure that procedures and practices relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression:

- Outline expectations and processes that are inclusive, welcoming and supportive in order that students and staff are not subject to discrimination or harassment.
- Protect all members of our school community by addressing complaints of discrimination and harassment due to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression, seriously and expeditiously.
- Educate our school community about the strength of diversity and, in particular, the value of all our students and staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two-Spirit, queer (LGBT2Q+) and those that are questioning.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1.0 Leadership

The Board will encourage and support leadership at all levels of the District to support students and staff who identify as LGBT2Q+.

- 1.1 The Board of Education will support staff and students as they work towards educating the school community about diversity, inclusion, and, in particular, the needs of persons who are questioning or who identify as LGBT2Q+.
- 1.2 The Superintendent will appoint a District Lead who will provide general leadership to District SOGI initiatives, including but not limited to attending Provincial summits and meetings, organizing School Lead meetings and monitoring SOGI procedures

and practices in schools. The District Lead will also sit on the District Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

- 1.3 School Administration will appoint a staff member to be a School Lead. The School Lead will attend District meetings, promote inclusive practices at the school level, present learning modules and information to staff and be a champion for students.
- 1.4 School Administration will request staff volunteers to be 'safe persons' at the school level who will be known to the student body as a safe contact for students.
- 1.5 Schools and staff are encouraged to display support for all students and in particular students who are questioning or identify as LGBT2Q+.
- 1.6 Schools are encouraged to include and support students when developing school policies and practices in the area of SOGI.

2.0 Education

School staffs shall be encouraged to support LGBT2Q+ individuals by teaching about their positive contribution to society, promoting the inclusion and acceptance of LGBT2Q+ students and staff, and actively teaching about discrimination and the impact of discrimination on individuals.

- 2.1 Schools will actively seek out resources for classroom and library use that reflect and value the diversity in the district and, in particular, LGBT2Q+ students to see themselves and their lives positively and visibly reflected in the curriculum. Resources will comply with BC Ministry of Education standards for meeting the prescribed learning outcomes and competencies.
- 2.2 School Leads will provide education and resources at meetings of staff to increase their awareness and understanding of the scope and impact of discrimination against LGBT2Q+ people and how to support students and staff.
- 2.3 Teachers will educate students in the areas of healthy relationships, personal health and safety, diversity and social justice education including harassment and homophobia through the BC Ministry of Education prescribed learning outcomes and competencies. These subject areas include but are not limited to Physical and Health Education, Social Studies and Social Justice.
- 2.4 Teachers shall be encouraged to include age appropriate LGBT2Q+ issues into curriculum that meet the BC Ministry of Education prescribed learning outcomes and competencies to help students acquire the skills and knowledge to understand the impacts of homophobia and transphobia upon society.

3.0 School District Employees

- 3.1 The district shall provide and promote opportunities for employees to increase their understanding and awareness of LGBT2Q+ issues in support of creating accepting, safe and supportive environments for all members of our school communities.
- 3.2 School and District Counselors will be educated in the knowledge and skills necessary to support students, staff, schools and parents when dealing with SOGI or LGBT2Q+ issues.
- 3.3 All staff have a duty to intervene in any interactions involving the use of offensive and discriminatory language, regardless of the speaker's intention, and will use the opportunity as a teachable moment to educate and prevent future discrimination. Significantly hurtful and discriminatory language and actions may be subject to discipline.
- 3.4 All staff will support students who feel unsafe or unwelcome due to issues of gender identity and/or sexual orientation. Staff will model respect and inclusion and promote human rights for all school community members.
- 3.5 Schools will reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by sex. In situations where students are segregated by sex, trans students will have the opportunity to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity. Students will be permitted to participate in sex segregated sports activities with the gender with which they identify. Trans students will be permitted to participate in physical education along with all other students and shall be permitted to join with groups that are sex segregated based on the gender with which they identify.

4.0 Members of the school community rights

- 4.1 A student's gender identity, legal name, or gender assigned at birth may constitute confidential personal information that will be kept confidential unless its disclosure is legally required or unless the student or the student's parent(s)/legal guardians have given authorizations. In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or to report a student's legal name or sex, such as for purposes of data collection, school staff and administrators will adopt practice to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such information.
- 4.2 Student and staff rights to discuss and express their gender identity and/or gender expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much private information to share will be respected.

- 4.3 Students and staff will be addressed by the names and pronouns they prefer. Names and pronoun choice may change according to context.
- 4.4 Whenever possible and permitted by law, requests made by a student, or the parent/guardian, or a staff member to change their official record to reflect their preferred name and/or gender identity will be accommodated.
- 4.5 Whenever possible, at the request of a student or of a students' parent(s)/guardian, the student's preferred name and/or gender identity will be included on class lists, timetables, student files, identification cards, etc.
- 4.6 Unless the student or the student's parent/guardian has specified otherwise, communications between the school and home shall use a student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth.
- 4.7 Students and staff shall have access to the washroom and change room that corresponds to their gender identity. Where possible, students who desire increased privacy will be offered an alternate area to change for sports or PE related activities.
- 4.8 The Board will strive to make available gender-neutral washrooms for students and staff at all school district schools and facilities.
- 4.9 All members of the school community have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression.
- 4.10 The Board and schools will support staff and students to develop safe places and groups to support school diversity and inclusion (ie. GSA, QandA, SAFE).

5.0 **Safety**

It is expected that schools are safe for all members of our school communities. The Board will strive to ensure that all District and School procedures and practices support staff and student safety and respond to any actions or language (including online) that incites hatred, discriminates, degrades, labels, or stereotypes staff or students based on their perceived or actual gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

- 5.1 Each school shall include language in its Code of Conduct that explicitly states that students who are questioning or identify as LGBT2Q+ are free from discrimination and harassment and that there are consequences for negative actions and comments.
- 5.2 These administrative procedures cannot anticipate every issue or situation that might arise with regards to sexual orientation or identity; therefore, the needs of

each student must be assessed on an individual basis with the intent to protect the rights of all students.

6.0 Communication

- 6.1 The Board will ensure that school and district forms and communication reflect the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities of students, staff and parents. Questions related to gender that are not required by ministerial or government regulation shall not appear on official forms.
- 6.2 Wherever possible, District and school communications will be inclusive of and sensitive to gender and LGBT2Q+ language.

References

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Human Rights Code of BC
School Act of BC
Policy 101 – Diversity and Inclusion

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

Purpose:

The language used in relation to LGBT2Q+ issues is important, dynamic and contextual. To be clear in our communication, we need to possess, understand and use a common language. Yet LGBT2Q+ language is not static: it is constantly evolving to avoid narrowly defining individuals and to reflect communities which may have slightly different definitions. In presenting this glossary of terms and definitions we acknowledge that vocabulary will continue to evolve that some individuals identify outside these terms and definitions.

Ally refers to a heterosexual individual who challenges homophobia and transphobia along with supporting equal civil rights, gender equality, and LGBT2Q+ social movements.

Bisexual can refer to people who are romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved with women or men.

Cisgender refers to people who identify as the gender assigned to them at birth, based on their biological sex.

Gay can refer to a person who is romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved solely with the same gender.

Gender Identity refers to the way a person perceives their own gender and defines themselves.

Heterosexism refers to the assumption that all people are heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior and more desirable for all people than any other sexual orientation.

Heterosexual refers to a man or a woman who is romantically, emotionally or sexually involved solely with the opposite sex.

Homophobia is the irrational fear or hatred of, aversion to, or discrimination against people based on an actual or assumed sexual orientation.

Lesbian can refer to a woman who is romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved with women.

LGBT2Q+ is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, 2 spirited and Questioning. The plus sign recognizes that not all people identify with these terms and may prefer other terms. It is meant to be an inclusive term for a very diverse group of people.

Queer refers to people who identify themselves based on sexual orientation or gender identity but don't want to identify with a specific label or who resist these categories as too simplistic, it is used as

an umbrella term. Some LGBTQ2+ people choose not to use this term due to its past negative connotations, and many find it offensive.

Sexual Orientation is used to refer to the wide range of human sexualities including, but not limited to Bisexual, Gay, Heterosexual, Lesbian, Pansexual, Transgender, Two-Spirited orientations.

Transgender refers to people who do not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth, based on their biological sex.

Transphobia is the irrational fear or hatred of, aversion to, and discrimination against people who are transgender or who otherwise transgress traditional gender norms.

Transsexual previously used in place of Transgender may choose not to use it due to its history as a derogatory term. This term is considered offensive by many.

Two-Spirit refers to Aboriginal or Indigenous people who identify themselves as having both masculine and feminine spirit and often fulfill a traditional third-gender ceremonial role within their cultures.