

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY

The Board recognizes and values the diversity found within its school communities and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the District's culture. The Board also recognizes that students and other school community members identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ+) face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. This often results in a struggle with a variety of profound social consequences including discrimination, harassment, physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm and suicide.

The Board believes that each member of the District community must share the responsibility for supporting all students and staff in addressing and facing these challenges and that we have the responsibility for providing an education system that is safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming for its students, employees and community members. The Board commits to creating this environment for all students and employees with special attention paid to supporting those who identify as LGBTQ+.

The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe and positive environment, free from discrimination, harassment and intimidation for all students, employees and community members regardless of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The Board is particularly committed to supporting those who identify as LGBTQ+. In this regard, the Board is committed to the letter and spirit of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the BC Human Rights Code, related District administrative procedures and the Collective Agreements.

Specifically, the Board will not tolerate hate crimes, harassment, discrimination or intimidation, and will vigorously enforce policy and regulations when dealing with such matters. The Board commits to providing a safe environment, free from harassment, discrimination and intimidation, while also promoting proactive strategies and guidelines to ensure that the LGBTQ+ community is welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life while being treated with respect and dignity.

The Board will not permit, encourage, nor condone any behaviours contrary to these commitments, whether by commission or by failing to act to bring such behaviours to an end, and is committed to providing support and assistance to those who may be the intended or unintended targets of such behaviours.

Reference: Sections 6, 7, 17, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act  
Human Rights Code  
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms  
Canadian Human Rights Act  
AP 176 – Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity

Approved: XXXXX 2021