

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY**Policy****Management Regulations - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

The Richmond Board of Education believes that an important role for public education is to prepare young people to work and live in open, supportive and democratic societies that are free of discrimination or violence that is based on sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

An educational environment that fosters equity and the principles of inclusion, will affirm the identities of individuals and their families, and can support the elimination of homophobia and discrimination within our schools and our communities.

It is the overarching responsibility of the Board of Education to jointly ensure that all staff understand and demonstrate that it is their individual and collective responsibility to identify individual discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. It is expected that all staff will work to eliminate the barriers and inequities to learning for students who identify themselves as LGBTQ+, ensuring that all students are treated with fairness, respect and dignity.

The Board will promote pro-active strategies and guidelines so that all members of this diverse community are welcomed, respected, accepted and supported.

The Board is committed to implementing measures that will:

- Define appropriate expectations, language, behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment.
- Ensure that complaints of discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression are taken seriously and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures.
- Raise awareness and improve understanding of the unique set of challenges experienced by those who identify sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

Education and Awareness

- The District will work continuously to educate all members of the school community (including students, staff, parents and guardians) to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity and expression and to promote a safe and inclusive environment.
- The District will support schools with SOGI affirming resources that can be infused in all curricula.
- The District will support developmentally appropriate activities and provide resources that promote knowledge and skills that develop respect for all sexual orientations and expressions.
- The District will support schools and staff in the maintenance of library resources that affirm human diversity as a fundamental component in our society, and reflect the diversity within our school communities.

District, School and Staff Responsibilities

- The Board and District will provide opportunities for school communities to increase awareness of the impact of harassment and discrimination.
- The Board and District will provide opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and skills in promoting respect for human rights, supporting diversity and addressing harassment and discrimination.
- The District will take action when there is evidence of, or an actual complaint, of harassment and/or discrimination.
- The District will distribute guidelines for investigating and addressing incidents of harassment and/or discrimination.
- The District will build greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, the harmful effects of isolation resulting from homophobic and/or transphobic discrimination.
- Schools will inform students, staff and parents on how and when to report incidents of harassment and/or discrimination and where appropriate, intervene.
- Schools will support formal and/or informal Gay/Straight Clubs or Alliance (GSAs) groups.
- Staff and students have an obligation to intervene in any interaction involving the use of harassing, discriminatory or homophobic

statements, comments and behaviours, regardless of the speaker's intentions and to convey that such comments are against policy and will not be tolerated. Education about the harmful impact of such language and behaviour will be emphasized and encouraged, alongside any discipline deemed necessary.

- Staff will support any individual or group of students that request help and support for any issues of harassment or discrimination.
- The District will review and report to the Richmond Board of Education annually regarding the work of district and school staff in support of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy (SOGI).

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