

## **Guidelines for Respectful Learning Environment for Diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions**

### **Objective**

School staff are expected to ensure a welcoming, supportive environment for all sexual minority staff, students and families.

### **1. Leadership**

The Principal shall:

- 1.1 ensure all aspects of this policy are clearly communicated to all staff, students, and families;
- 1.2 ensure staff address and provide appropriate remedial consequences for all interactions involving the use of comments, behaviours and actions which display homophobic, transphobic, and sexist, whether they occur in person or in digital form;
- 1.3 ensure staff know their professional responsibility to identify discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and create caring, respectful and safe learning environments;
- 1.4 ensure awareness and adherence to all division policies with respect to diversity, equity, human rights, sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, prejudice, and harassment;
- 1.5 ensure staff utilize language and educational resources and approaches that are inclusive, age-appropriate, and respectful of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions;
- 1.6 provide inclusive and respectful services and supports to sexual and gender minority students and families;
- 1.7 ensure staff work proactively to eliminate systemic inequities and barriers to learning for sexual and gender minority students and families;
- 1.8 support the establishment of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), or similar student support groups, at educational settings offered within the District, where interest by students has been expressed;
- 1.9 ensure staff will not refer students to programs or services that attempt to change or repair a student's sexual orientation or gender identity;
- 1.10 ensure discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented and dealt with expeditiously; and
- 1.11 ensure all staff recognize the confidentiality of the sexual orientation and gender identity of all students and protect them from unwanted disclosure of such information.

### **2. Staff**

Prairie Land Regional Division #25 is a safe and respectful working environment where diversity is valued and embraced and staff are treated with respect and supported. All staff share

responsibility for creating and maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. Complaints of discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity shall be promptly investigated and resolved as stated in the Prairie Land Regional Division #25 Policy - Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning and Working Environments.

The Division engages in employment practices which;

- 2.1 are free of bias resulting from any prejudice, including prejudice related to sexual orientation and gender identity; and
- 2.2 ensure equal opportunity for employment and advancement.

### **3. Professional Learning**

To assist all staff to become more knowledgeable about sexual and gender minority identities, cultures, and communities, PLRD #25 Central Services will provide professional learning opportunities to assist all staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and appropriate teaching practices necessary to create safe, inclusive, equitable, and respectful schools regardless of how students are perceived or identified.

### **4. Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and learning resources shall be chosen and/or updated to promote critical thinking and should include age-appropriate materials that accurately reflect the diversity of Canada's sexual and gender minority families, cultures, and communities.

### **5. Gender Identity and Gender Expression**

To support the safety, health, and educational needs of students who identify as, or are perceived to be, transgender or transsexual persons, Division staff shall adhere to the following recommended practices wherever possible and appropriate:

- 5.1 Official Records and Communication - When requested by an independent student, or the parent/guardian, the student's official record will be changed to reflect their preferred name, sex, or gender. All school forms and records shall be changed to ensure that a student's preferred name and sex or gender is current on class lists, timetables, student files, identification cards, etc.
- 5.2 Gender-Segregated Activities - To the greatest extent possible, schools should reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by gender (with the exception of already established single gender-based alternative programs). In classroom activities or school programs where students are segregated by gender, all students should be given the option to be included in the group that corresponds to their consistently asserted gender identity.
- 5.3 Washroom Accessibility - All students shall have access to a washroom that allows for appropriate privacy and that does not significantly disrupt the school environment. Staff shall consistently demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and safety of all students with respect to washroom access. The Principal shall ensure that individual solutions to washroom access are implemented with respect and discretion.
- 5.4 Dress Code - All students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression, while respecting the individual dress codes as identified by their school.

5.5 Resolving Conflict - The Principal shall be the final determiner of disputes that may arise with regard to a transgender or transsexual student's participation in educational or athletic activities. The principal shall ensure that the resolution of any conflict ensures reasonable accommodation and inclusiveness.

Prairie Land Regional Division #25 understands that change occurs over time and believes that the provision of an annual report at a public board meeting on progress related to each of the strategic directions identified in this regulation will ensure accountability and demonstrate the Division's commitment to support our diverse community.

Legal References:            Alberta Human Rights Act  
                                     Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Professional Conduct  
                                     Alberta Teachers' Association Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities  
                                     Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms  
                                     United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child  
                                     School Act (please see Section 45(8) of the School Act)

Cross Reference:            Board Policy 23 Addendum A

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