

2.19 LGBTQIA2S+ Safety and Inclusion*

Resolution passed 2017; amended 2025

Whereas, all children, youth, and teens are entitled to attend school in a safe, accepting, inclusive, and respectful learning environment - free from discrimination - with full access to school campuses, facilities, and community spaces, and the ability to fully participate in school and community programs; and

Whereas, all staff, families, guardians, and foster parents should have the right to be safe, included, and free to participate in schools and community programs; and

Whereas, Washington state law prohibits discrimination in public schools on the basis of sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity; and

Whereas, explicit federal statutory protections currently address discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and sexual orientation, but not gender identity. However, Washington state law prohibits discrimination against any person based on his or her sexual orientation or gender identity; and

Whereas, youth who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ are at greater risk of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) and discrimination, which can lead to lower academic achievement, higher absenteeism, lower graduation rates, and higher rates of isolation, depression, drug and alcohol use, and suicidal ideation and attempts; and

Whereas, education regarding LGBTQIA2S+ issues increases understanding, cultivates acceptance of and respect for LGBTQIA2S+ children, youth, teens, families and staff; and

Whereas, inclusive policies, programs, and practices that address the needs of LGBTQIA2S+ students, staff, and families have been shown to improve school climate, academic achievement, and emotional well-being for all students; and

Whereas, harassment and bullying policies that specifically mention sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are associated with: students feeling safer, lower levels of bullying, decreased incidents of harassment related to sexual orientation, increased teacher/staff intervention, and greater reporting of incidents.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils support the right for all children, youth, teens, families, guardians, and foster parents to be safe, included, and free to participate equitably in schools and community programs; and be it further

Resolved, that the Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils advocate for the adoption and enforcement of policies and practices that create and maintain safe, affirming, and inclusive school environments for LGBTQIA2S+ students, families, and staff, including but not limited to:

- Policies that prohibit harassment, intimidation, bullying (HIB), and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, and prompt and thorough investigation of all complaints;

- Dress codes that are gender-neutral, based on educationally relevant considerations, and consistently applied to all students;
- Engagement of LGBTQIA2S+ families as valued members of the school community;
- Staff professional development and training on LGBTQIA2S+ inclusion, bias reduction, students' rights, and creating safe school climates;
- Age- and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, and culturally responsive curricula and library collections that are inclusive and reflect the diversity of the student population, including LGBTQIA2S+ people and issues;
- Student support programs, including gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs), that promote respect and acceptance;
- Access to facilities that correspond to a student's gender identity;
- Use of preferred names and pronouns that reflect a student's identity in all educational settings and appropriate student records;
- The collection of data on school climate and incidents of harassment and discrimination, disaggregated by sexual orientation and gender identity, to inform continuous improvement efforts;
- Protection from unwanted disclosure to third parties of students' personal information that constitute confidential medical or educational information, such as gender identity, legal name, or gender assigned at birth, consistent with state law; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to incorporate standards regarding age-appropriate, medically accurate and culturally sensitive information on LGBTQIA2S+ issues into existing health and other appropriate curricula; and be it further

Resolved, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils seek and support state and federal legislation that ensure LGBTQIA2S+ individuals are part of a protected class, with equitable access to affirming health care and suicide prevention programs.

*LGBTQIA2S + definitions:

L = Lesbian

B = Bisexual

T = Transgender

Q = Queer or Questioning

I = Intersex

A = Asexual

2S recognizes Two-Spirit people, a term used by some Indigenous communities in North America to describe indigenous individuals who embody both masculine and feminine energies; a specific identity within some Indigenous cultures, not applicable to non-Indigenous individuals.

+ acknowledges there are other diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and the need for flexibility and inclusion in groupings