

MEDICINE HAT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 76

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

BACKGROUND

All members of the school community have the right to work and learn in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment.

POLICY

The Board of Trustees is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all members of the school community. This includes but is not limited to those students, staff, and families who identify or are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer, *heterosexual* or questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Board of Trustees expects all members of this diverse community to be welcomed, respected, accepted, and supported in every school.

As a public, inclusive school system, when planning for individual students the rights, needs and privacy of all students will be considered.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity rights, *including self identification and determination*, will be protected under District policy as is guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Alberta Human Rights Act, and Alberta School Act.

GUIDELINES

- ~~1. In an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation for individual differences, all sexual gender minority students and families have the right to:~~
 - ~~a. be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;~~
 - ~~b. have their confidentiality protected and respected;~~
 - ~~c. self identification and determination;~~
 - ~~d. freedom of conscience, expression and association;~~
 - ~~e. be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner;~~
 - ~~f. have equitable access to supports, services and protections;~~
 - ~~g. have avenues of recourse, without fear of reprisal, available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying and/or violence; and~~
 - ~~h. have their unique identities, families, cultures and communities included, valued and respected within all aspects of the school environment.~~

2. The Board of Trustees is committed to implementing measures that will:

- a. define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects;
- b. ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively, ***including complaints about vexatious or frivolous self identification;***
- c. ~~improve~~ ***foster*** understanding of the ~~individual~~ lives of sexual and gender minorities and their families, cultures, and communities;
- d. provide support, upon request, for the implementation of a gay-straight alliance, or similar club in their school;
- e. ~~support the safety, health, and educational needs of all students regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity;~~
- f. develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional learning opportunities, and administrative procedures to ensure that sexual and gender minority students are welcomed and treated with respect and dignity.

3. ***This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.***

Approved and Adopted:

REFERENCES

Alberta School Act

Alberta Human Rights Act

Alberta Teachers Association Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

District Policy 207 – District Council of School Councils

District Policy 621 – Welcoming, Caring, Respectful, and Safe Learning Environments