

502.2 Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression

Policy

The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions. All members of the school community have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. These fundamental rights are protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Alberta Human Rights Act, the Alberta Bill of Rights, and Alberta School Act.

Regulations

1. In an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation for individual differences, all students and families with a diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions have the right to:
 - 1.1. be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
 - 1.2. have their privacy and confidentiality protected and respected;
 - 1.3. self-identification and determination;
 - 1.4. freedom of belief, expression, and association in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act;
 - 1.5. be fully represented in an inclusive, positive and respectful manner;
 - 1.6. have equitable access to supports, services and protections; supports, services, and accommodations will be determined on a case-by-case basis;
 - 1.7. have avenues of recourse, without fear of reprisal, available to them when they are targets of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence; and
 - 1.8. have their unique identities, families, cultures, and communities included, valued and respected.

2. The Board is committed to measures that will:
 - 2.1. 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;
 - 2.2. ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through school and Division *Student Codes of Conduct*;

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- 2.3. improve the understanding of gender identity, sexual orientation and gender expression;
- 2.4. respect the legal rights of parents and guardians, including the right to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children, in accordance with the Alberta Bill of Rights;
- 2.5. if one or more students attending a school operated by the Board request a staff member employed by the Board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the school shall
 - 2.5.1. immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and
 - 2.5.2. within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.
 - 2.5.3. the principal shall immediately inform the Board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison, and if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school.
 - 2.5.4. The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the principal. The principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.
 - 2.5.5. The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in this section is
 - 2.5.5.1. limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity;
 - 2.5.5.2. is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.
- 2.6. support the safety, health, and educational needs of students with a diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions;

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- 2.7. develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional learning opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that all students with a diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions are welcomed and treated with respect and dignity;
- 2.8. provide for all students, including transgender students, the right to privacy and safety when using facilities.

The Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to develop the procedures necessary to implement this policy.

References

Division Policies:	Policy 502.1 Welcoming, Caring, Respectful, and Safe Learning Environments
School Act:	School Act, sections 16, 45.1
Other:	Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms Alberta Human Rights Act Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Professional Conduct Alberta Bill of Rights