



Revelstoke Board of Education

Policy Manual

5.6 Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

The Revelstoke Board of Education will not tolerate homophobic or discriminatory behavior or bullying toward members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. Homophobic and gender-based comments, discrimination, and bullying are demeaning to all students, parents or guardians and.

The Revelstoke Board of Education recognizes the importance of understanding sexual orientation and gender identity in order to create and maintain a safe, positive and inclusive learning and working environments for all students, employees and other members of the school community. The Board values the role education plays in broadening understanding, supporting all individuals, and creating healthy communities and therefore supports opportunities for school communities to increase awareness of the scope and impact of discrimination against LGBTQ2S+ students, staff and families

Guidelines

1. School Codes of Conduct will include specific reference to discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. Effective procedures, responses and consequences for any language or behaviour that degrades, denigrates, labels stereotypes students, or that incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination or harassment will be addressed in school codes of conduct.
2. All staff model respect for LGBTQ2S+ students, staff and their families, respond to incidents, and provide support to those who are affected.
3. While support is available for all students, district staff are also specifically trained to LGBTQ2S+ youth and their social / emotional and intellectual development.
4. The Board supports student groups and activities that promote inclusivity and diversity.
5. Community resource lists and displays in schools will be inclusive of community supports for LGBTQ2S+ youth and families.
6. The Board, in the regular course of reviewing policy, regulations and other district documents, will ensure that language is representative of the diversity in our community.

7. Opportunities will be provided for staff to increase their knowledge and skills in promoting respect for human rights, supporting diversity, and preventing and addressing discrimination in schools.
8. The Board will support the use of curriculum, age-appropriate activities, and resources that promote knowledge and skills in developing respect and understanding for, as well as eliminating discrimination against LGBTQ2S+ individuals.
9. The Board supports the accommodation of services and facilities to ensure safe and respectful access for all individuals.

NOTE: LGBTQ2S+ is used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, transitioning, two-spirit, queer people or those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

List of definitions follows:

DEFINITIONS:

Ally

An individual who is supportive of the LGBTQ2S+ community. They believe in the dignity and respect of all people, and are willing to stand up in that role.

Bisexual

Generally used to describe people who are emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one sex or gender.

Gay

A gay male is a male who is primarily attracted emotionally, physically, affectionately, romantically, sexually, erotically and/or spiritually to other males. Gay is also sometimes used as a broader, all-encompassing term for the community of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people. However, not all lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people accept this usage.

Gender

Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, and individual expressions of self. It influences how people identify themselves and others, and how they act and connect with one another.

Gender Identity

A person's gender identity is the way in which they define and act on their gender. Gender Expression is how they express their gender.

Heterosexism and Homophobia

The term heterosexism refers to the assumption that all people are heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior and more desirable than homosexuality. Homophobia is defined as “the irrational fear and hatred of homosexuals”. Both of these are perpetuated by negative stereotypes and are dangerous to individuals and communities.

Heterosexual

A term created around the same time as “homosexual” to describe individuals who are sexually attracted to the opposite sex/gender.

Homosexual

A term invented in the 1800’s to refer to individuals who are sexually attracted to their own sex/gender. This term is no longer considered acceptable because of the history of the use of the word.

Intersex

Intersex is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn’t seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. For example, a person might be born appearing to be female on the outside, but having mostly male-typical anatomy on the inside; or a person may be born with genitals that seem to be in-between the male and female types.

Lesbian

A woman who is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to other women.

Pansexual

Also referred to as omnisexuality, is sexual attraction, sexual desire, romantic love, or emotional attraction toward persons of all gender identities and biological sexes.

Queer

The term “queer” has a history of being used as a derogatory name for members of the LGBTQ2S+ (and Ally) community and those whose sexual orientation is perceived as such. Many people use this word in a positive way to refer to the community. They have reclaimed the term as their own. Not everyone believes this and sensitivity should be used when using or hearing it as there are still many negative connotations with its use.

Questioning

Individuals who are questioning their sexual orientation may benefit from support, understanding, information and guidance in their self-discovery.

Sex

Refers to a set of biological attributes and is primarily associated with physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and reproductive / sexual anatomy.

Sex and Gender

It is easy to confuse these two concepts and terms; however, they are different. Sex refers to the biological sex of a person. Gender refers to their societal appearance, mannerisms and roles.

Sexual Orientation

It is a personal characteristic that covers the range of human sexuality.

Straight

A slang word used to refer to the heterosexual members of our community.

Transgender

An umbrella term used to refer to people who transcend the traditional concept of gender. Many feel as though they are neither a man nor a woman specifically, and many feel as though their biological sex (male, female, etc.) and their socialized gender (man, woman, etc.) don't match up. Some opt to change/reassign their sex through hormones and/or surgery and some change their outward appearance, or gender expression, through clothing, hairstyles, mannerisms, etc.

Transsexual

Used to describe those individuals who use hormone therapy and/or surgery to alter their sex.

Transvestite

More appropriately referred to as "cross-dressing", the term transvestite most often refers to males who dress in the clothing of women. The term "drag" usually refers to dressing in the clothing and styles of another gender for entertainment purposes.

Two-Spirit

Two-Spirit is an English translation of terms in various languages used to describe a concept that exists in many Indigenous cultures. A Two-Spirit person has received the privilege from the Creator to house both male and female spirits in their bodies. Being given the gift of two spirits means that this individual has the ability to see the world from two perspectives at the same time. This greater vision is a gift to be shared with all, and as such, Two Spirit individuals are revered as leaders, mediators, teachers, artists, seers, and spiritual guides and are treated with the greatest respect and hold important spiritual and ceremonial responsibilities.

For the purpose of this policy Two-Spirit may be claimed by Indigenous peoples to show membership in the broader LGBTQ2S+ community.