



SECTION 1000: STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

POLICY 1095: SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY (SOGI)

- *Date Adopted: February 26, 2020*
 - *Date Revised: October 12, 2021 (Housekeeping Revisions)*
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POLICY STATEMENT

The Board believes that all public schools in the district shall be safe for everyone. The Board recognizes and values the diversity found within its school communities and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the district's culture. The Board also recognizes that students and other school members of a sexual minority and LGBTQ+ community (including, but not limited to, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, queer, or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQIA2S+ (referenced throughout the policy as LGBTQ+)), face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. In accordance with this policy, and all relevant laws of more senior governing bodies, Coast Mountains School District 82:

1. Prohibits any form of discrimination, intimidation or harassment against any person based on gender/gender identity or sexual orientation/perceived sexual orientation.
2. Encourages members of the school community to welcome, include and support all, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.
3. Instructs that all schools in the district put in place protocols that support this policy. The school district will provide an environment for all members of the school community to work and learn, free from fear, discrimination, and harassment, while being proactive to ensure that sexual minority students, employees, and families are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life, and are treated with respect and dignity.

LEGISLATION

- *School Act & Regulations*
- *Ministry of Education SOGI Policy Guide*
- *B.C. Human Rights Code (1996)*
- *B.C. Human Rights Code Amendment Act Bill 27 (2016) to include Gender Identity*
- *B.C. Freedom of Information and the Protection of Privacy Act*



LEGISLATION *(continued)*

- *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
- *CMSD82 Policies:*
 - *Policy 1015 Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools*
 - *Policy 1020 Diversity in Schools*
 - *Policy 1025 Student Code of Conduct*
 - *Policy 1070 Concerns by Parents/Guardians*

RATIONALE

Discrimination includes: publishing, issuing or displaying – or causing to be published, issued or displayed, any statement, publication, notice, sign, symbol, emblem or other representation that indicates, discrimination or an intention to discriminate against a person or a group or class of persons, including sexual orientation. Schools shall address discrimination of this type displayed in graffiti, student publications, blogs, websites, or other communication methods.

The purpose of this policy is to define appropriate behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects. This policy is also to ensure that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with expeditiously and effectively.

The policy will also raise awareness and improve understanding of the lives of people who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. By valuing diversity and respecting differences, students and staff act in accordance with Ministry of Education established principles related to diversity.

The Board will establish appropriate administrative procedures and strategies that promote respect for human rights, support diversity, and address discrimination. Procedures will ensure:

1. **Visibility**: The diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions are recognized and valued.
2. **Protection**: The dignity of all people across the sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) spectra is intended to be preserved, as well as protected from harm.
3. **Inclusion**: Equitable treatment and inclusion are a reality for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expression.



REGULATIONS

Social responsibility, including information, issues and attitudes related to the sexual minority population, is not assigned to a particular grade or subject area; instead, it is a responsibility shared among all staff. Within each school, staff will take concrete actions to ensure that the school is more welcoming and safe for sexual minority students.

Safety/Anti-Harassment:

- a. Any language or behaviour that deliberately degrades, denigrates, labels, stereotypes, incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination, harassment towards students or employees on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identification will not be tolerated.
- b. LGBTQ+ students and staff and same gender-parented families have the right to be free from harassment and discrimination. To be included and represented in a positive and respectful manner.

Self-Identification:

- a. Students have the right to self-identification, which includes the name by which they wish to be addressed and their preferred pronouns that correspond to their gender identity.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

- a. A student's trans* status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth may constitute confidential personal information that will be kept confidential unless its disclosure is legally required or unless the student or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) have given authorization. Students have the right to confidentiality of their official and/or preferred sex, gender, and name. In class, staff will not expose sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression of students.
- b. In situations where school staff or administrators are required by law to use or to report a trans* student's legal name or sex, such as for purposes of data collection, school staff and administrators will adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such information.
- c. Students' rights to discuss and express their gender identity and/or gender expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much private information to share will be respected.



REGULATIONS *(continued)*

Dress:

- a. Students may express their gender identity or gender expression through what they wear to school. A dress code should be as all inclusive as possible, which may include removing pronouns.
- b. Students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression. This includes students who may dress in a manner that is not consistent with societal expectation of masculinity/femininity.

Gender Integrated and Inclusive Activities:

- a. Schools will focus on integrated and inclusive activities. Where gender segregated activities exist, students will have the option to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity or, in the case of gender non-conforming students, the group they would like to participate in.

Inclusive Learning:

- a. Learning Resources: Learning resources should reflect and value the diversity in our district and students see themselves positively reflected in the curricula. All resources will emphasize universal human themes that acknowledge human diversity as an essential and enriching element of our society and provide all students with opportunities to become familiar with diversity.

Facilities:

- a. Individuals may choose to use washrooms and non-gendered single-stall washrooms and change rooms.

Inclusive Extra-Curricular Activities:

- a. Students will be included and accommodated for in all extra-curricular activities regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression, including support to set up a Gay-Straight Alliance.
- b. Schools will reduce the practice of segregating students by sex. In situations where students are segregated by sex, trans* students will have the option to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity.



REGULATIONS

Inclusive Extra-Curricular Activities: *(continued)*

All staff will be sensitive to sexual minority issues when creating and updating district and school policies, and when formulating disciplinary and corrective actions related to incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or exclusion. Corrective actions include both correcting inappropriate behaviour (remediation) and correcting damage done as a result of inappropriate behaviour (restoration).

Therefore, school codes of conduct will include language that prohibits fear promoting, harassing or discriminatory language and behaviour toward students, employees or others based on their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identification.

The Board shall consider any violence, threat of violence, or act of aggression, including harassment, discrimination, intimidation and bullying on school premises to be a serious threat to the school environment and to the safety of both students and staff and shall be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct.

It is the responsibility of all administrators, teachers and support staff to work together to build school communities, which are positive and welcoming:

- a. they will foster respect, inclusion, fairness and equity;
- b. they will set, communicate and establish clear expectations for acceptable conduct;
- c. they will provide students, through various techniques, information that will lead to greater understanding, acceptance and support sexual minority students.

School staffs are encouraged to incorporate school in-service individual professional development and group staff development activities as opportunities to enhance the school and work place as tolerant and diverse learning environments.

Education and Training:

- a. Staff: The district will promote opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge, skills awareness, and understanding in respect for human rights and addressing discrimination in schools.
- b. Student Programs: Students are educated in the areas of healthy relationship, diversity, social justice through the B.C. Ministry of Education curriculum (social studies, social justice 12, health and career, and personal planning). Teachers may include age appropriate SOGI material to inform students about respect and acknowledge human diversity as an essential and enriching element of our society.



REGULATIONS

Education and Training: *(continued)*

- c. Parents/Guardians: The district and school administration shall work to increase parental awareness of SOGI and the needs of LGBTQ+ students.

The Board will provide support for initiatives that foster dialogue to create understanding and respect for diversity.

The Board and the senior administrative staff shall jointly ensure that all employees know it is their individual and collective responsibility to respond to discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.

DEFINITIONS

Asexual: A person who is not sexually attracted to any gender or sex. Asexual people may still be romantically attracted to people of a variety of genders and sexualities and have romantic, non-sexual relationships.

Bisexual: A person who is attracted to both women and men.

Cisgender: Cisgender individuals have a gender identity that is in alignment with their assigned sex at birth, meaning that if they were assigned female at birth, they are a woman, and if they were assigned male at birth, they are a man. (The sex you are assigned at birth refers to what the doctors put on your birth certificate.)

Gay: A person who is attracted to someone of the same sex and/or gender as themselves. This word can be applied to all genders of relationships, but has primarily been used in reference to men.

Gender: A socially constructed concept of identity based on roles, behaviours, activities, and appearance such as masculine, feminine, androgynous, etc.

Gender expression: The ways a person presents their sense of gender to others (for example, through clothes, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.).

Gender identity: A person's internal sense of being a man, a woman, genderqueer, etc. This is not the same thing as a person's biological sex, and may not be consistent with how they are perceived by others.



DEFINITIONS *(continued)*

Gender nonconforming: A term that often refers to children who express gender in ways that differs from societal expectations of the sex and gender assigned to them at birth. For the purposes of this policy and accompanying regulations, gender non-conforming children are included under the term trans*.

Homophobia: The fear, ignorance and mistreatment of people who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay or bisexual. This often leads to bias, discrimination, hatred, harassment and violation of the human rights of lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Homophobic bullying can also be targeted against any individual, regardless of perceived sexual orientation.

Heterosexism: The assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior. Heterosexism can exist on a personal, interpersonal, institutional or cultural level.

Intersex: Refers to people whose reproductive or sexual anatomy is not easily defined as male or female. There are a variety of ways someone can be intersex, ranging from having ambiguous genitalia to having mixture of XX and XY chromosomes. Intersex individuals have historically been mistreated in North American society (i.e. being forced to have “corrective” genital surgeries as infants). The term Disorders of Sexual Development is being used increasingly amongst medical professionals in reference to intersex conditions, however, this term has not been fully adopted by intersex communities at the time this policy is being written. The word hermaphrodite was historically used to describe intersex individuals, however, this term is considered highly offensive.

Lesbian: A woman who is attracted to other women.

LGBTQ+ (commonly used acronym LGBTQ): An acronym that in this case stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, Two-Spirit, queer and questioning plus. There is a wide range of other terms often included in this acronym (often referred to by queer communities as “the alphabet soup”) such as asexual, and this acronym tends to vary depending on the source. The plus sign (+) indicates the inclusion of all sexual and gender identities.

Non-binary: Non-binary gender refers to a wide range of gender identities that are not “man” or “woman”. Some of these are genderqueer (an identity without a clear definition, see **Queer**), agender (not having a gender), bigender (having two genders), or genderfluid (a gender identity that shifts regularly). Many non-binary individuals use the gender neutral pronouns “they/them/theirs”, but other gender neutral pronouns also exist. Some non-binary individuals identify as transgender, and some do not.



DEFINITIONS *(continued)*

Pansexual: A pansexual is someone who can be attracted to males, females, transgender people and those who identify as non-binary (not female or male).

Perceived as LGBTQ+: Refers to someone who is treated as if they are LGBTQIA2S+ even if they do not identify as such.

Pronouns: The words one uses to refer to themselves (e.g. he/him/his; she/her/hers; they/them/theirs, etc.)

Queer: An umbrella term (often used in place of the LGBTQ+ acronym) used to describe individuals who identify as being part of sexual and gender diverse communities (e.g. lesbian, gay, transgender).

Questioning: Adults or youth who are not certain about their sexual identity or orientation.

Sexual Orientation: Refers to a person's attraction towards a particular gender or sex. Someone may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, pansexual, etc. It is important to remember that sexual identity and gender identity are separate

SOGI: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, is a topic. It is an inclusive term that is relevant to all individuals regardless of where they identify on the sexual orientation or gender identity spectrums, as every person has a gender identity

SOGI 123: Is a consortium of resource and tools for educators who want to better understand sexual orientation and gender identity. The website includes grade-level appropriate lesson plans, online learning modules and customized templates that align with BC's new curriculum. There is not a separate SOGI curriculum they are important topics that are interwoven through several subject area. Educators ensure conversations in classrooms reflect the diversity that we see in our school communities.

Trans* (also Trans, Transgender, Transsexual): An umbrella term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what they were assigned at birth. Some trans* people may choose to medically transition by taking hormones, having surgery. Some trans* people may choose to socially transition by changing their name, clothing, hair, etc.



DEFINITIONS *(continued)*

Transphobia: Fear, ignorance and mistreatment of people who are, or are perceived to be, trans* or gender nonconforming. This often leads to bias, discrimination, hatred, harassment and violation of the human rights of transgender or gender nonconforming people. Transphobic bullying can also be targeted against any individual, regardless of perceived gender expression.

Transition: A term most commonly used to refer to someone transitioning from one gender to another. Transition often consists of a change in style of dress, selection of a new name, and a request that people use the correct pronoun when describing them. Transition may, but does not always, include medical care like hormone therapy, counseling, and/or surgery.

Two-Spirit: An Aboriginal term describing the embodiment of both masculine and feminine spirits. This identity is not limited to gender expression or sexuality, but encompasses them both while incorporating a spiritual element. It is a standalone identity, not an Aboriginal term for gay or lesbian.