

## SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR LGBTTTQ STUDENTS

The Seven Oaks School Division is committed to ensuring a safe positive and respectful learning environment for all students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. This respects the letter and spirit of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Manitoba Human Rights Code and the Seven Oaks School Division Mission Statement.

### Harassment

The Division will provide a safe environment free from harassment and discrimination. Homophobic harassment is demeaning treatment of all students, parents and guardians and employees regardless of sexual orientation.

Any language or behaviour that 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.

Staff will deal with issues of harassment proactively by educating students to value diversity, respect difference and behaviour accordingly. Where necessary progressive discipline will be used to eliminate homophobic harassment.

### Student Support

The Seven Oaks School Division is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment which provides counselling and support to students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. All counsellors employed or contracted by the Division shall be educated in the knowledge and skills required to deal with LGBTTTQ issues with students. Counsellors will be informed and familiar with all policies with respect to human rights, anti-homophobia, hate literature, discrimination and harassment and will inform their school community to these policies. All staff will be sensitive to lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning students as well as students from LGBTTTQ families.

Schools are encouraged to designate staff persons to be a safe and available contact for students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Schools are encouraged in their school planning to advocate for students who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and those who are questioning their gender identity. Gay / Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs) or other student action groups dealing with discrimination and harassment are encouraged at secondary schools in the Division.

Student-established and student-led activities and organizations that promote areas of human diversity, including gay-straight alliances, will be run consistent with and in

compliance with school division/school policies and will be open to all students who wish to participate in an appropriate manner.

### **Curriculum and Learning Resources**

The Division is committed to enabling all lesbian, gay, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, bisexual and questioning students to see themselves and their lives positively reflected in the curriculum. Resources should be chosen or updated in order to promote critical thinking and include materials that accurately reflect the range of Canada's LBTTQ communities.

### **Staff Development**

The Division will ensure ongoing staff development in support of this policy.