

# **SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

---

*Section* SCHOOL AND STUDENTS

*Policy Name* SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

547

*Board Approved: October 18, 2022*

*Reviewed: June 14, 2022*

*Review by: December 2027*

---

## **1. RATIONALE**

Superior-Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB) is committed to providing safe, caring, and inclusive learning and work environments that are free from discrimination and harassment, in accordance with the 717 Workplace Harassment and Human Rights Policy. Superior-Greenstone District School Board respects diversity and values the of all members of our school communities and workplaces. Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to the principles of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code, the 536 Equity and Inclusive Education Policy and Management Guidelines, 520 Safe Schools - System Expectations Policy and Management Guidelines, 535 Progressive Discipline and School Safety Policy and Management Guidelines, and 525 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Management Guidelines.

Ontario's Human Rights Code (the Code) is a provincial law that sets out legal rights and obligations to protect people from discrimination. In 2012, three parties of the Ontario Legislature co-sponsored Toby's Act, the Bill that added "gender identity" and "gender expression" as prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Code. The grounds make it clear that trans people and other gender non-conforming individuals are entitled to legal protections in the same way that people are protected from discrimination and harassment based on race, age, disability and all other prohibited grounds.

Superior-Greenstone District School Board recognizes the biases and challenges faced by students and other school community members identifying as or perceived to be Two Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (2SLGBTQQIA) within our schools and communities, including discrimination, harassment, physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm, and suicide.

Every student, employee, parent/guardian, community member and trustee has the right to freedom from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and violence, regardless of sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity. Superior-Greenstone District School Board will not permit, encourage, nor tolerate harassment, discrimination, intimidation and/or violence.

Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to providing support and assistance to those who may be the intended or unintended targets of discriminatory behaviours and to promoting a safer and more inclusive space for all members of the community including those who are members of 2SLGBTQQIA communities.

## **2. POLICY**

It is the policy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board to foster and promote a safe, caring and inclusive learning and work environment while also promoting proactive strategies and guidelines to ensure that the Two Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,

Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual communities are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and treated with respect and dignity.

Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to ensuring that all employees are aware of their responsibilities as they relate to creating safety and support for all students and employees regardless of sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity.

### **3. AREAS OF FOCUS**

#### **3.1 Homophobia, Transphobia and Heterosexism**

Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to providing an environment of respect for all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity, and will endeavour to raise awareness of issues related to human rights and equity throughout the Board's jurisdiction. Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to identifying and eliminating homophobic, transphobic and heterosexist discrimination and barriers.

#### **3.2 Confidentiality**

Superior-Greenstone District School Board will make every effort to ensure confidentiality of anyone's sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

#### **3.3 Guidance and Counselling Services**

Counselling services are available for students and will be sensitive, supportive, and free of bias, in order to respond effectively to the needs of all students. School staff will help to remove discriminatory barriers and provide positive strategies to enable students to realize their potential and meet their academic goals.

#### **3.4 Staff Development and Professional Learning**

Superior-Greenstone District School Board employees will participate in staff development activities dealing with equity and inclusive education in order to acquire the knowledge, and skills, to identify and eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination. Professional learning activities will be ongoing, evidence based, and will provide opportunities for staff and trustees to participate in training on topics such as gender-based violence, transphobia, and homophobia, and will provide information for students and parents/guardians to increase their knowledge and understanding of sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity. 2SLGBTQ students and their families should be included in all decision-making. Training will allow staff to provide age appropriate information to students at all levels.

#### **3.5 Leadership**

Superior-Greenstone District School Board will provide leadership that is committed to identifying and removing sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity related, discriminatory behaviours and systemic barriers to learning, ensuring that all partners in education assume the responsibility for preparing students to live and to participate in a diverse society.

### **4. REVIEW**

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with 214 META Policy Initiation, Identification, Development, Implementation, and Review Policy.

**References**

Policy 520 Safe Schools: System Expectations

Policy 525 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Policy 535 Progressive Discipline and School Safety

Policy 536 Equity and Inclusive Education

Policy 717 Workplace Harassment and Human Rights

Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy on Preventing Discrimination Because of Gender Identity or Gender Expression

EGALE 2021 Climate Survey Report: Still In Every Class In Every School