

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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1. **Policy**

It is the policy of Superior-Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB) 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 (2SLGBTQQIA) communities are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and are 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.

2. **Areas of Focus**

2.1 **Homophobia, Transphobia and Heterosexism**

- 2.1.1 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will ensure that all policies, guidelines, procedures, and practices, including but not limited to, classroom practices, day-to-day operations, and communication practices, are anti-homophobic, anti-transphobic and anti-heterosexist.
- 2.1.2 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will identify and eliminate homophobic, transphobic, and heterosexist biases and barriers in SGDSB policies, guidelines, day-to-day operations, and practice.
- 2.1.3 Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to providing ongoing professional development in the matters captured in this policy, including anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia, and anti-heterosexist education.
- 2.1.4 Schools are expected to ensure that students are educated in the understanding of diversity, harassment, discrimination, anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia, and anti-heterosexism, through the curriculum in ways that are relevant and age appropriate.
- 2.1.5 Resources are available in every school and can be chosen to promote critical thinking skills that support the tenets of this policy. Schools are encouraged to use anti-homophobia, anti-transphobia, and anti-heterosexist resource materials that provide knowledge, skills, and strategies for educators to recognize, understand, and

challenge discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity. Whenever possible, resource materials should also include issues experienced by Two Spirited people.

- 2.1.6 2SLGBTQ students need educators to explicitly and visibly support, respect, include, and validate them.

2.2 Confidentiality

- 2.2.1 In the interest of safe and supportive environments, SGDSB is committed to ensuring that the confidentiality of the sexual orientation and gender identity of students and employees will be protected. Students and employees who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or transitioning will be given the support they require to do their work in a safe and respectful environment.
- 2.2.2 If a student is harmed as a result of their sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity, or perceived sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity, an administrator will maintain the confidentiality of the student's sexual orientation or gender identity, and may not report the incident to the student's parent/guardian, if, in the administrator's opinion, doing so would put the student at risk of harm from the parent/guardian.

2.3 Guidance and Counselling

- 2.3.1 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will ensure that student counselling services and programs are free from discriminatory biases related to sexual orientation and gender identification, and that these services and programs do not underestimate the potential of 2SLGBTQQIA students, because of bias and stereotyping related to sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity.
- 2.3.2 Superior-Greenstone District School Board supports the rights of 2SLGBTQQIA students to counseling that is supportive, affirming and free from efforts on the part of counselors to try to change their sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity through the use of or the referral to aversion, reparative, or conversion therapies.
- 2.3.3 School administrators and counsellors will ensure that counselling and support are provided to students who are dealing with sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression related matters.

2.4 Staff Development and Professional Learning

- 2.4.1 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will strive to ensure that curriculum delivery in all subject areas is consistent with the principles and practices of equity and inclusive education as they relate to sexual orientation and gender identity. Superior-Greenstone District School Board will honour this commitment by:

- ensuring that its staff have access to a wide variety of bias-free teaching and learning materials;
- supporting staff who choose to use learning materials with themes, topics or characters that reflect the diversity of sexual orientations;
- ensuring that best practice, age and developmentally appropriate teaching and learning strategies are used to address the topic of sexual orientation;
- ensuring that its facilities are spaces in which 2SLGBTQQIA students can participate in learning experiences without fear of harassment; and
- ensuring that curriculum delivery, learning experiences, and assessment and evaluation practices are free from homophobia, transphobia and heterosexism.

2.4.2 Administrators will support teachers striving to include in their teaching positive images and accurate information about history and culture that reflects the accomplishments and contributions of 2SLGBTQQIA people.

2.4.3 Additional training and resources shall be provided to staff members and counsellors that is sensitive and responds knowledgeably to 2SLGBTQQIA students as well as students with 2SLGBTQQIA family members.

2.4.4 All employees of SGDSB will be supported in being able to identify discriminatory attitudes and behaviours as described in the policy, and are expected to be committed to eliminating the harm, inequities, and barriers that might exist in relation to sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity.

2.5 Leadership

2.5.1 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will acknowledge, through its communication to students, staff and the community, that some children live in 2SLGBTQQIA headed families and need to be positively recognized and included as such.

2.5.2 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will provide leadership at all levels that fosters 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 sexual orientation, gender identity and equity throughout the SGDSB's jurisdiction.

2.5.3 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will acknowledge that there are barriers that may prevent full participation in school-community relationships by 2SLGBTQQIA communities. Through engagement with these communities, SGDSB will identify and remove barriers that do exist.

2.5.4 School administrators must ensure that students and staff practice appropriate behaviour and actions to prevent homophobic discrimination and harassment through greater awareness of and responsiveness to their harmful effects.

2.5.5 All administrators, teachers, counsellors, staff and student leaders will work together to support SGDSB's position in the school community. Leaders in schools will ensure that activities are undertaken at the beginning of each school year to make all members of the school community aware of the expectations and provisions of this policy, including the expectation that every member of the school community will work purposefully to eliminate harmful behaviours and ensure safety and support for 2SLGBTQQIA students and staff.

3. Guidelines and Principles

- 3.1 School administrators must respond to all complaints about discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity seriously, and ensure that they are dealt with effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures.
- 3.2 All administrators, teachers, counselors, staff, and student leaders will model respect for 2SLGBTQQIA students and families.
- 3.3 It is the responsibility of all staff to exercise individual and collective responsibility to identify discriminatory attitudes and behaviours. School staff will work to eliminate systemic inequities and barriers to learning for 2SLGBTQQIA students.
- 3.4 All staff members have an obligation to intervene in any interaction involving the use of homophobic or transphobic epithets, slurs, and behaviours, regardless of the speaker's intentions, and to convey that such comments are against policy and are not acceptable in the school community.
- 3.5 Language or behaviour that degrades or incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination or harassment towards students or employees on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity, is not acceptable. The prohibition of such language and behaviour should be specified in the school's code of conduct.
- 3.6 At least one member of staff should be identified as a safe contact for 2SLGBTQQIA students. School administrators are responsible for informing students, parents/guardians, and other staff, about the location and availability of this contact person.
- 3.7 Working with the school's safe contact, administrators will visually mark an area as welcoming and reaffirming for 2SLGBTQQIA students and staff through the use of posters or other identifiers.
- 3.8 All secondary school administrators will continue to support the existing Gay/Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs) in their schools. Administrators will make best efforts to facilitate the formation of GSAs, where students or staff come forward requesting this support in other schools.
- 3.9 Pay attention to supporting the safety and wellbeing of trans students and do not assume that their needs are adequately addressed by attention to sexual diversity.

- 3.10 Recognize the importance of compounding oppression, including racism, classism, and ableism. Do not assume that trans students' needs will be met by programs intended to support LGBTQ students.
- 3.11 Meaningfully include, consult, and engage individuals and organizations with established expertise in intersectionality and 2SLGBTQ-inclusive education .

4. **Definitions:**

- Agender – a person who identifies as having no gender or a neutral gender identity.
- Androgynous – a word to describe a behaviour, trait, or style of expression that either blends both masculine and feminine forms of expression or is culturally read as gender-neutral.
- Asexual - an individual who does not experience sexual attraction to others.
- Barriers - policies, procedures or practices that prevent equity of access and outcome. They can be both systemic and individual.
- Bias - an inaccurate, limited, and fixed view of the world, or of a given situation, individuals, or groups. A bias against or towards members of a particular sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity can be expressed through speech, nonverbal behaviour, and written and other media.
- Bisexual - individuals who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender, though not necessarily at the same time or to the same degree. Bisexual may also be defined as romantic and/or sexual attraction to people of all genders.
- Cisgender – a person whose gender identity corresponds with what is socially expected based on their sex assigned at birth (e.g. a person who was assigned male at birth identifies as a man).
- Demisexual – a person who experiences sexual attraction to someone only after having an emotional attraction to them.
- Dyadic – a person whose chromosomal, hormonal, or anatomical sex characteristics fall within the conventional classifications of male or female.
- Gay - a person whose primary sexual orientation is to members of the same gender. It is sometimes used to refer to the general 2SLGBTQQIA community, but most often refers to gay men.
- Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) - student groups designed to create safe spaces for 2SLGBTQQIA students and allies.
- Gender Identity - is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation.

- Gender Expression - is how a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language, and voice. A person's chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender.
- Harassment (the Ontario Human Rights Code) - means engaging in a course of a vexatious comment or conduct that is known to be, or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, based on age, disability, family status, marital status, creed, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship, and record of offences. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning or unwelcome, based on a ground of discrimination identified by the policy. It can include sexually explicit or other inappropriate comments, questions, jokes, name-calling, images, email and social media, transphobic, homophobic or other bullying, sexual advances, touching and other unwelcome and ongoing behaviour that insults, demeans, harms or threatens a person in some way. Assault or other violent behaviour is also a criminal matter.
- Heterosexism - the belief in the exclusive privileging of heterosexuality and the expression of this belief in societal institutions and practices that deny, denigrate, or stigmatize non- heterosexual forms of behavior, identity, relationship, or community. This definition is often used in the context of discrimination against bisexual, lesbian and gay people that is less overt, and which may be unintentional and unrecognized by the person or organization responsible for the discrimination. Heterosexism excludes the needs, concerns, and life experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, while it gives advantages to heterosexual people.
- Heterosexual - an individual whose primary sexual orientation is to members of the opposite gender. Heterosexual people are often referred to as "straight".
- Homophobia - the irrational fear, hatred, or intolerance of lesbians and gay men, or any behaviour that falls outside of perceived traditional gender roles, usually based on erroneous myths and stereotypes. Homophobic acts may include, but are not limited to, jokes, name- calling, shunning/exclusion, and the promotion of hatred and violence targeting lesbian and gay individuals or groups.
- Homosexual - an individual whose primary sexual and affectional attraction is to a person of the same sex. The medical and psychiatric origins of this term have made it unattractive to most lesbians and gay men as a way of describing themselves or their community.
- Intersex - a term used to describe a person born with reproductive systems, chromosomes and/or hormones that are not easily characterized as male or female. This might include a woman with XY chromosomes or a man with ovaries instead of testes. Intersex characteristics occur in one out of every 1,500 births. Typically, intersex people are assigned one sex, male or female, at birth. Some intersex people identify with their assigned sex, while others do not.
- Lesbian - a woman whose primary sexual orientation is to other women or who identifies as a member of the lesbian community.

- Nonbinary – an umbrella term to reflect a variety of gender identities that are not exclusively man or woman. Identity terms which may fall within this category include: genderqueer, agender, bigender, genderfluid, or pangender.
- 2SLGBTQQIA – Two Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning, Intersex and Asexual, is an acronym for individuals or communities. LGBT is also used.
- Pansexual - individuals who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to people regardless of their gender identity. The definitions of Bisexual and Pansexual are similar but have some historical differences and meaning to others. Pansexual is sometimes seen as being under the umbrella of Bisexual in the acronym.
- Queer - A reclaimed word that has been historically offensive and derogatory, though is now used sometimes as an umbrella term for the 2SLGBTQQIA community and may be used personally to describe one's identity.
- Questioning - individuals who are in the process of questioning their sexual orientation. They are often in need of support and understanding during this stage of their identity and are seeking information and guidance.
- Trans or transgender - is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes, but is not limited to, people who identify as transgender, trans woman (male-to-female), trans man (female-to-male), transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer. Transgender is a broad term that can be used to describe a person whose gender identity is different from one assigned at birth, regardless of their status of surgical procedures or hormone therapy. Not all transgender people use hormone therapy or have surgery.
- Transphobia - is the aversion to, fear or hatred of trans people and communities. Like other prejudices, it is based on stereotypes that are used to justify discrimination, harassment, and violence toward transgender people.
- Transsexual - a person whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth. They may or may not undergo medically supportive treatments to align their bodies with their gender identity, such as hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery or other procedures. They may also undertake other changes to align their external attributes and appearance with their gender identity.
- Two Spirit or Two Spirited - a term used by Indigenous people to describe from a cultural perspective people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or intersex. It is used to capture a concept that exists in many different Indigenous cultures and languages. For some, the term Two-Spirit describes a societal and spiritual role that people played within traditional societies, such as: mediators, keepers of certain ceremonies, transcending accepted roles of men and women, and filling a role as an established middle gender.

5. Review

These procedures 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

PRONOUN USAGE GUIDE – (<https://egale.ca/awareness/pronoun-resource-for-teachers/>)

Tips and Tools

1. To be inclusive and respectful of gender diversity, use the gender-neutral pronoun set, they, them, theirs, when referring to any person whose pronouns you do not know until you have a chance to find out what they are. Ex. “Today we have a guest speaker coming in. They are an expert in marine biology. Please give them a warm welcome!”
2. If you have trouble remembering someone’s pronouns, it is always best simply to ask for the reminder! It is also important to ask if you may use these pronouns in front of other people. Ex. “Hi Fae! How was your vacation? Can you remind me what your pronouns are again?”
3. While it is normal to take practice when adopting a new habit, it is also important to demonstrate genuine effort. If you accidentally use the wrong pronoun when referring to someone, even if they are not present, simply correct yourself and commit to getting it right next time. Ex. “Did you hear that Fae wrote her own, sorry, I mean, their own play over the summer? Sh..They even wrote a score to go with it!”
4. Everyone makes mistakes, it is okay. After you have apologized, do not dwell on your mistake. Remember it is not the responsibility of the person you have misgendered to address your feelings about having slipped up.
5. If you are an occasional teacher be sure to check with the classroom teacher or school administrator to ensure the names on the roll are those preferred by the students, as well as their preferred pronouns.

Pronoun Sets

Here are pronouns that you might see or hear. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

She	He	They	Ey	Zi	Xe
Her	Him	Them	Em	Hir	Xem
Hers	His	Theirs	Eirs	Hirs	Xirs

For more resources visit the Resources section on the EGALE Canada website at:

<https://egale.ca/resources/#category=resources>