

## **SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR 2SLGBTQ+ STUDENTS AND STAFF**

The Seven Oaks School Division is committed to ensuring a safe, positive and respectful learning environment for all students and staff who identify as two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, non-binary 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.

Any language or behaviour that degrades, denigrates, labels, stereotypes, incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination, harassment towards students, families and/or caregivers or employees on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression will not be tolerated.

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

### **Student Support**

The Seven Oaks School Division is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment that 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 work with 2SLGBTQ+ students or those experiencing homophobic or transphobic harassment. Counsellors will be informed about and familiar with all policies with respect to human rights, anti-homo/transphobia, hate literature, discrimination and harassment and will inform their school community to these policies. All staff will be sensitive to two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, queer and questioning students as well as students from 2SLGBTQ+ 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 sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gender and Sexuality Alliances or Gay-Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs) or other student action groups dealing with discrimination and harassment are encouraged at all schools in the Division.

Revised: June 3, 2019

Revised: February 2, 2014

Adopted: April 9, 2012

Student-established and student-led activities and organizations that promote areas of human diversity, including gender and sexuality alliances or 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 two-spirit, lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual, non-binary, queer 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 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

### **Staff Development**

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

### **Infrastructure**

The Division will endeavor to include inclusive, single-stall washroom facilities in any new developments. Upon major renovations to any division-owned facilities that do not already include inclusive, single-stall washroom facilities, these spaces may be built as part of the renovation. These spaces may include inclusive signage (equal in size to that provided for gender-segregated washroom spaces) and will be located in close proximity to the gender-segregated washrooms.

### **Community Partnerships**

The Division strives to ensure the full inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ students and staff in all learning experiences provided through the Division. Administrators and staff will work with partner agencies to ensure appropriate support for 2SLGBTQ+ students and staff participating in field trips, internships, professional development and other community-based learning.

### **Privacy / Confidentiality**

Students may not have discussed their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression with their parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver(s). Staff will support the student so they feel safe and welcome at school and so they can successfully engage in their education. When a student makes a request related to their preferred name, pronouns, gender identity and/or gender expression and when the student has capacity of consent, parental/guardian consent is not required.