

Policy 16

SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION

The Board of Education recognizes and values the diversity found within its school community and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the District's culture. The Board also recognizes that students and their families, employees and volunteers who identify as or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer or questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression (LGBTQ) face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. This often results in a struggle with a variety of profound social consequences including discrimination, harassment, physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm and suicide.

The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all students and their families, employees and volunteers, including those who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQ.

Specifically

The Cowichan Valley School District is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for all students and their families, employees and volunteers including those who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQ. This environment is to be free of discrimination, harassment and intimidation.

The Board will implement strategies and guidelines to ensure that students and their families, employees and volunteers who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQ are welcomed and included in all aspects of their education, their child's education, their employment or their service, as the case may be, and are treated with respect and dignity.

The Board will not tolerate any behaviour that is discriminatory, harassing or intimidating towards students and their families, employees or volunteers, including those who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQ. The Board is committed to providing support and assistance to those who may be affected by such behaviour.

The authority and responsibility for the Administrative Procedures related to this policy rests with the Superintendent of Schools.

Legal Reference: Section 65, School Act