VEA Toolkit for Promoting Inclusion for LGBTQ+ Students and School Employees

Greetings

Enclosed is a **revised LGBTQ+ toolkit** to be used as a resource guide to help our members advocate for inclusion for students and school employees.

We're proud to produce this resource because we all know that LGBTQ+ students often face unique challenges in our schools. They're frequently targeted for bullying, harassment, and discrimination, and they have higher suicide rates than other students. Sometimes they've come out at school but not at home. Often they're too afraid to come out anywhere. They need—and deserve—safe and affirming public schools.

At the 2016 VEA Delegate Assembly, VEA passed a New Business Item (NBI) 24 which states that the VEA goes beyond its resolution E-5, which proclaims that "the Association opposes discrimination on the basis of (…) gender, or sexual orientation or gender identification," by the Office of Human and Civil Rights (HCR) develop a detailed action plan for educating and empowering locals to urge school boards and localities to adopt anti-discrimination policies inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ+) students and school employees.

An ad hoc team of members and staff across the Commonwealth developed the toolkit and created training modules to address the challenges of LGBTQ+ students and school employees.

The ad hoc committee will continue to train "Promoting Inclusion for LGBTQ+ Students and School Employees as well as serve as an action team available to assist locals to implement plans and develop sample policy language to propose to the local school division.

We are ready to provide training and assistance organizing a local team. Please contact me directly at 800-552-9554 ext. 324 or email me at **tsteele@veanea.org**.

In solidarity,

Taisha C. Steele

Taisha C. Steele, Ed.S, (she/her)
Director Human and Civil Rights

Promoting Inclusion for LGBTQ+ Students and School Employees

Table of Contents

Materials in this toolkit are designed to educate all those involved in public education about LGBTQ+ issues. Use as appropriate to help foster understanding and help make our schools a safer and more welcoming place.

Terms and Definitions

Agender: Without gender. Often used as an identification for people who do not identify with or conform to any gender.

Ally: A person who speaks out or takes actions on behalf of someone else or for a group that they are not a part of.

Androgynous: Identifying and/or presenting as neither distinguishably masculine nor feminine.

Aromantic: A person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in forming romantic relationships.

Asexual (Ace): A person who does not experience sexual attraction, but may experience other forms of attraction (e.g., intellectual, emotional). Asexual people may also identify as "bisexual," "gay," "lesbian," "pansexual," "queer," "straight," or another orientation.

Birth Assignment (Sex Assigned at Birth): Determined by external genitalia at birth—female, male or intersex.

Bigender: Having two genders, exhibiting cultural characteristics of both masculine and feminine roles

Bisexual: A person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender or gender identity. This attraction is not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Some people may refer to this as Bi.

Butch: Commonly used to refer to masculinity displayed by a female but can also refer to masculinity displayed by a male.

Chosen Family (also known as Found Family): People who love and support one another as healthy families do but who are not related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Cisgender (Cis): A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Cis-Heteronormative: The assumption that heterosexuality and being cisgender are the norm. This assumption effects interpersonal and societal interactions and society as well as furthers the marginalization of queer and gender diverse people. **>>>**

Coming Out: The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

Cultural Competence: Knowing one's culture and interacting effectively with people of different cultures. In a school this includes behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable educators to work effectively cross-culturally.

Deadnaming: Referring to a transgender person's birth name instead of their chosen name. Many consider deadnaming to be a form of transphobia. In some situations it may be necessary to use someone's deadname until they legally change it.

Demisexual: A person who feels sexual attraction only to people with whom they have a close emotional bond. Most demisexuals feel sexual attraction rarely as compared to the general population, and some have little to no interest in sexual activity. Demisexuals are on the asexual spectrum, meaning they are closely aligned with asexuality.

Drag Queen/Drag King: A man who dresses as a woman, typically as a performance. A woman who dresses as a man, typically as a performance. This is different from transgender (see definition below).

Dyadic: People who are not intersex. Dyadic people are those who were born with sex characteristics that could be categorized into one of the binary genders (male/female). Dyadic people can possess any gender identity and including transgender

FTM (AFAB): A person, assigned female at birth, who identifies and lives as a male. See transgender boy or man.

Gay: A person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to some members of the same gender.

Gender: A person's internal sense of self as male, female, both or neither ("gender identity"), as well as one's outward presentation and behaviors ("gender expression"). Gender norms vary among cultures and over time.

Gender Affirmation Surgery: A surgical procedure where a person's appearance and existing sexual characteristics are altered to better match the person's gender.

Gender Binary: The idea that there are two distinct and opposite genders—male and female. This model doesn't account for the full spectrum of gender identities and gender expressions.

Gender Dysphoria: Clinically significant distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one to which they identify. According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the term - which replaces Gender Identity Disorder - "is intended to better characterize the experiences of affected children, adolescents, and adults." Gender Dysphoria can be part of the transition experience, but some will use this term to imply someone who is reconsidering their gender identity as experiencing a "phase."

Gender-Expansive: An adjective used to describe people who identify or express themselves in ways that broaden the culturally defined behavior or expression associated with one gender.

Gender Expression: How a person expresses their gender through outward presentation and behavior. This includes, for example, a person's name, clothing, hairstyle, body language, and mannerisms.

Gender Identity: An internal, deeply felt sense of being male, female, a blend of both, or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same as or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Neutral Language: Language that avoids bias towards a particular sex or gender. Using gender neutral and inclusive language also helps reduce gender stereotyping, and promotes social change and gender equality. Much of everyday language is gendered so it will take concerted effort to use gender neutral language in the classroom.

Gender Nonconforming or Gender Variant: A person who has a gender identity and/or gender expression that does not conform to the gender they were assigned at birth. People who identify as "gender nonconforming" or "gender variant" may or may not also identify as "transgender."

Gender Pronouns: The pronoun or set of pronouns that a person would like others to call them by when their proper name is not being used. Traditional examples include "she/her/hers" or "he/him/his." Some people prefer gender neutral pronouns, such as "ze/hir/hirs," "zie/zir/zirs," "ey/em/eirs," "per/per/pers," "hu/hum/hus," or "they/them/theirs." Some people prefer no pronouns at all. The best practice is to ask, "What are your pronouns?" Try to avoid saying "preferred pronouns." ►►►

Gender Role: A set of social and cultural beliefs or expectations about appropriate behavior for men/boys or women/girls. Gender roles can vary from culture to culture. Strict gender roles can limit a person's development.

Gender Role Stereotyping: Stereotypes based on social and cultural beliefs or expectations about appropriate behavior for men/boys or women/girls. This can limit children's aspirations, achievements and well-being.

Gender Spectrum: The broad range along which people identify and express themselves as gendered beings or not gendered.

Gender Transition: The process by which some people strive to more closely align their outward identity with the gender they know themselves to be. To affirm their gender identity, people may go through different types of transitions.

- **Social transition:** This can include a name change, change in pronouns, and change in appearance, clothes, or hairstyle.

- **Legal transition:** This is the process of updating identity documents, such as birth certificates and drivers' licenses, to reflect a person's authentic gender and name. Different states and localities have different rules, often making this process very challenging.

- **Medical transition:** For children, this may include the use of hormone blockers to delay the onset of puberty. It may also include cross-sex hormones to induce a puberty that is more consistent with the child's gender identity, or for adults, to promote physical changes. It can also include gender affirmation surgery.

Gender-fluid: A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Genderism: A system of oppression that benefits cisgender people at the expense of transgender and gender nonconforming people. Genderism may take the form of transphobia, bias, and discrimination towards transgender and gender nonconforming people.

Genderqueer: People who typically reject the binary categories of gender by embracing a fluidity of gender identity. People who identify as "genderqueer" may see themselves as being both male and female, or neither male nor female.

Heteronormative: The assumption of heterosexuality as the given or default sexual orientation instead of one of many possibilities, and that the preferred or default relationship is between two people of "opposite" genders.

Heterosexism: The attitude that heterosexuality is the only valid or "normal" sexual orientation. This can take the form of overt negative comments or actions towards LGBTQ+ people or subtle actions or assumptions that marginalize LGBTQ+ people.

Heterosexual: A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to people of a different gender. Also known as "straight."

Homophobia: The fear and hatred of, or discomfort with, people who are attracted to members of the same sex or gender.

Homosexual: A person who is attracted to members of the same sex or gender. It is usually used in medical or scientific references.

Intersectionality: The ways that different forms of discrimination affecting gender, class, and race are interconnected.

Intersex: The term for 2% of babies who are born with naturally occurring variations in chromosomes, hormones, genitalia, and other sex characteristics.

Lesbian: A woman who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to some other women.

LGBTQ (LBGTQ+): An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning. Additions to this acronym can include A, for "asexual" or "ally," and I, for "intersex." LBGTQ+ is being used more frequently to acknowledge others in the community.

LGBTQ+ Family: A family in which some people are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, or queer. This could include parents, guardians, foster parents, children, chosen family, siblings, or grandparents who are LGBTQ+.

Misgender: To refer to or imply that a person is a gender other than their gender identity. This includes using the wrong form of gendered language, such as pronouns or titles, but can also include challenging someone's right to be in a gender-restricted area such as public bathrooms or locker rooms. ➤➤➤

MTF (AMAB): Male to Female or Assigned Male At Birth are terms referring to a person, assigned male at birth, who identifies and lives as female.

Non-binary: An umbrella term for people who transcend commonly held concepts of gender through their own expression and identities. Other terms for this might include "gender expansive," "gender creative," or "genderqueer." Some non-binary people also identify as transgender.

Outing: Exposing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity to others without their permission.

Pansexual: A person who can be attracted to any sex, gender, or gender identity.

Plus (+): Used to represent and be inclusive of community members who use different language to describe identity.

QTPOC: An acronym that means Queer Trans People of Color.

Queer: A term some people use to identify themselves with a flexible and inclusive view of gender and/or sexuality. Also it is used interchangeably with LGBTQ+ to describe a group of people such as "queer youth." It is also seen in academic fields, such as queer studies or queer theory. Historically, it has been used as a negative term for LGBTQ+ people. Some people still find the term offensive while some embrace the term as an identity. See "reclaimed words."

Questioning: A person who is in the process of understanding and exploring what their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and gender expression might be.

Reclaimed Words: Choosing to identify with terms that once were used as slurs against a group. The words are "reclaimed" and given new meaning, often imbued with a sense of pride and resilience. An example would be "queer." It's important to remember that identity is unique to each individual; not all members of a community readily accept the use of reclaimed words as they may still find them offensive and hurtful.

Same-Gender Loving: A term used instead of lesbian, gay, or bisexual that has been coined and used by communities of color to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender. The term was adopted because of the level of stigma of using LBGTQ+ terms in their community.

Sex: One's biological and physical attributes—external genitalia, sex chromosomes, and internal reproductive structures—that are used to assign someone as male or female at birth.

Sexual Fluidity: The concept that sexual orientation can vary across the lifespan and in different contexts. This does not mean that it can be changed through willpower or therapy.

Sexual Orientation: Describes a person's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. Some examples of sexual orientations are gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, or pansexual.

Sexuality: Describes how one experiences and expresses one's self as a sexual being. It begins to develop in early childhood and continues over the course of one's lifetime.

SOGIE (SOGI): An acronym that stands for Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression.

Straight: A term for heterosexual.

Transgender or Trans: An umbrella term that describes people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation; transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

Transphobia: The fear or hatred of, or discomfort with, transgender people.

Two-Spirit: A closed identifier for members of the Turtle Island Indigenous communites. Between 1990-1992 the Two-Spirit tag became an umbrella term developed to bridge linguistic barriers between native nations and European Americans to describes people who live within a spectrum of genders, sexual identities, gender expressions, and gender roles.

Vocabulary adapted from:

The Human Rights Campaign
https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms

Welcoming Schools: A Project of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation
https://welcomingschools.org/resources/lgbtq-definitions

GLSEN: Gay Lesbian &Straight Education Network
https://www.glsen.org/ ➤➤➤

University of California Davis Office For Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
https://health.ucdavis.edu/diversity-inclusion/LGBTQI/LGBTQ-Plus.html

University of Northern Iowa Gender and Sexuality Services
https://lgbt.uni.edu/sites/default/files/lgbtq_terminology.pdf

Johns Hopkins University Diversity & Inclusion LGBTQ+ Life
https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/lgbtq/education/glossary/

Pronouns Page
https://en.pronouns.page/

Pronouns Terminology
https://en.pronouns.page/terminology

Two-Spirit Video
https://youtu.be/A4lBibGzUnE

Honoring People by Name

Pronouns
More and more of our students and colleagues realize that our traditional gender pronouns (he/him, she/her) aren't reflective of their gender identities. Sometimes, transgender, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, and other gender-variant people use different pronouns for themselves. It is important that we do our best to use pronouns respectfully in our teaching and learning communities as part of how we provide a safe and secure learning environment for all.

How do I know which pronouns to use?
When there is a reason to know, it is best to ask. If it is someone you interact with in passing, it is OK to avoid any reference to gender when speaking to or about them. For students, parents, and colleagues you have ongoing relationships with, it is appropriate to ask. Try these:

- "What pronouns do you use?"
- "How would you like me to refer to you?"
- "My name is Bill, and my pronouns are he and him. What about you?"

What if I make a mistake?
A quick apology and correction when you make a mistake is appropriate, and models to everyone how to be respectful. Try this: "Her lab station is—I'm sorry-- hir lab station is over there." If you realize the mistake after the fact, it is appropriate to apologize later. Try this: "I'm really sorry I used the wrong pronoun. I'm going to be more careful from now on."

When should I correct others?
Sometimes people appreciate when someone stands up for them, while other people don't want the attention drawn to them. When the person isn't there, a matter-of-fact correction is usually appropriate. Try: "I think Taylor uses he/him. But, yes, I am his English teacher!" Explain that some students use a variety of pronouns regularly. They may wish to be referred to as he/him on one day and as they/them on another. ➤➤➤

Traditional/Masculine	He	Him	His	Himself
Traditional/Feminine	She	Her	Hers	Herself
Gender Neutral (they)	They	Them	Theirs	Themself
Gender Neutral (ze)	Ze	Hir	Hirs	Hirself
Gender Neutral	Ey	Em	Eirs	
Gender Neutral	Per	Per	Pers	
Gender Neutral	Hu	Hum	Hus	

Inclusive Language Best Practices

Some of your students may not identify with either gender so there are a lot of terms used in American culture that are binary. Try to avoid using terms like "guys" or "ladies and gentlemen" or "boys and girls" when addressing your students or large groups of people. Instead, use words like "scientists," "readers," "athletes," "writers," "artists," "scholars," etc.

Some additional gender-neutral ways to address large groups would be using terms such as these:

- Friends
- People/Peeps
- Y'all
- Using the name of your school's mascot— so if your school's mascot is the hornets "Hello Hornets, how are we doing today?" If your mascot is inclusive this will work.
- If you do classroom teams/houses you can refer to the students as their teams/houses/or fandom you have sorted them into.

If you are not sure what pronoun to use, it is fairly safe to default to they/them.

Avoid grouping students by gender. Instead, use birthdays, ice cream preferences, pet preferences, etc.

Avoid gender specific uniforms and dress code requirements for events such as chorus concerts and ROTC.

Names

An important part of a student's identity is their name. If a student and/or parent/guardian wish for a student to go by a different name, it is important to consider the following:

- A student may not want their parent/guardian to know.
- A student may only want certain teachers/staff/students to know.
- Students are not required to present substantiating evidence, obtain court-ordered name changes, or to change their student records as a prerequisite to being addressed by their preferred names and pronouns at school.

Prefixes/Honorifics/Titles

Some genderfluid/nonbinary individuals may use "Mx." as their honorific. "Mx." is generally pronounced as mix.

Student Information Systems

What is a Student Information System?
A Student Information System (SIS) is any computer program that collects and stores data about students, including data about student names, addresses, phone contact numbers, date of birth, place of birth, height, weight, parents or guardians, gender/sex, grades, assessments, attendance, IEP information, transcripts, athletic participation, and course registration. According to the Code of Virginia § 22.1-287, this information "may be publicly released in accordance with federal law and regulations and the regulations of the Board of Education."

Pursuant to § 22.1-23.3 of the Code of Virginia, local school divisions should adopt policies, procedures, and practices for an inclusive school environment that are consistent with *Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*

Why do Student Information Systems matter?
Since Student Information Systems must have a legal name and gender, this data is collected from a student's birth certificate. To change "sex" on a birth certificate, a person must have a "verified medical procedure." There is no provision for gender on a birth certificate. According to FERPA-34 Code of Regulations Section 99.7 (A)(2)(ii), parents or eligible students (those who are over 18 years of age) have the right to "…seek amendment of student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation to the student's privacy rights." To make changes, SISs need a way to make changes in the system. Most SISs do not have this capability. In addition to issues of a student's name and gender, most SISs do not have ways to include two fathers or two mothers in their systems; therefore, the person or people who enter data into these systems do not have a way to input legal family information for all students.

In your school system, it is possible that some changes could be requested by a student without parent permission. However, parents are entitled to access student records so these changes can be seen by parents, which may accidentally out a student to their parents. Your school system should tell you the policies and procedures for navigating this situation.

Questions to Ask about Student Information Systems
What are some questions that one should ask school systems about Student Information Systems?

- Does the SIS software for the school system allow for changes in students' names or the pronouns used when referring to a student?
- Can the SIS list parents and guardians so that all "non-traditional" family members can be included in the SIS?
- Does the SIS make whom to contact in what order clear? Does it include information relating to divorced parents, families with stepparents who are directly involved with the student, and any important custody issues that are important when contacting parents or guardians?
- If the SIS for the school system has the capabilities to make changes or to include all family members, does the school system employ this capability when creating student records?
- Does the school system inform students that they can change their records after they turn 18 according to FERPA?
- Can chosen names be set to be the default name that appears when auto-generating information such as progress reports, rosters, and sub plans?

Gender Diversity by VDOE VDOE Gender Diversity

Access to Facilities and Sex Segregated Spaces

All students are entitled to have access to restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities that are sanitary, safe, and adequate so that they can comfortably and fully engage in their school programs and activities. Schools frequently maintain separate restrooms, locker rooms or other facilities for males and females. Students should be allowed to use the facility that corresponds to their gender identity. While some transgender students will want that access, others may want alternatives that afford more privacy. Taking into account existing school facilities, administrators should take steps to designate gender-inclusive or single-user restrooms commensurate with the size of the school. When schools have available gender-inclusive or single-user restrooms or private changing areas, these restrooms or areas should be accessible to all students without special codes or keys. This would allow for any students seeking privacy to access single-user restrooms and private changing areas voluntarily. For locker room facilities without private changing areas, school divisions should make reasonable accommodations for requests for increased privacy. At the request of any student, schools should offer alternative arrangements such as a separate changing schedule, use of a nearby private area, access to a staff member's office, not requiring students to dress in uniform for physical education or offering alternatives to in-person physical education. Any accommodations offered should be non-stigmatizing and minimize lost instructional time. Any information related to accommodations should be handled in such a way as to protect the student's privacy relating to their gender identity.

It can be emotionally harmful for a transgender student to be questioned regarding the use of restrooms and facilities. School staff should not confront students about their gender identity upon entry into a restroom. Furthermore, as school divisions plan for new school facilities or renovations, they should consider generally accommodating students who want more privacy, such as designing additional single-user or gender-inclusive restrooms or changing areas. Additionally, § 22.1-6.1 of the Code of Virginia requires each school board to make menstrual supplies available at all times and at no cost to students in accessible locations in each elementary school and in the bathrooms of each middle and high school. Accordingly, these supplies should be made available in all bathrooms to be gender-inclusive.

Sports Teams

VHSL policy (https://www.vhsl.org/eligibility/) allows transgender students to participate on sports teams consistent with their gender identity when at least one of the following criteria is met:

A. For a student-athlete who has undergone sex reassignment before puberty;

B. For any student who is verified by appropriate medical documentation as having a consistent identity different than the gender listed on the student's official birth certificate or school registration records;

C. For any student where hormonal therapy appropriate for the assigned sex has been administered in a verifiable manner and for a sufficient length of time to minimize gender-related advantages in sports competition.

Sex-Segregated Spaces

Bathrooms and Locker Rooms

There is no clear legal guidance related to student access to restrooms and locker rooms. However, there are rulings from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3795.pdf) related to staff access to restrooms.

In Macy v. Dept. of Justice, the EEOC ruled in a federal sector appellate case that discrimination based on transgender status is sex discrimination in violation of Title VII.

In Lusardi v. Dept. of the Army, also a federal sector appeal, the EEOC held the following:

1. a federal agency that denied an employee equal access to a common bathroom/facility corresponding to the employee's gender identity discriminated on the basis of sex;

2. the agency could not condition this right on the employee undergoing or providing proof of surgery or any other medical procedure; and

3. the agency could not avoid the requirement to provide equal access to a common bathroom/facility by restricting a transgender employee to a single-user restroom instead (though the employer can make a single-user restroom available to all employees who might choose to use it). ▶▶▶

Additionally, § 22.1-6.1 of the Code of Virginia requires each school board to make menstrual supplies available at all times and at no cost to students in accessible locations in each elementary school and in the bathrooms of each middle and high school. Accordingly, these supplies should be made available in all bathrooms to be gender-inclusive.

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) OCR indicated that discrimination against a person based on their status as transgender generally involves discrimination on the basis of their biological sex (OCR, 2020). Thus, schools have a responsibility to respond to discrimination on the basis of sex, including on the basis of the student's nonconformance to stereotyped notions of gender. Additionally, President Biden issued an Executive Order that states, "Children should be able to learn without worrying about whether they will be denied access to the restroom, the locker room, or school sports…All persons should receive equal treatment under the law, no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation" (Exec. Order No. 13988, 2021).

Inclusive School Practices

Virginia SOLs
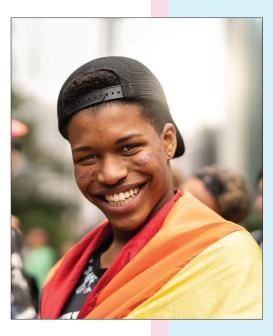
22.1-207.1 Family Life Education
1. The Virginia Standards of Learning for Family Life includes references stating that the range of human sexuality and that "human sexuality," and "dating, violence, and the characteristics of abusive relationships" are to be taught at least once in middle school and twice in high school, and that the curriculum should include information about preventing and responding to sexual assault, preventing and responding to sexual harassment and sexual violence, accepting others' points of view, and identifying effects of discrimination (especially on families).

The topics below are from the Introduction to the Family Life SOLs and were edited to delete information not applicable to LGBTQ+ issues:

"The following guidelines shall be followed in the implementation of the Family Life Education program developed locally.

A. The Family Life Education program developed locally shall be comprehensive and sequential and include the following content areas and may include others at the discretion of the local school board…

6. Human sexuality…

9. The etiology, prevention, and effects of sexually transmitted infections…

11. Dating violence, which shall include a focus on informing high school students that consent is required before a sexual act, the characteristics of abusive relationships, steps to take to deter a sexual assault, the availability of counseling and legal resources, and, in the event of sexual assault, the importance of receiving immediate medical attention and advice, as well as the requirements of the law;

12. Mental health education and awareness." ▸▸▸

The Family Life SOLs have no mention of curriculum supportive of LGBTQ+ students, however.

Many school systems have adopted policies that outline the inclusion of LGBTQ+ students and their rights in schools. Some of these are included in the resources section.
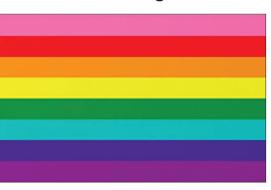
Questions to Ask About Your School Division

- Do school climate inventories ask students demographic information, and does that info include LGBTQ+ identity?
- Are trainings offered/made available that empower teachers/administrators/support staff to support LGBTQ+ students?
- Is there a visible ally network for LGBTQ+ students? What are the requirements for belonging to that network?
- Is there a person or set of people who help LGBTQ+ students navigate the bureaucracy of student info systems, sex-segregated spaces, etc.?
- Can school climate inventories ask students demographic information, and does that information include LGBTQ+ identity?
- Since the Family Life SOLs do not define this, can school boards clarify what it means to talk about the range of human sexuality?
- Can we clarify all the ways that sexual harassment manifests?
- What does it mean when we teach students to be accepting of others' points of view/ways of life?
- How is Family Life implemented, and do localities have language addressing the support of LGBTQ+ students and family structures in curriculum?
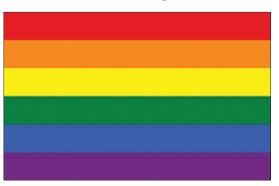
Pride Flags

The Gilbert Baker Flag

In 1977, Harvey Milk asked Gilbert Baker to create a flag to celebrate the queer community. Baker, taking inspiration from the song "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" featured in the movie *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), created a flag based on the rainbow. He assigned each color in the flag with a specific meaning: hot pink stands for sex, red stands for life, orange stands for healing, yellow stands for sunlight, green stands for nature, turquoise stands for magic and art, indigo stands for serenity, and violet stands for the spirit of LGBTQ+ people.

The 6-Color Pride Flag

In 1979, because of a difficulty finding pink fabric for the Gilbert Baker flag, the six-color flag was introduced. In 1986, the turquoise and indigo stripes were replaced by royal blue because organizers of San Francisco's Gay Freedom Day Parade wanted an equal number of stripes so that they could fly half on one side of the street and the other half on the other side. The meaning of the stripes is as follows: red stands for life, orange stands for healing, yellow stands for sunlight, green stands for nature, blue stands for harmony, and purple stands for spirit. ▶▶▶

More Color More Pride Flag

In 2017, Amber Hikes, the Philadelphia Executive Director of the Mayor's office for LGBTQ+ Affairs, introduced The More Color Pride flag. The eight-stripe rainbow flag was designed to better recognize LGBTQ+ people of color by adding brown and black.

The Pride Progress Flag

In 2018, Daniel Quasar, a non-binary artist and graphic designer, designed the Pride Progress Flag. The flag incorporates additional colors into the Rainbow Pride flag to explicitly represent trans people (light blue, pink, and white) and LGBTQ+ communities of color (brown and black). He took the trans colors from Monica Helm's 1999 Trans Pride Flag where blue symbolizes the traditional color used for baby boys, pink symbolizes the traditional color used for baby girls, and white symbolizes those who are transitioning, feel that they have no gender, or are intersexed.

Inclusive Pride Flag

In May of 2021, Intersex Equality Rights UK unveiled a new Pride flag meant to include intersex people. Valentino Vecchietti, the designer and intersex activist, added the yellow field with a purple circle to the Pride Progress flag, making it more inclusive.

There are many more Pride flags adopted by members of specific groups within the LGBTQ+ community.

Resource:

Emoji Flags
https://emojiflags.avris.it/

Resources

Virginia Department of Education
Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students.
VDOE Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students

Virginia SOLs for the Family Life Curriculum
VA SOLs for Family Life Curriculum

National Education Association
"National Training Program on Safety, Bias, & LBGTQ+ Issues" is a website that explains the training offered by the NEA.
NEA Safety, Bias, and LGBTQ+ Issues Training

American Civil Liberties Organization
https://www.aclunc.org/our-work/know-your-rights/lgbtq-students

Equality Virginia
Founded in 1989 as Virginians for Justice, Equality Virginia (EV) is the leading advocacy organization in Virginia seeking equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people. EV is building a fully inclusive Commonwealth by educating, empowering, and mobilizing Virginians to ensure all LGBTQ+ people are free to live, love, learn, and work.
https://equalityvirginia.org/

Teaching Tolerance Resources

- "Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ+ Students" outlines the best practices for a LGBTQ+ inclusive school environment that includes links for additional resources including the following:
  Teaching Tolerance Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ+ Students

- "Responding to Hate and Bias at School: A Teaching Tolerance Guide" shows educators how to respond to a hate-related incident in their school or community and guides them through crisis management and post-crisis efforts at improvement.
  Teaching Tolerance Responding to Hate and Bias at School

- "Speak Up at School: A Teaching Tolerance Guide" gives educators the tools to help students and themselves turn from bystanders to upstanders and explains how to respond to biased remarks from peers, parents, or even administrators.
  http://www.tolerance.org/publication/speak-school

- "Examining Your School's Climate" provides a questionnaire to begin the process of assessing your school climate.
  http://www.tolerance.org/map-it-out

- "Learning for Justice Glossary of Terms: The Acronym and Beyond"
  Learning for Justice Glossary Terms

- "Ten Tips for Starting a GSA" can help make a GSA's launch successful. http://www.tolerance.org/10-tips-GSA

- "Common Roadblocks" provides ways to constructively respond to common objections to LGBTQ+-inclusive policies.
  Responding to Common Roadblocks with LGBTQ+ Inclusive Policies

Whom to Contact

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https://www.glsen.org/chapter/northern-virginia

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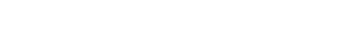
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Ær Queen, Fairfax

Cory Foster, PIttsylvania

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Notes/Thoughts

VeA Toolkit for Promoting Inclusion for LGBTQ+ Students and School Employees

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