

## RSU 2

### **Students who are Transgender and Gender Expansive** *Ensuring Equity, Equality, and Nondiscrimination*

#### **Resources**

*Please contact Tara Kierstead (tkierstead@kidsrsu.org) should you have questions about any of the resources below, or be in need of additional resources.*

#### Books:

Many books are available for parents/guardians, educators, young children, teens, and adults. If you would like a list of recommended readings, please email Tara Kierstead at tkierstead@kidsrsu.org.

#### School Based Resources:

Schools can implement a number of initiatives to ensure that students feel affirmed in their school regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. These include:

**Safe Spaces:** Any staff member in the district can order their own Safe Space kit. The guide provides concrete strategies that will help you support LGBTQ students, educate about anti-LGBTQ bias, and advocate for changes in your school. The kit not only guides you through making an assessment of your school's climate, policies, and practices but it also outlines strategies that you may use to advocate for change, including posting a Safe Space sticker or Safe Space poster in your classroom or office.

<https://www.glsen.org/safespace>

Tara Kierstead can also lead free Safe Space trainings for groups of staff members, who, upon completion of the training, will receive a Safe Space sticker for their office or classroom.

**Gay/Straight/Transgender Alliances (GSTAs):** GSTAs are student-run clubs that may serve as a social, support, and advocacy channel for LGBTQ students. They primarily exist in middle and high schools. Elementary schools have opted to host Ready, Set, Respect! clubs with similar purposes.

**Ready, Set, Respect!:** We all want students to feel safe and respected and to develop respectful attitudes and behaviors. The kit provides a set of tools that will help you prepare to teach about respect and includes lesson plans that can help you seize teachable moments. The lessons focus on name-calling, bullying and bias, LGBTQ-inclusive family diversity, and gender roles and diversity, and are designed to be used as either standalone lessons or as part of a school-wide anti-bias or bullying prevention program.

<https://www.glsen.org/readysetrepect>

**Civil Rights Teams:** The mission of the Civil Rights Team Project (CRTP) is to increase the safety of elementary, middle level, and high school students by reducing bias-motivated behaviors and harassment in our schools. The CRTP accomplishes this by supporting student civil rights teams in schools. The CRTP and the student civil rights teams are active in identifying and addressing issues of bias in school communities,

especially those related to race and color, national origin and ancestry, religion, physical and mental disabilities, gender (including gender identity and expression), and sexual orientation.

[http://www.maine.gov/ag/civil\\_rights](http://www.maine.gov/ag/civil_rights)

**Curriculum and Libraries:** Schools should ensure that their curriculum is both a window and a mirror, allowing students who are not LGBTQ to see the experiences of others and providing a reflection for LGBTQ students. This can include incorporating LGBTQ history, reading books by LGBTQ authors, and ensuring sexual health curriculum is inclusive of all identities. Teachers can use the resources below for help in creating inclusive lessons. Teachers are also invited to join the GLSEN Educator Network to share resources and find support. Below is also a link for coaches and physical education teachers specifically.

School librarians should make sure to have LGBTQ inclusive books in their libraries. Librarians can get a list of recommended books from Tara Kierstead ([tkierstead@kidsrsu.org](mailto:tkierstead@kidsrsu.org)), or check out the Rainbow Book List link below.

<https://www.glsen.org/educate/resources/creating-lgbt-inclusive-lessons>

<https://www.glsen.org/educate/resources/lesson-plans>

<http://action.glsen.org/page/s/educator-network>

<https://www.glsen.org/article/game-plans-pe-teachers-coaches-administrators-parents>

<http://glbtrt.ala.org/rainbowbooks/rainbow-books-lists>

#### Parent/Guardian, Educator, and Student Resources:

There are many guides, websites, and organizations available for information and support. Below are just a few:

- Teaching Tolerance's Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ Students guide - Written to help school leaders ensure that all students feel safe, seen and capable of success; to ensure that the curriculum is as complete and representative as possible; to ensure that the school climate fosters open and respectful dialogue among all students and staff; and to prepare youth to engage and thrive within our diverse democracy.

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/best-practices-for-serving-lgbtq-students>

- The Human Rights Campaign's Schools in Transition guide - Written for administrators, teachers, parents, and other adults who work with youth, this guide covers topics ranging from basic concepts of gender and the importance of affirming gender identity, to best practices for restroom access and working with parents/guardians who are unsupportive.

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/schools-in-transition-a-guide-for-supporting-transgender-students-in-k-12-s>

- GLSEN - GLSEN is a national organization addressing LGBTQ issues in K-12 education, which provides resources and supports to students, educators, administrators, and other constituents.

<https://www.glsen.org>

GLSEN Southern Maine  
 glsensomaine@gmail.com  
 207-619-1417  
[www.glsen.org/southernme](http://www.glsen.org/southernme)

GLSEN Downeast Maine  
 downeastme@chapters.glsen.org  
 207-217-9873  
[www.glsen.org/downeastme](http://www.glsen.org/downeastme)

- GLSEN's Respect for All - Policy Recommendations to Support LGBTQ Students: A Guide for District and School Leaders - This resource provides education policymakers and practitioners, particularly at the district and school levels, with concrete recommendations related to creating safe and affirming learning environments that uphold the dignity of all students.

<https://www.glsen.org/article/respect-all-policy-recommendations-support-lgbtq-students>

- GLSEN's Supporting Safe and Healthy Schools for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Students: A National Survey of School Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists - This guide is the latest example of GLSEN's evidence-driven approach to understanding the dimensions and impact of LGBTQ issues in K-12 schools, and identifying the most promising avenues for an effective response.

[https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Supporting%20Safe%20and%20Healthy%20Schools%20-%20A%20Report%20on%20Mental%20Health%20Professionals%20%26%20LGBTQ%20Youth\\_0.pdf](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Supporting%20Safe%20and%20Healthy%20Schools%20-%20A%20Report%20on%20Mental%20Health%20Professionals%20%26%20LGBTQ%20Youth_0.pdf)

- GLSEN's 2017 National School Climate Survey - This survey is GLSEN's flagship report on the school experiences of LGBTQ youth in schools, including the extent of the challenges that they face at school and the school-based resources that support LGBTQ students' well-being. Also see Maine's State Snapshot from the report.

<https://www.glsen.org/article/2017-national-school-climate-survey-1>

[https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Maine%20State%20Snapshot%20-%202017%20NSCS\\_0.pdf](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Maine%20State%20Snapshot%20-%202017%20NSCS_0.pdf)

- GLSEN's Guide for Trans and Gender Nonconforming Students - This guide outlines the rights students have in their schools.

[https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Trans%20Student%20KYR\\_0.pdf](https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Trans%20Student%20KYR_0.pdf)

- HRC Foundation's Welcoming Schools - Welcoming Schools is the nation's premier professional development program providing training and resources to elementary school educators to embrace family diversity, create LGBTQ and gender inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying, and support transgender and non-binary students.

<http://www.welcomingschools.org/>

- The Gender Cool Project - The GenderCool Project is a national storytelling campaign spotlighting remarkable stories of transgender young people.

<https://gendercool.org>

- EqualityMaine - EqualityMaine works to secure full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in Maine through political action, community organizing, education, and collaboration.

<http://equalitymaine.org>

- OUT Maine - OUT Maine supports and empowers lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning young people, under the age of 22, and their allies in rural Maine.

<https://outmaine.org>

- Outright LA - Located in the Lewiston/Auburn area, Outright LA's mission is to create safe and affirming environments for youth ages 14-21 who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or questioning.

<http://www.outrightla.org>

- Waterville Inclusive Community Project - Provides support for LGBTQ teens in the Waterville area.

<http://www.wicpme.wordpress.com>

- MaineTransNet - Provides support and resources for the transgender community, their families, and significant others. They also provide training and consultation to health and social service providers, direct people to available resources, and facilitate peer support groups for people who are transgender and allies, as well as providing avenues for social networking and public dialogue.

<http://www.mainetransnet.org>

- Trans Youth Equality Foundation - The Trans Youth Equality Foundation provides education, advocacy, and support for children and youth who are transgender and gender expansive and their families.

<http://www.transyouthequality.org>

- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Maine - ACLU is a non-partisan organization dedicated to defense of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights for all Mainers.

<https://www.aclumaine.org>

- GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) - New England's leading legal rights organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status, and gender identity and expression.

<https://www.glad.org>

- Lambda Legal - A national nonprofit organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work. Their website includes many resources, including "Blending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Students" that is available for download.

<https://www.lambdalegal.org>

<https://www.lambdalegal.org/publications/bending-the-mold>

- Transgender Law Center (TLC) - They are the largest national trans-led organization advocating self-determination for all people. Grounded in legal expertise and committed to racial justice, TLC employs a variety of community-driven strategies to keep transgender and gender expansive people alive, thriving, and fighting for liberation.

<https://transgenderlawcenter.org>

- PFLAG - Uniting people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer with families, friends, and allies, PFLAG is committed to advancing equality through its mission of support, education, and advocacy. PFLAG has 400 chapters and 200,000 supporters crossing multiple generations of American families in major urban centers, small cities, and rural areas in all 50 states. There are PFLAG chapters in Houlton, Portland, and Waterville.

<https://www.pflag.org>

- The Trevor Project - The Trevor Project is a national organization focused on crisis and suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. They offer online support and resources. Their free and confidential resources also include:

Trevor Lifeline - 866-488-7386 - For young people in crisis, who feel suicidal, or who just need a safe and judgement-free place to talk. Available 24/7.

TrevorChat - Secure instant messaging service that provides live help to LGBTQ youth. Available 7 days a week between 3pm - 10pm ET.

TrevorText - Text "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200 - Secure resource that provides live help for LGBTQ youth with a trained specialist, over text messages. Available Monday-Friday between 3pm - 10pm EST.

<http://www.thetrevorproject.org>

- National Center for Transgender Equality - The nation's leading social justice advocacy organization winning life-saving change for people who are transgender.

<https://www.transequality.org>

- Queer Kid Stuff - A web series educating kids on LGBTQ topics. Creator and host Lindsay and her best stuffed friend Teddy explain queer topics through a vlog-style conversation with young viewers focused on love and family. The short videos are a tool for parents/guardians, teachers, and LGBTQ adults to help them explain these words and ideas to young children in their lives, recommended for ages 3-7. A free, printable activity sheet accompanies each episode to further instill the lessons of the videos through activities which can be done at home or in the classroom.

<http://queerkidstuff.com>

- SezME - Sez Me began as an LGBT web series for kids and evolved into a multidisciplinary educational program for all ages. This is an LGBT show for the whole family!

<https://www.sezme.me>

- Gender Spectrum - Gender Spectrum's mission is to create a gender-inclusive world for all children and youth. To accomplish this, they help families, organizations, and institutions increase understandings of gender and consider the implications that evolving views have for each of us.

<https://www.genderspectrum.org>

- Families in TRANSition: A Resource Guide for Parents of Trans Youth - This guide was written and published by Central Toronto Youth Services, and it addresses the needs of parents/guardians and families supporting their children that are transgender.

[http://lgbtqpn.ca/wp-content/uploads/woocommerce\\_uploads/2009/04/Families-in-TRANSition.pdf](http://lgbtqpn.ca/wp-content/uploads/woocommerce_uploads/2009/04/Families-in-TRANSition.pdf)

- Office for Civil Rights (OCR): Part of the U.S. Department of Education, the OCR provides resources for students who are transgender and gender expansive.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/lgbt.html>

- Kids Legal - Offers legal services for low-income Maine youth.

[www.kidslegalaids.org](http://www.kidslegalaids.org)

- Family Acceptance Project (FAP) - The FAP has a free downloadable booklet titled "Supportive Families, Healthy Children: Helping Families with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Children," along with other resources on their website.

[https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/FAP\\_English%20Booklet\\_pst.pdf](https://familyproject.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/FAP_English%20Booklet_pst.pdf)

<https://familyproject.sfsu.edu>

- Camp Aranutiq - They build confidence, resilience, and community for transgender & gender-variant youth and their families through camp experiences.

<https://www.camparanutiq.org>

## Definitions and Terms

The following definitions and terms are not intended to provide rigid labels for students, but to assist in discussing and addressing the needs of our students and create a common vocabulary. The terminology in this area is continually evolving and preferences for particular terminology vary widely. Administrators, school staff, volunteers, students, and other adults who interact with students should be sensitive to the ways in which particular students who are transgender and gender expansive may wish to be identified.

Youth who are transgender and gender expansive use a number of words to describe their lives and experiences. Some examples these students may use to refer to themselves include, but are not limited to, trans, transgender, male-to-female (MTF), female-to-male (FTM), genderqueer, non-binary, genderfluid, two-spirit, trans boy, and trans girl. The terminology and language used to describe individuals who are transgender and gender expansive may differ based on varied factors such as geographic location, race, ethnicity, age, country of origin, etc., and may change over time. The individual student is the best person to determine their own identity. School staff, other students, and other adults who work with students should be sensitive to, and use, the terminology that supports and respects the wishes of the individual student.

Agender: A person who feels they have no gender.

Ally: A member of the majority or dominant group who works to end oppression by recognizing their own privilege and supporting or advocating for the oppressed population. For example, a straight cisgender person who supports for and stands up for the equality of LGBTQ people.

Assigned Sex at Birth: Refers to the sex designation recorded on an infant's birth certificate should such a record be provided at birth.

Bullying: Bullying and Cyberbullying have the same meaning in this policy as in Maine law. Bullying includes, but is not limited to a written, oral, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:

(1) Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property; or
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property;

OR

(2) Interferes with the rights of a student by:

- Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or
- Interfering with the student's academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school;

OR

(3) Is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based on a student's

association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, and that has the effect described in subparagraph (1) or (2) above. (These behaviors might also meet the criteria for harassment as defined in board policy ACAA: Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students).

Cisgender: An adjective describing a person whose gender identity corresponds to their assigned sex at birth. For example, an individual who was assigned the sex designation of female at birth and whose gender identity is female.

Coming Out: The ongoing process that an LGBTQ person goes through, to recognize their own identities pertaining to sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression, and to be open about them with others.

Gender: A set of cultural identities, expressions, and roles - codified as feminine or masculine - that are assigned to people. Since gender is a social construct, it is possible to reject or modify the assignment made, and develop something that feels truer and just to oneself.

Gender Binary: A socially constructed system of viewing gender as consistently solely of two categories (male and female) in which no other possibilities of gender are believed to exist. The gender binary is inaccurate because it does not take into account the diversity of gender identities and gender expressions among all people. The gender binary is oppressive to anyone that does not conform to dominant societal gender roles.

Gender Expansive: An adjective used to describe an individual whose gender expression does not conform to the social expectations or norms or stereotypical expectations for a person of that sex assigned at birth. Individuals who are gender expansive may identify as male, female, some combination of both, or neither. A person's gender expression may differ from stereotypical expectations about how females and males are "supposed to" look or act. Gender expansive is not synonymous with transgender; not all individuals who are gender expansive identify as transgender.

Gender Expression: The way a person expresses gender to others in ways that are socially defined as either masculine or feminine, such as through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, name, pronouns, activities, voice, or mannerisms. (Note: Gender expression can vary depending on one's culture as well as changes in social norms and expectations, such as shifts in clothing and hairstyles). Students who adopt a presentation that varies from the stereotypic gender expectations sometimes may describe themselves as gender expansive, genderqueer, or genderfluid.

Gender Identity: Gender identity is a person's internal, deeply rooted sense of being a man or a woman, some combination of both, or neither, regardless of one's assigned sex at birth. Everyone has a gender identity. Only the individual can determine their own gender identity.

Genderqueer: A person who has a gender identity and/or gender expression that does not conform to the sex they were assigned at birth. People who identify as genderqueer may or may not also identify as transgender.

Intersex: A term used for individuals born with variations in sex characteristics – reproductive or sexual anatomy or chromosome pattern - that do not fit the typical binary notions of male or female bodies.

LGBTQ: An acronym that stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning." Questioning incorporates those who are uncertain or fluid about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.



Misgender: To misgender is to refer to someone by a name, pronoun, or gendered word (such as son or daughter) that does not fit with the individual's affirmed gender.

Outing: "Outing" someone is telling someone else about a person's sexual orientation or gender identity without their permission. Outing is disrespectful and harmful to an individual, and while it may be deemed in the best interest of the student by a "well-meaning" faculty member, staff member, or another student, the results can be quite harmful to the student in question. Being "outed" has meant for some students being pulled from the school and physically moved to another geographic location and school system, or because of parental pressure to stop the transition.

Pronouns: Pronouns are what a person would like others to call them by, when their birth 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.

Sex: The biological condition or quality of being female or male. Sex refers to the sexual organs a person was born with. Sex and gender are not the same thing. They differ in that gender is how a person feels, regardless of what sexual organs they were born with.

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientation is defined in the Maine Human Rights Act as an individual's "actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality or gender identity or expression." Sexual orientation is a person's emotional and sexual attraction to another person based on the gender of the other person. Sexual orientation can be towards persons of the opposite sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes and more than one gender. Sexual orientation is not the same as gender identity.

Transgender: A person whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth.