

LGBTQ+ Back to School Resources

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Being a Supportive Teacher

Safe Space Kit



How to support students when they come out to you (page 16)

How to respond to anti-LGBTQ language and behavior (page 20)

Assess your school. LGBTQ-inclusive school checklist (page 32)

Implement policies. Anti-bullying and non-discrimination (page 33)

Safe Space Kit – Respond to Anti-LGBT Language

1. Address Name-Calling, Bullying or Harassment Immediately
 - a. No action is an action – if an incident is overlooked or not addressed it can imply acceptance and approval.
2. Name the Behavior
 - a. “I heard you use the word _____ and that is derogatory and is considered name-calling. That language is unacceptable.”
3. Use the Teachable Moment (or Create One).
 - a. In the moment or later? Publicly or privately?
 - b. Center or focus the teachable moment around the behaviors not the specific students involved.
4. Support the Targeted Student
 - a. Ask the student what they need or want.
 - b. In the moment or later? Publicly or privately?
5. Hold Students Accountable
 - a. Consequences consistent with the RPS Student Handbook



Safe Space Kit – Unintentional Anti-LGBTQ Language



POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO “THAT’S SO GAY”

RESPONSES	BENEFITS	CHALLENGES
“What do you mean by that?”	Doesn’t dismiss it.	Students might not be forthcoming.
“How do you think a gay person might feel?”	Puts responsibility on the student to come up with the solution.	Student may not say anything.
“Do you say that as a compliment?”	Asking this rhetorical question in a non-accusatory tone may lighten things up enough for your students to shake their heads and admit, “No.”	Students may just laugh off your question, or reiterate that they’re “Just joking.”
“So the connotations are negative?” or “So maybe it’s not a good thing?”	Not accusatory. Could open up the floor for discussion.	There’s always the chance that students will still be reluctant to speak up.

Answering Questions from Families and Students

Families who want to change their students

Often do not want to fully legally change student's name, but want their student's name used in contexts

Legal Name Change



Changing what you go by?

Google Account

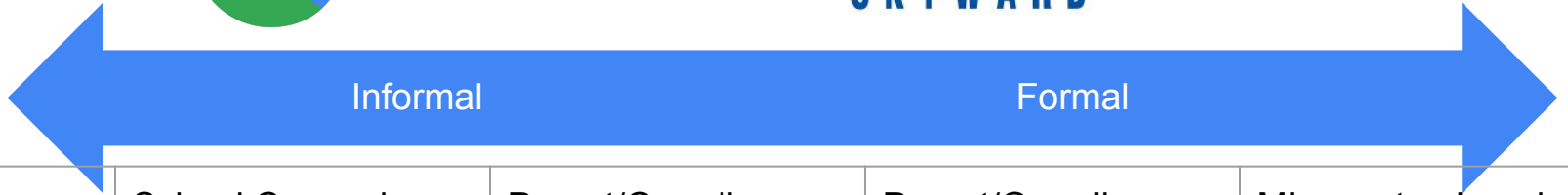


Skyward
Other Name

Skyward Records



Legal Name Change



Who?	School Counselor	Parent/Guardian	Parent/Guardian	Minnesotan Legal System
How?			Go to Skyward Family Access, Go to Online Forms, Select "Name/Gender Identity Change" form	After change, bring the appropriate legal documentation to the Registration & Records Office at the Edison building or email to registration@rochesterschools.org
What does it change?	Name in gmail, google classroom, and related apps (Can parents see this?)		First and Middle Name Only	Full name is legally changed within Rochester Public Schools and elsewhere
What does it NOT change?	Class roster, attendance		Last name cannot be changed. Name can only be changed once.	Josh Halverson

Rochester Public Schools Policies

RPS Equity Belief Statements

One of the eleven statements:

“We believe that one’s gender and sexuality are important parts of one’s identity which deserve to be genuinely accepted and valued. We believe that every student and staff member has the right to grow in a safe space and to be addressed by their preferred name and by pronouns which correspond to their gender identity.”

Office of Equity and Engagement

Before July 1st, 2022, this department was called DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion).

William Ruffin II

Executive Director of Equity and Engagement

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Typical Anti-LGBTQ+ Acts are Level II Offenses

Abusive language

Bullying

Harassment

Discrimination

Physical aggression

Threats of violence

Bullying/Harassment Anonymous Tipline

<https://tsscapps.rochester.k12.mn.us/tipline/>

Site administrators are expected to respond to Level II offenses after an investigation has been completed as described in the Student Handbook.

Protections of LGBTQ+ Students Apply Online

Users may not use Electronic Technology to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit or distribute: ... materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.

Dress Code

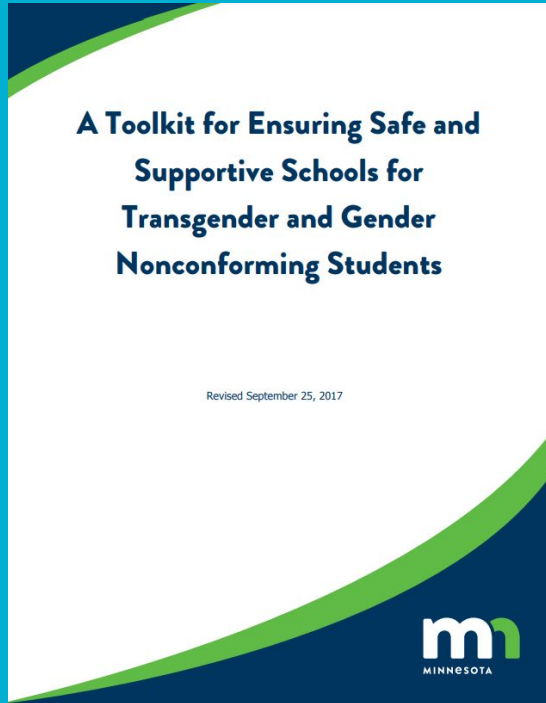
Appropriate Clothing includes

- Clothing appropriate for the weather.
- **Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.**
- Clothing appropriate for the activity (i.e., physical education or the classroom).

Inappropriate Clothing includes

- Clothing causing a disruption to the learning environment.
- Clothing bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene.
- Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors.
- Objectionable emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects, or pictures on clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances or provokes any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in School Board Policy 413 Harassment and Violence.
- Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.

Minnesota Department of Education



Guidance on school policies, applicable laws, names, pronouns, student records, dress code, restrooms, and more.

Gender Sexuality Alliances (GSA)

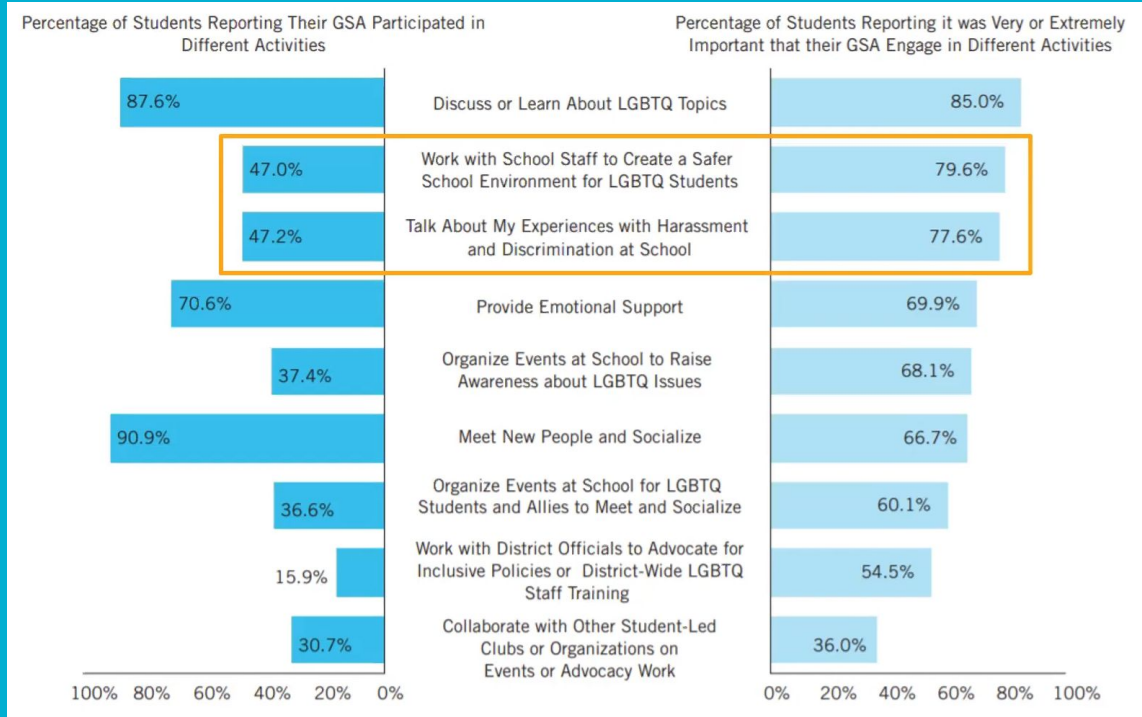
Recommendations: GSA Students and Advisors

- Work to ensure that GSAs better meet the needs of the students they serve by **assessing the needs of the student members** of their GSA and implementing and adjusting GSA activities accordingly.
- Prioritize identifying and **resolving common challenges** in GSAs, such as attendance problems and pushback from other students in the school.
- Work to **ensure GSAs are inclusive** of both students of color and transgender and nonbinary students.

Recommendations: School Administrators

- **Support advisors and GSAs who face pushback** from parents and other educators by taking a strong supportive stance and provide opportunities for parents and staff to learn about the importance of LGBTQ students having a GSA at their school.
- Provide GSAs with greater **support and resources in engaging in advocacy activities, such as resources about how to advocate to school districts**, and guides to planning advocacy or awareness-raising events.
- **Provide formal professional development and resources on LGBTQ youth-specific content and LGBTQ youth of color-specific content** so that educators do not have to solely rely on resources and training opportunities that they seek out on their own, and to increase advisors' self-efficacy working with these diverse groups of students.

What Activities are Important to GSA Students?



Areas of opportunity?

Work with School Staff to Create a Safer School Environment for LGBTQ Students

Talk About Students' Experiences with Harassment and Discrimination at School

Hard

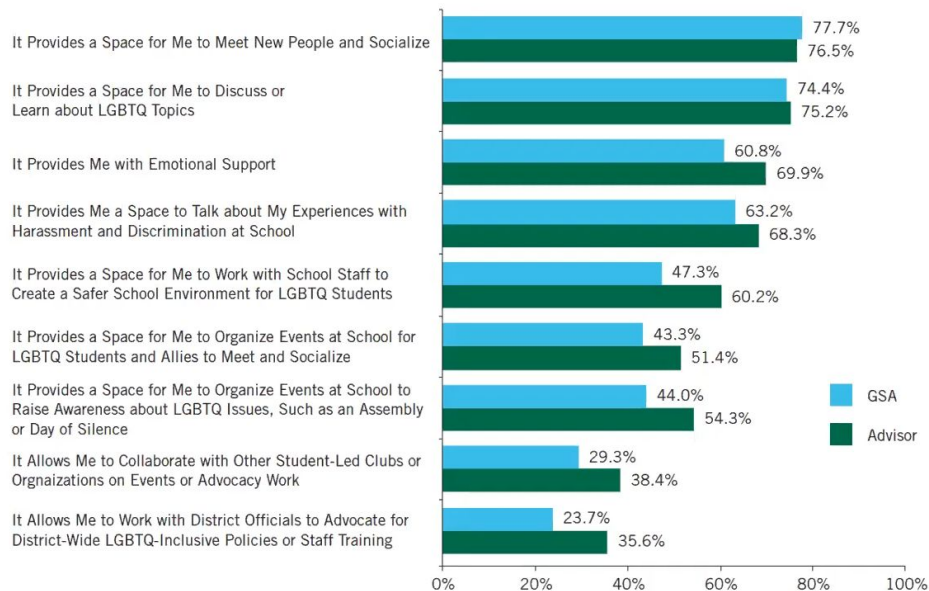
GSA and advisors were most helpful in:

- Providing space or planning events for socializing
- Discussing or learning about LGBTQ topics

GSA and advisors were least helpful in:

- Collaborating with other student-led clubs or organizations on events or advocacy work
- Working with district officials to advocate for district-wide LGBTQ-inclusive policies or staff training

Figure 2.3 Students' Ratings of GSA and Advisor Helpfulness in Meeting Students' Needs
How helpful has your GSA and advisor been in addressing the following reasons for joining the GSA?



GLSEN®

Data Source: GSA Student Survey and GSA Advisor Survey

Recommendations: Supportive Organizations

- Provide resources for GSAs with specific **activity suggestions**, particularly those on how to sustain your GSA, and engage in effective advocacy efforts.
- Provide support for GSAs to better **equip members and advisors with the skills to successfully work through and resolve internal challenges** such as interpersonal conflict and organizational skills.
- Provide **resources for GSAs on diversity inclusion** in their GSA, including inclusivity of transgender and nonbinary students and inclusivity of LGBTQ students of color.