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## **POLICY 4305**

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### **GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION**

The Greater Victoria School District 61 Board of Education recognizes the need and obligation to provide a safe and supportive environment for all members of the school community who are transgender and/or gender non-conforming. The Board is committed to the rights of all students and staff to learn and work free from fear, discrimination, and harassment, while also promoting pro-active strategies and guidelines to ensure that transgender and gender non-conforming students, employees and families are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life, and are treated with respect and dignity. This requires that appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions are defined in order to ensure support and inclusion, and prevent marginalization or discrimination.

Specific supports, in addition to those outlined below, may be required to enable the full participation of students and staff, expression of their identity, or protection of their safety. Adaptations or accommodations should be individualized in a manner that meaningfully involves the student or staff member in the decision making process.

#### **1. Leadership**

In order to provide leadership on the issues of gender identity and gender expression, the Board will:

1. Support inclusion of all students and staff in all aspects of school life (academic, social, and extracurricular), and enable the free and full expression of their gender identity.
2. Ensure discriminatory actions and complaints regarding discrimination or harassment relating to perceived or actual gender identity, or gender

- expression, will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures
3. Ensure that gender based discrimination and transphobia are treated with the same professional due diligence as any other form of discrimination.
  4. Advocate for the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming students at a provincial level, including the inclusion of gender identity and expression in curriculum.

## **2. Learning Resources**

The Board is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment for transgender and gender non-conforming students where students and staff have access to educational resources that are respectful of diverse gender identities and gender expressions.

## **3. Student Support**

The Board is committed to ensuring that transgender and gender non-conforming students and staff are supported in our schools.

The establishment of school-based clubs dedicated to gender and sexual minority inclusion will continue to be encouraged and supported in all schools.

## **4. Communications**

The Board will ensure that communications to students, staff, parents, guardians, and the community recognize that some students live in gender diverse families that represent a diversity of gender identity, expression and sexualities.

## **5. Student Information and Privacy**

The Board believes that all students and staff deserve to have their information and privacy protected and respected.

The Board believes that students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and/or gender expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much private information to share.

## 6. Sex-Segregated Activities

The Board is committed to reducing, and where possible eliminating, the practice of segregating students based on sex and/or gender in order to ensure the full inclusion of transgender and/or gender non-conforming students.

## 7. Accessibility

The Board recognizes that students have the right to freely access bathroom and change room facilities that are gender neutral.

The Board recognizes that students have the right to access to bathroom and change room facilities that corresponds to their gender identity or the group in which they are most comfortable.

## 8. Dress

The Board recognizes that students and staff have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression.

## DEFINITIONS

In this policy, all references to “sexual or gender minority” persons or LGBTQ+ persons will include, but are not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, intersex, queer or questioning persons, persons who are labeled as such whether they are or not, and persons with immediate family members who identify as a sexual or gender minority.

**Gender nonconforming:** A term that often refers to children who express gender in ways that differs from societal expectations of the sex and gender assigned to them at birth.

**Trans or Transgender:** An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what they were assigned at birth. Some trans people may choose to medically transition by taking hormones, having surgery. Some trans people may choose to socially transition by changing their name, clothing, hair, etc.

*Greater Victoria School District*

Adopted: September 26, 2016

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Modification to this document is not permitted without prior written consent from the Greater Victoria School District.