

CODE: HFA.BP**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (28-01-2020)**TOPIC:** Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**ISSUE DATE:** (29-01-2020)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2018)

PURPOSE

To articulate the Board of Trustees' (the Board) commitment to support all sexual and gender minority students, staff and families.

To reflect the Board's mandated responsibility and expectation for providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning and working environment throughout the Division.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions for the following terms and for terminology for all other policies related to AE.BP Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments are found in a Glossary of Terms (linked in References).

- **actual sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression**
- **perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression**

POLICY

The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all members of the school community. This includes those students, staff, and families who identify or are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer or questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Board expects all members of this diverse community to be welcomed, respected, accepted, and supported in every school.

All members of the school community have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. This right is guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Alberta Human Rights Act*, and *Education Act*. These rights shall be supported, and enforced so that all members of the school community may work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation for individual differences. The Board will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination on the basis of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The Board affirms the rights, as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, of each staff member employed by the Board and each student enrolled in a school operated by the Board. Staff members employed by the Board and students enrolled in a school operated by the Board will not be discriminated against as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The Board believes that all sexual and gender minority students, staff and families have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
- have their confidentiality protected and respected;

- self-identification and determination;
- freedom of conscience, expression, and association;
- be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
- have equitable access to the same supports, services, and protections provided to heterosexual students and families;
- have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence; and
- have their unique identities, families, cultures, and communities included, valued and respected within all aspects of the school environment.

The Board is committed to implementing measures that will:

- define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects.
- ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures.
- improve understanding of the individual lives of sexual and gender minorities and their families, cultures, and communities.
- develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that sexual and gender minorities and their families are welcomed and treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community.

The Board also recognizes the need to develop and maintain mutually supportive relationships with a variety of sexual orientation and gender identity minority groups in order to ensure the ongoing improvement of the implementation of this policy.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board understands that institutional and cultural change occurs over time and believes that the provision of an annual report at a public board meeting on progress related to the strategic directions and benchmarks identified in this policy will ensure accountability and demonstrate the Division's commitment to supporting our diverse communities.

The Board will comply with requirements respecting this policy established by the Minister.

REFERENCES

AD.BP - Vision, Mission, Values, and Priorities
 AE.BP - Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments
 AE.BB.BP - Wellness of Students and Staff
 FA.BP - Human Resources Framework
 FBCA.AR - Respectful Working Environments
 FBCB.AR - Division Staff Code of Conduct
 FBE.AR - Health and Wellness of Staff and Students
 GGDA.AR - Guidelines for Student Activities and Organizations
 HF.BP - Safe, Caring, and Respectful Learning Environments
 HFA.AR - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
 HG.BP - Student Behaviour and Conduct
Alberta Human Rights Act

Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Professional Conduct
Alberta Teachers' Association Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
Education Act Sections 33(1), 35.1(1)
Glossary of Terms