

Welcome!

Today we will be discussing BSD's approach to LGBTQ+ topics in schools



Goals for tonight's workshop:

- Share BSD LGBTQ+ Task Force Recommendations
- Learn about how and why LGBTQ+ topics are introduced in schools
- Listen to student panel
- Examine sample lesson plans at a variety of grade levels
 - Explore LGBTQ+ representation in children's literature

Agreements:

1. This is safe place where we honor integrity and respect for all.
2. No hate speech, homophobia, transphobia will be tolerated.
3. Videos and photographs are not permitted.

Task Force Statement of LGBTQ+ Advocacy



We at the Burlington School District (BSD) stand committed to transforming BSD into a national model for holistic wellness for LGBTQ+ people, youth, and adults. We stand in solidarity with LGBTQ+ students, staff, and community members and believe that schools can truly be safe only when every student is assured access to an education without fear. We stand behind our BSD staff who pursue a safe and supportive environment for *all* students. We also stand behind our educators who teach an inclusive curriculum that features LGBTQ+ people, history, and events and raises awareness to counter discrimination, stereotypes, bias and harassment.



Commitment to Diversity and Equity in Burlington School District

The diversity of our students is an asset to the Burlington community. Burlington School District believes that all students and staff deserve a safe, inclusive learning and work environment where differences are valued and celebrated. The District also believes that every student has a right to strive to learn at their highest and greatest potential.

The District has committed itself to closing the opportunity gap in student outcomes based on racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, ability, or any other real or perceived disparities that may limit any student's opportunity to be fully included and successful in school.

BSD firmly believes racism and white supremacy culture negatively impact our entire District and is committed to the eradication of racism and white supremacy culture in our District. In SY '23, BSD's entire leadership team will work with Truss Leadership and The Leadership Collaborative to engage in anti-racist and culturally responsive leadership training.

We are also committed to transforming BSD into a national model for holistic wellness for LGBTQ+ people, youth, and adults. We stand in solidarity with LGBTQ+ students, staff, and community members and believe that schools can

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Commitment to Diversity and Equity in Burlington School District (continued)

truly be safe only when every student is assured access to an education without fear. We stand behind our BSD staff who pursue a safe and supportive environment for all students. We also stand behind our educators who teach an inclusive curriculum that features LGBTQ+ people, history, and events and raises awareness to counter discrimination, stereotypes, bias and harassment. To further this work, the District created an LGBTQ+ Task Force in FY22; that group's report and recommendations (including this statement of advocacy) can be found at www.bsdrv.org/district/superintendent/school-assessments-data

The Burlington Board of School Commissioners continues its support and commitment to the District's diversity, equity, and inclusion work. The Office of Equity provides District leadership around issues of equity and access, including fully implementing Restorative Practices and providing resources, support, and advocacy towards just, equitable, and inclusive solutions.

Vermont Agency of Education Best Practices for Schools Regarding Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students

Visit <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-best-practices-transgender-and-gnc.pdf>

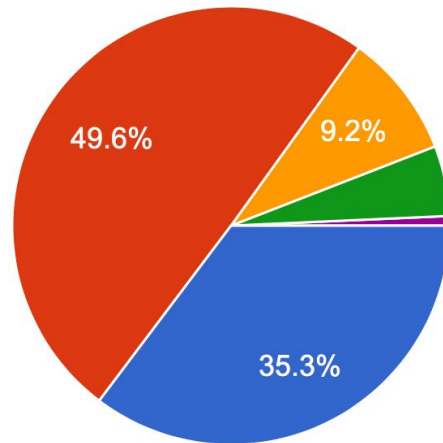
BSD is committed to fully understanding and respecting cultural differences. Our goals are inclusivity, safety and respect. Schools are non-partisan and are not pushing any political agendas.

BSD has a large LGBTQ+ population.

Out of 425 highschoolers surveyed, 35.3% self identified as LGBTQ+

Do you identify as LGBTQ+?

425 responses



- Yes
- No
- I am not sure.
- I prefer not to answer.
- I don't know what this question means

Task Force Members

Autumn Bangoura, Equity Instructional Leader, Task Force Co-chair

S.B., BHS Student, Task Force Co-chair

K.B., EMS Student

Nikki Ellis, EMS Assistant Principal

Jessica Oski, Parent

Billy Ray Poli, BHS Choral Director

Shel Pomerantz, BSD Alumni, Outright VT Communications Coordinator

Larry Rudiger, Community Member

Alex Ryder, BSD LGBTQ+ Advocacy Coordinator

Amanda Talbert, Community Member

Scope of Work

To transform the Burlington School District into a national model for holistic wellness for LGBTQ+ people, youth and adults.

The Task Force identified **four key areas of growth**:

1. **Curriculum and Resources** - Examine how Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression are currently addressed and discussed in our schools
2. **Non-Discrimination Policies** - Collect information on current policies that protect LGBTQ+ youth and staff in BSD and make recommendations for BSD to adopt specific non-discrimination policies that support and affirm LGBTQ+ youth and staff
3. **Environment** - Assess successes and challenges in creating a sexuality and gender affirming/gender liberated environment
4. **Safety** - Ensure the safety and affirmation of Burlington's students and staff during and outside of school hours as related to teasing, taunting, and harassment due to actual or perceived gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation

How are LGBTQ+ issues discussed at BSD?

Elementary

- **Family Diversity** - students will be exposed to a variety of family structures through books including mother/father, single parents, step-parents, multiracial, adoptive, same-sex parents, grandparent or other family members raising children, foster parents, incarcerated parents, parents with disabilities, etc.
- **Bullying and Harassment** - School counselors review definitions of bullying and harassment and teach students about **protected categories**

- What is the difference between **Bullying** and **Harassment**?
- What are the “**Protected Categories**”?

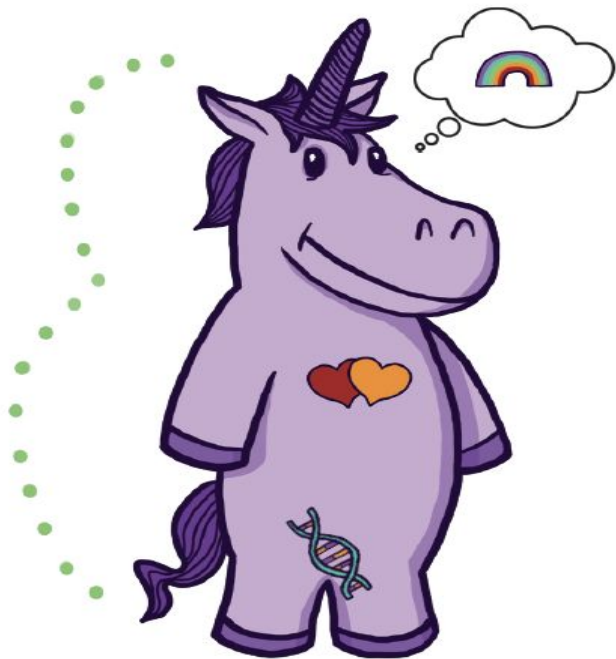


What are the “Protected Categories” under Harassment law?

- RACE
- CREED
- GENDER
- EXPRESSION
- DISABILITY
- GENDER
- IDENTITY
- COLOR
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION
- MARITAL STATUS
- NATIONAL ORIGIN
- SEX

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



 Gender Identity

 Female/Woman/Girl
Male/Man/Boy
Other Gender(s)

 Gender Expression

 Feminine
Masculine
Other

 Sex Assigned at Birth

Female Male Other/Intersex

 Physically Attracted to

 Women
Men
Other Gender(s)

 Emotionally Attracted to

 Women
Men
Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

Other common practices regarding LGBTQ+ topics in schools:

- **Signaling Allyship** - BSD staff are encouraged to promote **safe spaces** through displays of signs, pride flags and buttons
- **Pronouns** - to prevent **misgendering** students, students are routinely asked to share pronouns as part of the norms of building new class communities
- **GSAs and Rainbow Clubs** - Affinity spaces are provided for folks with shared identities to gather and build community. Students and staff opt in to be a part of these clubs.

Other common practices regarding LGBTQ+ topics in schools:

- **Pronoun and Name Changes** - BSD students who use a name that is not their legal name and/or gender may give the school district their current information which will be used on class rosters and other documents. All Vt school districts collect and maintain legal name and legal gender data that matches the student's birth certificate for mandatory state reporting, state assessments and transcripts.
- **Representation in Literature** - The Office of Equity recently received a grant from the Vermont Principal's Association to purchase LGBTQ+ themed books and gifted each library \$500 to expand representation of LGBTQ characters and nonfiction materials.

Questions for Student Panel

- 1) At what age or grade did you first learn about anything having to do with LGBTQ+ identities in school and what was the content?
- 2) What is the difference between how LGBTQ+ topics are addressed in elementary school versus middle and high school?
- 3) What more needs to be done at BSD to ensure respect and integrity for LGBTQ+ students, staff and family members?

Mirrors, Windows and Doors in Literature

Take a moment to browse through the books provided.

Discuss:

1. What is standing out to you after browsing the books?
2. How were LGBTQ+ issues approached in your schooling and how is it different today?
3. What questions do you have?

Other Resources

[Outright VT has new online learning modules!](#)

[This is What LGBT Life is Like Around the World Ted Talk](#)

[LGBTQ Task Force Report](#)