

## **Sexual Orientation (LGBTQ)**

### **Policy 4055**

**October 6, 2009**

The Board of Education believes that all public schools in this district shall be safe for everyone. The Board of Education recognizes and values the diversity found within its school communities and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the district's culture. The Board also recognizes that students and other school community members, with alternate sexual preferences face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. In accordance with this policy, and all relevant laws of more senior governing bodies, School District 81 (Fort Nelson):

1. Prohibits any form of discrimination, intimidation or harassment against any person based on gender/gender identity or sexual orientation/perceived sexual orientation.
2. Encourages members of the school community to welcome, include and support all regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.
3. Instructs that all schools in the district put in place protocols that support this policy. The School District will provide an environment for all members of the school community to work and learn, free from fear, discrimination, and harassment, while being pro-active to ensure that sexual minority students, employees, and families are welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life, and are treated with respect and dignity.

The purpose of this policy is to define appropriate behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment through greater awareness of and responsiveness to their harmful effects. This policy is also to ensure that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with expeditiously and effectively. The policy will also raise awareness and improve understanding of the lives of people who identify themselves on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. By valuing diversity and respecting differences, students and staff act in accordance with Ministry of Education established principles related to diversity.

In this policy, all references to "sexual minority" persons will include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, and questioning persons (LGBTQ); persons who are labeled as such, whether they are or not; and persons with immediate family members who are of a sexual minority.

Social responsibility, including information, issues and attitudes related to the sexual minority population, is not assigned to a particular grade or subject area; instead, it is a responsibility shared among all staff. Within each school, staff will take concrete actions to ensure that the school is more welcoming and safe for sexual minority students.

Therefore, School Code of Conduct will include language that prohibits fear promoting, harassing or discriminatory language and behaviour toward students, employees or others based on their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identification.