

Olympia School District

Resolution 586 Support of Pride Month

A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Olympia School District No. 111, Thurston County, Olympia, Washington, to declare support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) students, families and staff.

Whereas, the Olympia School District strives to model and promote inclusive and respectful treatment of all our members; and

Whereas, LGBTQ+ youth are twice as likely as their peers to report being physically assaulted, kicked, or shoved;¹ and

Whereas, LGBTQ+ youth are twice as likely than their peers to attempt suicide;² and

Whereas, 34% of LGBTQ+ students report being bullied or harassed on school property;³ and

Whereas, over 80% of LGBTQ+ students of color report being verbally harassed and are often blamed for their own victimization;⁴ and

Whereas, LGBTQ+ students in the Olympia School District are bright, brilliant youth engaged in self and social liberation in spite of this bullying and harassment; and

Whereas, the significantly higher rates of school dropout, academic failure, and school disengagement among LGBTQ+ youth across the country are often attributed to peer harassment and bullying; and

Whereas, no one should ever be the target of bullying, harassment, or violence; and

Whereas, school districts can make changes to ensure schools are safer and more supportive of LGBTQ+ students, families, and staff; and

Whereas, LGBTQ+ youth at schools with gay-straight alliances and policies prohibiting the expression of homophobia in place for at least 3 years have fewer suicidal thoughts;⁵ and

Whereas, the District is committed to maintaining safe, healthy and welcoming learning environments for all members of our community including the LGBTQ+ community or those who may be perceived as such; and

Whereas, the District partners with Pizza Klatch to provide support groups at all of its high schools for LGBTQ+ youth and allies to discuss issues such as gender identity and expression, healthy relationships, bullying, and other topics under the guidance of trained facilitators; and

Whereas, Washington state first prohibited discrimination based on sexual orientation in public employment in 1991 by executive order of then Governor Booth Gardner; and

Whereas, current Washington state law prohibits bullying of students and workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity; and

¹ Human Rights Campaign (<https://www.hrc.org/youth-report/view-and-share-statistics>)

² Mental Health and Suicidality Among Racially/Ethnically Diverse Sexual Minority Youths (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4062032/>)

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm>)

⁴ Gay-Straight Alliance Network (https://gsanetwork.org/files/aboutus/LGBTQ_brief_FINAL-web.pdf)

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/youth.htm>)

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Whereas, Washington state voters affirmed in November 2012 the rights of all citizens to marry whom they choose; and

Whereas, Washington state Department of Health began to offer a non-binary gender option – gender x – on birth certificates in January 2018; and

Whereas, the month of June is an opportunity to celebrate the identities and contributions of the LGBTQ+ community; and

Whereas, the first Gay Pride March was held in June 1970 to commemorate the Stonewall Riots; and

Whereas, the celebration of Pride Month is rooted in that history of resistance and struggle for equal rights as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution; and

Whereas, that struggle for equal rights continues today; and

Whereas, the greater Olympia community has been honoring and celebrating Capital City Pride since 1991; and

Whereas, by recognizing Pride Month we affirm that supportive school environments substantially improve the mental health and school engagement of LGBTQ+ students; and

Whereas, by recognizing Pride Month, we support policies, practices, and curriculum that honor and respect LGBTQ+ students, staff, and families; and

Whereas, by recognizing Pride Month we reaffirm our commitment to a supportive environment that promotes trust, growth, and achievement for all students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Olympia School Board of Directors declares June 2018 as Pride Month and encourages the Superintendent and all District staff to support lessons and activities that engage students in meaningful learning about the accomplishments of the LGBTQ+ community and the experiences of our LGBTQ+ students, staff and families.

ADOPTED this 11th day of June, 2018, by the Board of Directors of Olympia School District No. 111, Thurston County, Washington, at a meeting held thereof.

OLYMPIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 111

A municipal corporation of the State of Washington

Frank L. Wilson, President

Joellen Wilhelm, Vice President

Leslie Huff, Director

Hilary Seidel, Director

Attest:

Patrick C. Murphy, Ed. D., Superintendent
Secretary to the Board of Directors

Scott Clifthorne, Director