

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

## *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning Student Rights in Schools*

- ▶ **Gay-Straight Alliances or Gender-Sexuality Alliances (GSAs):** You have a right to start a GSA in your school if your school allows other noncurricular clubs (like Anime Club or Chess Club). Public high schools with noncurricular clubs must allow GSAs and are federally required to treat them the same as any other club.
- ▶ **No Outing:** Your school and its representatives shouldn't out you to anyone, including your parents or guardians. You have a right to privacy while at school.
- ▶ **Freedom of Expression:** You're constitutionally allowed to talk about your opinions on LGBTQ issues, and be open about your LGBTQ+ identity while at public school.
- ▶ **Dress & Access for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students:** You have a right to be treated fairly and equitably with regards to dress codes, locker rooms, restrooms, and your name and pronouns. If you're transgender or gender nonconforming, you still have a right to be treated fairly and with respect.
- ▶ **Dances:** If you're attending public school, your school can't stop you from bringing a same-sex partner to a school dance. You can also dress in a way that matches your gender so long as it follows the dress code, or campaign for the prom royalty position of your choice.
- ▶ **Confidentiality:** "Title IX protects all students, including LGBTQ students, from sex discrimination. Title IX encompasses discrimination based on a student's failure to conform to stereotyped notions of masculinity and femininity. Schools should also be aware of their obligation under Title IX and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to protect the privacy of their students when maintaining education records" (U.S. Department of Education).

**"Students in schools with GSAs were almost twice as likely to describe their peers as accepting compared to students in schools without a GSA (54.7% vs. 28.3%)"**

**-GLSEN 2017**



## Inclusion in Action: Talking to School Officials about LGBTQ+ Inclusion

You have a right to be fairly represented in your school's curriculum, policies, and procedures. For example, you have a right to learn about LGBTQ+ figures in your curriculum! Consider educating your principal about the importance of LGBTQ+ equality. Do some research before this meeting, and work with your school's GSA or with other students to prepare. Finding a supportive teacher or administrator who has your back can also help!

Talking with your principal and school administrators is a good way to highlight what your school is doing well to support LGBTQ+ students, and what can be done better.

### ***"I think I might be experiencing discrimination, what do I do?"***



Document everything, and write down what happened, the date, where things happened, who was involved, and anything else that might be relevant.



Keep copies of any documentation, including bullying forms, incident reports, or any forms you fill out.



Do research! Read up on your school's policies, especially their nondiscrimination policy for students. The more knowledge you have about your school's policies, the more you know about whether they're enforcing them equally on all students.



Reach out! If you feel you aren't being heard or treated fairly, reach out to your local LGBTQ+ organizations, the ACLU, or Equality Florida and ask for support. Check out our resources below if you need help!

### **Learn more about your rights in schools and report discrimination at:**

<https://www.aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights/lgbt-youth>

### **Learn more about the laws that protect your rights at:**

<https://www.eqfl.org/know-your-legal-rights>

#### **Questions? Need help? Contact:**

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