

Scenarios for Practice



From our Work—LGBTQIA+ Scenarios

For this activity, you are going to be asked to pick one of three scenarios. In order to be prepared for the scenarios, you should spend some time reading through the following supporting documents for what you selected.

Scenario 1 deals with a teacher who was disciplined after they presented 7th grade students' "About Me" projects around the room. One of the projects has LGBTQIA+ flags in it. The teacher was directed to remove only that project.

Scenario 2 involves a school board policy that directed teachers to shelter students in locker rooms based on gender, and the aftermath of keeping a non-binary student sitting on the gym bleachers during an active shooter drill.

Scenario 3 involves a teacher who is also a GSA club advisor that allowed a drag show to be performed during club time, after school, and the fallout once the community found out.

You will receive more specifics about each of the scenarios during class. For now, please review the information and begin brainstorming how you might support your member and local, should this happen in your own work.

Specific things to think about:

How would you handle this from a service model perspective?

How would you handle this from an organizing perspective?

What documents would you need to help your work?

How would you work with the press?



Scenario 1

Discrimination

Scenario #1

You, the union staff, get a call from a building rep and a president.

A well-respected teacher and union member, Mrs. J, was given an unfair disciplinary write up.

This is the situation: A parent complained that a 7th grade girl's "about me" project showed 4 LGBTQ+ pride flags. The parent did not come speak to the teacher—she went straight to the school board. On the write up, the principal wrote that Mrs. J didn't show "good judgement" and "clear classroom expectations of appropriateness." In his disciplinary meeting with the member, the principal told Mrs. J that he's a conservative Christian, "we can't promote this here" and asked her if she would allow a Confederate flag or swastika on the wall of her classroom. He also announced that he needs to talk to the students about talking about their sexual orientation at school.

He directed her to turn in lesson plans weekly for his review. He ordered Mrs. J to take down ONLY the project with LGBTQ+ flags and leave every other student project up on the classroom walls. Mrs. J didn't want any student to feel targeted, so she took down every project. Mrs. J and her building rep both tried to talk to the principal and assistant superintendent about this unfair treatment of both students and staff. Neither administrator corrected the issue, and just keep telling Mrs. J that she needs to "understand that parents have opinions too."

The local president and building rep are horrified. There's a history of homophobia in the district, including several union members who fear retaliation from their supervisors. The local officers know their superintendent and school board members well. They believe that the district leadership will back the principal's actions. The president, building rep, and Mrs. J are game to try anything and believe that many of their colleagues would also be horrified. The local isn't familiar with grievances, and doesn't have a grievance chair.

ARTICLE 3 ETHICS

The Board of Education expects that each teacher shall put forth every effort to promote a quality instructional program in the school district. The Board of Education has stated its policies in the online district policy manual. All teachers are expected to be familiar and be in compliance with the contents of these policies. To access District policies, go to the HSD home page, then click on "District Policies" under the "Quick Links" section.

The Board of Education's various policies relating to conflict of interest will be made known to all teachers. It shall be deemed unethical for any teacher to attempt to influence a Board of Education member outside of an official Board of Education Meeting in regard to teaching assignments, purchase of equipment and supplies, selection of textbooks, or like matters which are ultimately decisions delegated to the Superintendent/designee.

An effective educational program requires teachers with integrity, high ideals, empathy, and human understanding. All teachers will be expected to adhere to the general staff ethics policy endorsed by the Board of Education.

The Board of Education expects the teachers to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, co-workers and officials of the district.

ARTICLE 8
PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The Board of Education recognizes that teachers of the district have the same fundamental civic rights and responsibilities as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for elective public office and holding an elective or appointed public office.

No teacher will use school system facilities, equipment, or supplies in connection with campaigning; nor will the teacher use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. State law prohibits teachers from participating in the management of a campaign for the election or defeat of a member of the Board of Education which employs such teacher.

Any discussions of politics in the classroom are to be handled in such a manner as to give unbiased information. A teacher shall not impose, or attempt to impose, his or her personal, political philosophy upon the students.

ARTICLE 9

TEACHER/STUDENT RELATIONS

The relationship between all teachers and students in the school district should be one of cooperation, understanding and mutual respect. All teachers have the responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning, which should be accomplished through effective individual and group discipline. All students and teachers will treat each other with respect and have the right to learn and work in a safe environment as defined in the Student Behavior Guide.

Teachers will not be subjected to harassment, abusive language, physical aggression, insults or interference in the performance of the employee's duties. Any such complaints will be handled according to the District's Behavior Guide and/or Policy AC.

Differences and problems that arise between a teacher and student are typically best worked out by conferences between these two (2) persons or between the teacher and the parent of the student. However, teachers and students should immediately report a violation or perceived violation of the district's nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policy (AC), regardless of whether a conference has been held.

No teacher may use his or her status as a teacher to adversely influence a student of the district. No teacher may date, make advances toward, or engage in any sexual relationship with a district student, regardless of the student's age, the perceived consensual nature of the relationship, where the advances are made or whether the teacher directly supervises the student. Further, no teacher may discuss or plan a future romantic or sexual relationship with a student. All teachers possessing evidence of or witnessing such conduct or sexual harassment shall report it to the district's administration immediately. All teachers or school officials who know or have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse shall immediately report the suspected abuse to the Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services hotline, pursuant to state law and to the principal.

ARTICLE 12

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to secure at the lowest possible administrative level and as expediently as possible, equitable solutions to the problems that may from time to time arise affecting the welfare or working conditions of teachers. Both parties agree that these proceedings shall be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of the policy.

B. Definition

1. A grievance is a complaint, misunderstanding, problem or dispute based upon pay, inequitable application of existing published policies, or the conditions or circumstances under which a teacher works. Complaints about non-renewal of a probationary teacher's contract, or about any official Board of Education action, shall be directed to the Board of Education; and a hearing on the same, unless required by state laws, shall be discretionary with the Board of Education. Complaints concerning evaluations, except those that lead to loss of pay, will be excluded. Complaints relating to discrimination on the basis of sex or disability will be resolved in accordance with Policy AC.
2. In this policy, a "teacher" is any certificated teacher of the school district with a teacher contract and one who does not have an administrative contract.
3. "Provide a written answer" shall be the deliverance of the appropriate grievance form or letter, containing the answers and reasons thereof to the grievant, unless notification is by other responsible method such as registered mail.
4. The grievance procedure shall not apply to summer school.

C. Time Limits

1. All time limits herein shall consist of teaching days when a grievance is submitted between the opening day of school as described by the school calendar and on or before June 1st.. Time limits pertaining to a grievance submitted after June 1st and before the last day of school as prescribed by the school calendar shall consist of all week days, Monday through Friday. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter before the close of the school term, or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. The grievance procedure must be initiated within seven (7) days of the action or knowledge of the action. Knowledge of the action is indicated when the

grievant informs the immediate supervisor of the complaint, misunderstanding, dispute or circumstances.

3. The time limits specified in any step of this procedure may be extended, in any specific instance, by the written consent of both parties. In the absence of a written reply within the specified time limits, the grievance shall be resolved in favor of the grievant.

D. Forms

Forms for the filing of a grievance will be available on the Human Resource's Page of the District's website or through the association representative.

E. Personnel Files

1. All documents, communications and records dealing with the proceedings of a grievance shall be filed separately from the personnel files of the grievant and participants.
2. Access to the grievance files is restricted to the grievant, the administration and the Board of Education, or to other person(s) designated by grievant by means of written authorization.
3. The grievant shall agree in writing to the distribution of written responses to a grievant's representative, if any. Failure to do so shall restrict the distribution of written responses to the grievant alone.

F. Reprisals

No reprisals of any kind shall be attempted against any grievant, grievant's representative, member of the association, administrator, association director, or any teacher of the Hazelwood School District because of the filing of a grievance.

G. Procedure

Informal

1. The parties acknowledge that it is usually most desirable for a teacher and his or her assigned supervisor (elementary principal, and/or secondary assistant principal) to resolve grievances through free and informal communications. When requested by either party, the grievant's representative(s) may assist in this resolution.

Step 1

1. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved at the informal level, the grievant must present the grievance in writing on the designated form within seven (7) days to the principal's office or the grievance will be considered waived.
2. The principal will arrange a meeting within seven (7) days of the time the written grievance is received. The principal, the grievant and the grievant's representative(s) shall be present for the meeting. For the secondary buildings, the assigned supervisor, if involved in Step 1, will be present at the meeting unless unusual circumstances prevent his or her participation.

The building principal shall provide the grievant and the grievant's representative(s) with a written answer within seven (7) days after the meeting. In the absence of a written reply within the specified time limits, the grievance shall be resolved in favor of the grievant.

Step 2

1. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved in Step 1, the grievant must present the grievance in writing on the designated form within seven (7) days to the office of the appropriate assistant superintendent or the grievance will be considered waived.
2. The assistant superintendent or his/her designee will arrange a meeting within seven (7) days. The assistant superintendent or his/her designee, the grievant and the grievant's representative, unless the grievant chooses otherwise, shall be present at the meeting.
3. The assistant superintendent or his/her designee shall provide the grievant and the grievant's representative with a written response within seven (7) days after the meeting. In the absence of a written reply within the specified time limits, the grievance shall be resolved in favor of the grievant.

Step 3

1. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved in Step 2, the grievant has seven (7) days to submit the grievance to the superintendent or his/her designee or the grievance will be considered waived.
2. The superintendent or his/her designee shall within seven (7) days hold a meeting with the grievant and the grievant's representative(s).

3. The superintendent or his/her designee shall provide the grievant and the grievant's representative(s) with a written response within seven (7) days after the meeting. In the absence of a written reply within the specified time limits, the grievance shall be resolved in favor of the grievant.

Step 4

1. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved in Step 3, the grievant has the option in seven (7) days to request the superintendent or his/her designee to provide a meeting with the Board of Education, or the grievance will be considered waived.
2. A meeting involving the Board of Education, the grievant and/or grievant's representative(s) shall be held within ten (10) days of the receipt of the request if possible.
3. Following said meeting a written response to the grievant and the grievant's representative(s) shall be provided within ten (10) days. In the absence of a written reply within the specified time limits, the grievance shall be resolved in favor of the grievant. The Board of Education shall be the final determining body concerning any grievance.

H. Released Time

In Steps 2 and 3 of the grievance procedure, the immediate and appropriate administrator at such step shall have full authority to grant release time to the participants. Time allotted to lunch, parent conferences, or planning shall not be used for resolving grievances unless the participants agree.

I. General Provisions

1. Nothing herein contained shall deprive any teacher of any legal rights, nor of his or her professional rights as a member of any organization with which the association is affiliated.
2. A grievance arising from the action of an administrator above the rank of principal may be processed in accordance with Step 3 (superintendent).
3. The president of the association may file a grievance on behalf of the association initiating with Step 3 (superintendent).
4. All participants shall be given at least a day of notice of a meeting for each seven (7) days allotted to arrange the meeting.

Policy GBCB: STAFF CONDUCT**Status:** ADOPTED**Original Adopted Date:** 01/24/2017 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/19/2017

District employees are to serve the public and aspire to a high degree of integrity to maintain the public's trust, support and cooperation. It is important that all employees exhibit exemplary judgment and conduct both on and off duty. This judgment and conduct will maintain a culture of trust and safety among students, parents/guardians, the community and employees. Violations of this trust could lead to discipline and/or action under state or local statutes.

The Board of Education expects that each professional and support staff member shall put forth every effort to promote a quality instructional program in the school district. In building a quality program, employees must meet certain expectations that include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Become familiar with, enforce and follow all Board policies, regulations, administrative procedures, handbooks, other directions given by district administrators and state and federal laws as they affect the performance of job duties.
2. Maintain courteous and professional relationships with pupils, parents/guardians, other employees of the district and all patrons of the district.
3. Conduct oneself with honesty and integrity in all relationships and interactions, and always act in an ethical manner.
4. Refrain from adverse criticism or gossip about employees of the district.
5. Keep current on developments affecting the employee's area of expertise or position, and participate and engage in professional development activities, teams, etc., provided, mandated or suggested by the district.
6. Transact all official business with the appropriate designated authority in the district in a timely manner.
7. Maintain appropriate, acceptable use of district electronic and communication devices.
8. Care for, properly use and protect school property.
9. Remain faithful and prompt in attendance at work.
10. Attend all required staff meetings called by district administration, unless excused.
11. Keep all student records, medical information and other sensitive information confidential as directed by law, Board policy, district procedures and the employee's supervisor.

12. Immediately report all dangerous building conditions or situations to the building supervisor and take action to rectify the situation and protect the safety of students and others if necessary.
13. Properly supervise all students. The Board expects all students to be under assigned adult supervision at all times during school and during any school activity. Except in an emergency, no employee will leave an assigned group unsupervised. Any employee shall assume responsibility for any unsupervised students and assist in any way possible to prevent injury to person or property.
14. Obey all safety rules, including rules protecting the safety and welfare of students.
15. Adhere to Board policy and law, and use exemplary judgment in all communications and interactions with students.
16. Submit all required reports or paperwork at the time requested. Employees will not falsify records maintained by the school district. Falsification of records or paperwork will result in discipline, up to and including termination.
17. Refrain from using profanity or profane gestures.
18. Refrain from conduct that creates a disruptive and/or offensive learning or working environment.
19. Dress professionally and in a manner that will not interfere with the educational environment.
20. Come to work and leave work at the time specified by the employee handbook or by the employee's supervisor. Employees who are late to work, stop working before the scheduled time or work beyond the scheduled time without permission may be subject to discipline, including termination.
21. Refrain from leaving the designated work site during working hours, whether on district business or not, unless approved by the supervisor.
22. Employees are permitted to engage in outside employment as long as it does not interfere with the employee's work duties or responsibilities or in any way lessen the effectiveness of the employee in his or her district job.
23. School employees, other than commissioned law enforcement officers, shall not strip search students, as defined in state law, except in situations where an employee reasonably believes that the student possesses a weapon, explosive or substance that poses an imminent threat of physical harm to the student or others and a commissioned law enforcement officer is not immediately available.
23. School employees shall not direct a student to remove an emblem, insignia or garment, including a religious emblem, insignia or garment, as long as such emblem, insignia or garment is worn in a manner that does not

promote disruptive behavior.

24. State law prohibits teachers from participating in the management of a campaign for the election or defeat of a member of the Board of Education that employs such teacher.
25. Employees will not use district funds or resources to advocate, support or oppose any ballot measure or candidate for public office. Employees will also refrain from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views or self-serving propaganda of any kind.
26. Employees will not use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes, unless allowed by law.
27. Refrain from making disparaging or derogatory remarks about colleagues or other district staff since that is a violation of professional ethics. Transmit constructive criticism of other staff members or of any department of the school district to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation.
28. Personal relationships with students or other staff members that decrease in any way the individual's ability to carry out his or her professional responsibilities are prohibited.

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Note: The reader is encouraged to check the index located at the beginning of this section for other pertinent policies and to review administrative procedures and/or forms for related information.

**School District Guidelines for
LGBTQ students-Follow Best Practices**

State Law	Best Practices
Bullying/Harassment The Federal Law Title IX and F.S. 1006.147 prohibits bullying and harassment of all students.	Bullying/Harassment Schools will follow the district policy prohibiting bullying and harassment, addressing any incident against an LGBTQ student the same way they would address an incident against any other student, unless the bullying/harassment is based on a student's LGBTQ status, in which case the matter may need to be addressed through the District's anti-discriminatory policy. (contact Student Services or HR)
Official Documents Documentation from a State court is required to reflect a change in name and/or gender in a student's official school records.	Official Documents Schools will only modify student records to reflect a change in name or gender upon receipt of such documentation from a State court. While official student records must contain the student's legal name, schools should permit the use of " " in unofficial student records to assist staff in calling the student by the preferred name.
Names and Pronouns There is no federal or State state law that requires schools to call a student by a requested name or use gender pronouns consistent with their gender identity. F.S. 1014.04 does reserve the right to the parent to direct the education and care as well as to direct the upbringing and the moral or religious training of his or her minor child.	Names and Pronouns Schools will use the name and gender pronoun corresponding to his/her consistently asserted gender identity upon request of the student with knowledge of the parent.
GSA Clubs at School Under the Federal Equal Access Act , a public school permitting any non-curricular club must also allow students to form a GSA. The school must also treat the GSA the same as it does any other non-curricular club in terms of access to facilities, resources, and opportunities to advertise.	GSA Clubs at School Schools will permit students to form GSA clubs. The clubs will comply with S.B. Rule 4.06 "Student Clubs and Organizations". Personnel who support these clubs may not design agendas, lead discussion, or provide resources that directly support the discussion of LGBTQ issues.
Coming Out Federal courts have found students have a constitutional right to be "out" at school if they want to be. Although students have the First Amendment right to free speech , a school can restrict a student's free speech when it causes significant disruption in the classroom.	Coming Out Schools will not try to silence students who are open about their sexual orientation or transgender identity, or who question their orientation or gender identity. Restricting a student's free speech may occur if it: (1) causes, substantial disruption with the school's work or material interference with school activities including classroom instruction; (2) impinges upon the rights of other students to be secure and let alone including but limited to discourse in the classroom setting; or (3) the school reasonably forecasts it will cause a substantial disruption with the school's work or material interference with school activities.
Privacy The U.S. Supreme Court recognizes the federal constitutional right to privacy , which extends to students in a school setting.	Privacy School personnel will not unnecessarily disclose any information about a students' sexual orientation, transgender identity or questions they may have about their sexual orientation or gender identity to third parties.

State Law	Best Practices
Restrooms There is specific case law that requires schools to allow a transgender student access to the restroom corresponding to their consistently asserted transgender identity.	Restrooms On a case by case basis, school social workers will work with school and family to evaluate the use of restrooms corresponding to the student's consistently asserted gender identity. If approved, student will be allowed to use the restrooms corresponding to the student's gender identity or at the student's option gender-neutral restrooms and will not be allowed access to the restroom corresponding to the student's birth sex.
Athletics The Federal law Title IX ensures the safety and inclusion of transgender students in all school-sponsored activities (Department of Education, 2014). No federal law requires schools to allow a transgender student to play on a team consistent with their gender identity and expression. State Statute 1006.205 delineates participation by gender.	Athletics As a result of Senate Bill 1028/State Statute 1006.205, athletic teams or sports designated for females, women, or girls may not be open to students of the male sex. A statement of a student's biological sex on the student's official birth certificate is considered to have correctly stated the student's biological sex if the statement was filed at or near the time of the student's birth.
Locker Rooms There is no specific federal or State state law that requires schools to allow a transgender student access to the locker room corresponding to their consistently asserted transgender identity.	Locker Rooms On a case by case basis, school social workers will work with school and family to evaluate and provide a transgender student with available accommodations that best meets the needs and privacy concerns of all students. Transgender students will not be forced to use the locker room corresponding to their birth sex.
Dress Gender expression is protected by the U.S. Constitution and Title IX . This right to free expression includes choice of clothes. As long as what is worn would be appropriate if worn by other students, then a student should be able to wear that clothing even if it isn't stereotypically associated with their biological gender.	Dress Schools will allow transgender students to wear clothing in accordance with their consistently asserted gender identity as long as what is worn is in accordance with dress code policy and gender standards.
Prom/Dances The Federal law Title IX and First Amendment Federal court cases prohibits excluding same-sex couples from school-sponsored proms and dances.	Prom/Dances Schools will allow same-sex couples to attend school sponsored proms and dances. Schools will not dictate that only biological males may wear tuxedos, and only biological females may wear dresses. Schools will review the request for transgender students running for Prom King/Queen, taking into consideration the safety of the student.
Gender Segregation There is no Federal or State state law on the issue of gender segregation for school activities (i.e. classroom activities, field trips, PE class, etc.)	Gender Segregation It is recommended that teachers separate students alphabetically rather than by sex for school activities. Note: This does not include gender specific curriculum such as puberty.
Overnight Field Trips There is no Federal or State state law requiring school personnel to adhere to the requests of an LGBTQ student.	Overnight Field Study Because of the complexity of field study issues, they will be handled on a case by case basis.

State Code Education 1001 Section 42 Parental rights in education.

1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below:

(42) Parental Rights

1. Local school board must, in accordance with the rights of parents enumerated 1002.20 and 1014.04, adopt procedures for notifying a student's parent if there is a change in the student's services or monitoring related to the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student. The procedures must reinforce the fundamental right of parents to know as much about school personnel, curriculum choices, and supplemental materials and activities to make decisions regarding the upbringing and control of their children by requiring school district personnel to encourage a student to discuss issues relating to his or her well-being with his or her parent or to seek permission to discuss or facilitate discussion of the issue with the parent.

2. A school district may not adopt procedures or student support forms that require school district personnel to withhold from a parent information about his or her student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being, or a change in related services or monitoring, or that encourage or have the effect of encouraging a student to withhold from a parent such information, unless a reasonably prudent person would believe that such disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect, as those terms are defined in s. 39.01. School district personnel may not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being.

3. A school district may not encourage classroom discussion about sexual orientation or gender identity in primary grade levels or in a manner that is not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students.

4. A parent of a student may bring an action against a school district to obtain a declaratory judgment that a school district procedure or practice violates this paragraph and seek injunctive relief. A court may award damages and shall award reasonable attorney fees and court costs to a parent who receives declaratory or injunctive relief.

A blue decorative graphic consisting of a solid blue rectangle on the left and a light blue triangle on the right, with the hypotenuse of the triangle facing downwards.

Scenario 2

Gendered Locker Rooms

Scenario 2:

You are the UniServ director for a rapidly changing county. The northern portion of the county is quickly becoming a bedroom community for Washington DC while the southern portion of the county is fighting hard to remain true to its rural southern roots. This has led to many clashes regarding local policy, both at the school board and board of supervisor level. Four years ago, you and your teachers sat through a series of increasingly contentious school board meetings regarding the bathroom policy for a young transgender girl in the fourth grade—the only openly transgender student in the county. During that spring, parents became increasingly hostile and threatening to the board, and indicated that they would personally go after the jobs of any employee who allowed this young girl to use the girl's bathroom. That summer, the school board passed a policy that required the student to use only single stall bathrooms and barred her from using both the boys' and girls' bathrooms or locker rooms.

One day in the first month of a new school year, you receive a call from a PE teacher at one of your schools. She tells you that earlier that week, the school held one of the state-required lockdown drills during a PE class where that girl, now a 14-year-old 8th grader, was a student. The 3 PE teachers quickly conferred after realizing that their lockdown procedures did not take this student into account. The lockdown procedures call for boys to shelter in place in the boys' locker room and girls to shelter in place in the girls' locker room. This student, however, uses the single stall accessible restroom in the gym when she needs to change or use the restroom during PE class. Without clear guidance—and with the wrath of the parents still echoing in their minds—the teachers had decided to have the one male PE teacher take the boys into the boys' locker room, while one female PE teacher took the rest of the girls into the girls' locker room and the second female PE teacher remained in the gym with the transgender student.

The PE teacher proceeds to tell you that the mother of the child runs a group called Equality Stafford and has posted on Facebook about the incident. That post has quickly gone viral and has already been shared a couple hundred times:

Equality Stafford Community,

This past week, an incident occurred during a middle school lock down drill in Stafford County. When the drill began, a particular class of children took shelter in the bathroom/locker room nearest them as they were in PE. One student was prevented from entering either the boys or girls locker room while the teachers discussed where she should go. The student was forced to watch the adults charged with her care, debate the safest place (for the other students) to have her shelter. During this debate, she was instructed to sit in the bleachers until the drill was complete, away from her peers and identified as different. After some additional debate, she was made to sit in the locker room hall way, by the door alone and away from her peers. This happened because the child, in addition to being a model student, also happens to be transgender.

.Let me be clear. During an event that prepares children to survive an attack by actual assailants, she was treated as if she was so much of a danger to peers that she was left exposed and vulnerable. These events occur across our country right now but this one happened here.

We need you. We need all of you to come out on October 9th at 6:30 pm to the Stafford County School Board Meeting at 31 Stafford Avenue. We need you to come and lend your voice to the growing cry. This is unacceptable, this cannot happen to one more child. Not one more in this county. Not ever again.

Please bring yourselves, your friends, your colleagues and your voice to this school board meeting. We need you.

How do you support and educate other union members to understand the needs of transgender students and staff?

What might you advocate for in a new policy?

How do you use this issue as an organizing issue?

Va. transgender student separated from other youths in safety drill, mom says

By [Debbie Truong](#)

October 9, 2018 at 5:10 p.m. EDT

The superintendent of a Virginia school system has requested a review of safety procedures amid allegations that a transgender student was forbidden from entering a locker room during a middle school safety drill.

Students in the 14-year-old girl's physical education class in the Stafford County Public Schools were shepherded into the girls' or boys' locker room during the Sept. 28 drill. But the student was prevented from sheltering in either, according to the girl's mother and Equality Stafford, a group that advocates for LGBTQ rights in the county's schools. The drill was designed to simulate a lockdown that might happen if the school were threatened.

"It doesn't make me confident she'll feel very safe, should there be an actual emergency," said the girl's mother, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of safety concerns.

Teachers debated where to direct the student before having her sit in a hallway leading to the locker room, separate from her peers, the mother said. The girl, who changes for physical education class in a single-stall restroom, found the encounter "mortifying and embarrassing," her mother said.

The mother said she discussed the incident with Stafford Superintendent Scott Kizner, whom she described as concerned and receptive. The Stafford school system, about 45 miles outside the District, issued a statement saying it does not comment on individual incidents involving students but noted that Kizner requested a review of all protocols and procedures.

"We take such matters very seriously and they will be addressed," the statement read. "The welfare of all students is of the utmost importance."

On its Facebook page, Equality Stafford called the incident unacceptable, and the group protested the girl's treatment at a Tuesday night school board meeting.

"During an event that prepares children to survive an attack by actual assailants, she was treated as if she was so much of a danger to peers that she was left exposed and vulnerable," read the post, which amassed hundreds of comments and was shared more than 1,200 times.

The mother said the school system reviews transgender students' requests to use restrooms or locker rooms that align with their gender identity on a case-by-case basis. Her 14-year-old, she said, isn't allowed to use gender-specific facilities in her middle school.

The woman emphasized that she doesn't blame her daughter's P.E. teachers.

"This isn't on the teachers, and they are not the bad guys," the mother said. "The issue is the lack of policies and training."

[Menu](#)



STAFFORD COUNTRY SCHOOL BOARD RESPONDS TO TRANSGENDER STUDENT SINGLED OUT DURING ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILL

RVA STAFF | OCTOBER 10, 2018

[Menu](#)

TOPICS: [ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILL](#), [EQUAL RIGHTS](#), [STAFFORD COUNTY](#), [STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD](#), [STUDENT](#), [TRANS](#), [TRANSGENDER](#), [VIRGINIA](#)

A Stafford County Middle School has come under fire for isolating a transgender girl during active shooter training last week. According to a Facebook post by Equality Stafford on October 3, the incident occurred during a lock down drill.

“One student was prevented from entering either the boys or girls locker room while the teachers discussed where she should go. The student was forced to watch the adults charged with her care, debate the safest place (for the other students) to have her shelter,” it read.

The post goes on to say that she was made to sit in the gym with a teacher until the drill was over, while “away from her peers and identified as different.”

The post also poses a larger issue: “After some additional debate, she was made to sit in the locker room hallway, by the door away from her peers. This happened because the child, in addition to being a model student, also happens to be transgender.”



Equality Stafford

October 3 at 9:20 PM · 📍

...

[Menu](#)

Equality Stafford Community,

This past week, an incident occurred during a middle school lock down drill in Stafford County. When the drill began, a particular class of children took shelter in the bathroom/locker room nearest them as they were in PE. One student was prevented from entering either the boys or girls locker room while the teachers discussed where she should go. The student was forced to watch the adults charged with her care, debate the safest place (for the other students) to have her shelter. During this debate, she was instructed to sit in the gym with a teacher until the drill was complete, away from her peers and identified as different. After some additional debate, she was made to sit in the locker room hall way, by the door away from her peers. This happened because the child, in addition to being a model student, also happens to be transgender.

Let me be clear. During an event that prepares children to survive an attack by actual assailants, she was treated as if she was so much of a danger to peers that she was left exposed and vulnerable. These events occur across our country right now but this one happened here.

We need you. We need all of you to come out on October 9th at 6:30 pm to the Stafford County School Board Meeting at 31 Stafford Avenue. We need you to come and lend your voice to the growing cry. This is unacceptable, this cannot happen to one more child. Not one more in this county. Not ever again.

Please bring yourselves, your friends, your colleagues and your voice to this school board meeting. We need you.

****ETA:** It is important to highlight that the child's PE teachers are not the bad guys. They are teachers without guidance in a county without guidance for these issues. They were following that they were told to do.

Equality Stafford was also clear about how the drill was conducted, and where the school believes the major risk during an active shooter scenario would be.

"Let me be clear. During an event that prepares children to survive an attack by actual assailants, she was treated as if she was so much of a danger to peers that she was left exposed and vulnerable," they said.

In a later post, the LGBTQ group pointed out that the teachers who led the lock down drills are not the "bad guys" and that they are teachers without "guidance," scared of potential "retribution" from parents and the administration.

"These teachers need education and support, and we need you to accomplish that," the post went on to say.

Indeed, Virginia schools have grappled with trans issues for the past few years: trans teen Gavin Grimm sued the Gloucester County School Board (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/22/us/gavin-grimm-transgender-bathrooms.html>) to use the boys' bathroom in a case that went all the way to the Supreme Court. Grimm won his case in May of this year, but not without a three-year struggle, which included the school board contesting the ruling.

At a school board meeting last night, Superintendent Scott Kizner said he personally apologized to the teen and called for a change in the school's policy. According to Fredericksburg.com (https://www.fredericksburg.com/news/local/stafford/stafford-superintendent-apologizes-to-transgender-student-amid-national-outcry/article_8d0f967a-2092-57c0-9328-33a68a084c15.html), Kizner was quoted during the meeting:

"We did not live up to my unwavering expectation that every child and adult — regardless of race, religion, color, disability, gender and sexual orientation — is treated with respect and dignity, and for that I apologize to the student, the family and the Stafford community."

Kizner was asked whether he thinks the trans student should have been allowed to shelter-in-place in the girl's locker room during a potential incident. He replied by saying that students should head to the most secure location regardless of their gender.



RVA Staff





POLITICS LOCAL ▾ NATIONAL WORLD ▾ OPINIONS ▾ A&E ▾ LIFESTYLE ▾ HEALTH ▾

HOMEPAGE NEWS

Stafford schools superintendent a to trans student

Middle schooler separated from classmates during lockdown drill

Published 4 years ago on October 10, 2018

By **Michael K. Lavers**



The superintendent of the Stafford County School District on Oct. 9, 2018, said he has personally apologized to a transgender middle school student who was separated from her classmates during a

lockdown drill.

The superintendent of the Stafford County School District has apologized to a transgender student who was unable to enter the girls' or boys' locker room during a lockdown drill.

The Free Lance-Star newspaper reported Scott Kizner spoke at the Stafford County School Board's meeting on Tuesday.

Kizner said he personally apologized to the trans middle school student for the incident that took place on Sept. 28.

"We did not live up to my unwavering expectation that every child and adult — regardless of race, religion, color, disability, gender and sexual orientation — is treated with respect and dignity and for that I apologize to the student, the family and the Stafford community," Kizner, according to the Free Lance-Star.

The incident received national attention after Equality Stafford, a local LGBT advocacy group, wrote about it on Facebook on Oct. 3.

"The student was forced to watch the adults charged with her care, debate the safest place for her (among the other students) to have her shelter," read the Facebook post. "During this debate, the student was instructed to sit in the gym with a teacher until the drill was complete, away from her peers and identified as different. After some additional debate, she was made to sit in the locker room hall way, by the door away from her peers. This happened because the child, in addition to being a model student, also happens to be transgender."



Equality Stafford

about 4 years ago



Equality Stafford Community,

This past week, an incident occurred during a middle school lockdown drill in Stafford County. When the drill began, a particular class of children took shelter in the bathroom/locker room nearest them as they were in PE. One student was prevented from entering either the boys or girls locker room while the teachers discussed where she should go. The student was forced to watch the adults charged with her care, debate the safest place (for the student) to be. ... [See more](#)

306

567

1.3K

Local LGBT activists attended Tuesday's meeting. The Free Lance-Star reported a number of trans people spoke.

The Stafford County School District does not include gender identity and sexual orientation in its non-discrimination policy. The Free Lance-Star reported both Kizner and members of the Stafford County School Board said during Tuesday's meeting they are open to potential changes.

The mother of a Stafford County Public Schools student who asked the Washington Blade to identify them by name said Kizner's apology "is very much appreciated."

"Words are powerful, but it's action that is meaningful and long lasting," she said. "We are moving forward working with Dr. Kizner and the board to implement the inclusive policies and trainings that were promised."

RELATED TOPICS: #EQUALITY STAFFORD #SCOTT KIZNER #STAFFORD COUNTY
#STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #TRANSGENDER #VIRGINIA

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'Raven's Home' introduces first trans character in Disney Channel history



British Triathlon bans trans women from competing with women

EXCLUSIVE: Mother of transgender daughter kept out of locker rooms during lockdown drill speaks out

She hasn't been permitted in a gendered restroom for four years, her mother explained.

ZACK FORD 

OCT 11, 2018, 4:35 PM

CREDIT: GETTY IMAGES

Over the past week, a story has [gone viral nationally](#) about a Virginia transgender student who was forbidden from sheltering in a locker room with her classmates during a lockdown drill. But, as the student's mother explained in an exclusive interview with ThinkProgress, that incident follows years of discrimination she's experienced at the school.

Amy, who asked only to be identified by her first name for her family's privacy in their small town, told ThinkProgress that her daughter "Paige" (a pseudonym) has been prohibited from using any gendered facility at the school for nearly four years. That's why, according to Amy, "there was a tremendous amount of confusion about where exactly my daughter should shelter" during the drill. Paige is literally forbidden from entering either the boys' or girls' locker rooms, so when the drill took place, her teachers honestly weren't sure whether an exception could be made.

"This is exhausting work," Amy explained. "I shouldn't have to fight so hard for one child to just be able to go to school and be safe with her peers." Yet despite the national attention and uproar that erupted after the incident, the school board at its meeting this week announced no immediate policy proposals to prevent it from happening again. The superintendent, who is new to the district, [did apologize to the family](#), but nothing has

otherwise changed. In the meantime, Paige is still not permitted to use the girls' facilities.

"It's the responsibility of not just our schools, but our school boards and all the people involved in our school system to make sure that every single child feels taken care of," Amy said. "And my child has not felt taken care of by her school board."

Years of discrimination

When Paige first came out as transgender at age 10 back in 2015, she was the first transgender student the Stafford County School District administration had ever been asked to accommodate. And at first, Amy recalls, they were actually very supportive, allowing Paige to use the girls' bathroom at her elementary school. "They asked a lot of questions, they asked *her* a lot of questions about what she needed, and they did the best they could to accommodate that."

That lasted all of two weeks — until a group of angry parents wearing "Save Our Schools" stickers confronted the school board about their accommodations. Amy described them as speaking "very disgustingly against my child" and "saying very, very awful things," such as calling her a "predator." The Stafford County School Board unanimously agreed to reverse the school's decision to let Paige use the girls' restroom.

Elsewhere in Virginia, the Gloucester County School Board had made the same decision to restrict Gavin Grimm's bathroom access just three months prior. Grimm, a transgender boy, was mounting a legal fight against his school, making it a "hot topic" at the time. (Grimm's case is actually still ongoing over a year after he graduated.) Amy feels that Paige, as the only out trans student in Stafford, was similarly made an example of.

Justice for Gavin Grimm: Federal court rules school engaged in illegal transgender discrimination

Unlike in Gloucester, however, Stafford didn't pass any written policy governing how the district would treat transgender students. They only made a decision about Paige specifically, leaving it to the individual schools across the district to make their own decisions about how to respond in other cases. "That obviously hasn't worked very well for us," Amy said, pointing out that Paige is now in her second school in the district and neither has accommodated her. She's also heard from parents across the district whose trans kids are facing similar restrictions.

Since that 2015 school board decision, Amy has had to meet with school officials every summer to talk about how to protect Paige's safety and ensure she receives the best education possible, but that has never resulted in allowing Paige to use the restrooms. It has resulted, however, in ongoing humiliation and ostracization for Paige.

In elementary school, classes would be taken to the bathroom as a group, with the students divided by gender on either side of the hallway. They'd then go into the restrooms two at a time. "It was humiliating for her," Amy explained, "because she would have to walk down a completely separate hallway to go use the bathroom."

Likewise, in her middle school, Paige is forced to use a bathroom located in a main hallway heavily trafficked by all students — and nowhere near her classroom. She is not permitted to use the gym's locker rooms, which means she is denied access to a gym locker. She alone must carry her gym clothes with her in a bag and change in a separate

restroom. When she stays after school to hang with her girlfriends, Paige can't go to the bathroom with them. One time she tried, and a teacher actually pulled her out.

These are experiences that transgender students have reported across the country, and studies have shown such isolation can have a negative impact on their mental health, how safe they feel at school, and their academic performance. Some even avoid using the restrooms entirely, which can have serious repercussions for their physical health.

"It's embarrassing," Amy explained, "and something that makes me the most sad about that is that I don't think it makes her that upset anymore. She's used to it and doesn't know anything different. She's known two weeks of freedom."

She's known two weeks of freedom.

But despite her brave, resilient demeanor, recent events have shown that Paige is still very much affected by this daily discrimination.

Anti-LGBTQ legal group quietly encourages community members to reject trans kids

The drill

On Friday, September 28, Paige was in PE, her fourth block class, when a lockdown drill began. While the students and staff retreated into the locker rooms, the teachers at first had Paige remain in the gym sitting in a chair with a teacher. After the teachers openly debated what should be done, they decided to move Paige to just inside the locker

room door, but she was kept isolated in the entry hallway away from the rest of the students, who were in the locker room proper.

The humiliation of the whole experience caused Paige to have a panic attack. According to Amy, some of the teachers thought she was just upset because the drill was scary. "One teacher recognized what was really going on and why she was upset," Amy said. After the drill, "she told [Paige] alone privately that she didn't understand why they were doing it that way, that it wasn't right, and that if she ever needed anything or support or someone to talk to, she was always there for her."

Amy doesn't entirely blame the other teachers, because she recognizes that the policy may have put them in a difficult situation. "They've been told she's not allowed to go into the girls' locker room," she explained. "So when you're told that by those above you, whether that's administration or the school board, that this is the rule... they were probably afraid if they let her in there that their jobs were at risk."

"Part of me would like to think we can just use some common sense and say, 'This is a lockdown drill... This is a situation where we're practicing for something that could happen and we need to make sure we do it right,'" Amy said.

But as Paige explained in a note to the school board this week, she felt like "an afterthought."

The school board meeting

News of Paige's experience first started circulating because of a [note posted on Facebook](#) last week by Equality Stafford, a group that promotes LGBTQ inclusion in Stafford County schools. The note encouraged the community to show up to this week's school board meeting and show their support, which they did.

Paige wanted to speak for herself at the meeting, but the board's rules require that any public speaker share their name and address, and Amy wasn't comfortable that it would be safe for her. In fact, Amy wasn't even sure she was comfortable letting Paige *attend* the meeting, but Paige was insistent. As tough as the drill itself was, Paige seemed to "bounce back pretty quickly" and wasn't bothered by the attention the story was receiving.

Michigan mom defends her trans kid against a hostile town

They agreed to let Paige craft a statement about her experience that didn't include any identifying details, and at the meeting, Amy asked her aunt to read it to leave room for some anonymity. "When my aunt started reading, by the end of the first sentence... Paige started bawling. She let out a gasp and she just started bawling." This cascaded to other people, as family friends and strangers alike began crying upon hearing Paige's story. "I think she had been holding that in for a little while," Amy said. "And I think hearing her words read out loud by a family member who also got choked up while she was reading it — I think it just hit her in that moment."

In her statement, Paige described four years of suffering, "being treated like an outcast." She recounted the events of the drill and how it made her feel to be treated differently from the other students in a crisis situation. "If we were practicing our safety, why was I first made to sit in the hallway of the locker room facing a wall, alone, by the door?" she wrote. "The door in which, if there was someone armed in my school, I would have been the first one gone. I felt like an afterthought."

"Blame is pointless now," she insisted. "I want to stop being treated like an afterthought. I want you to stop treating me like I am a predator. It's time for you to fix this."

"She was surprised she got so upset hearing it," Amy added. She's always admired her daughter's resilience, but she also worries about the cumulative effect of all this rejection. "That's a lot for any *adult* to deal with," she said, noting that Paige's story is by

no means anonymous among her friends and community. "She cried and cried and cried, and then she was okay."

Superintendent Scott Kizner, who's only been serving the district for about a month, publicly apologized at Tuesday's meeting. Amy acknowledged that he has apologized to her and to Paige privately as well, which they appreciate. "It's the only apology we've ever gotten through all the years we've been in the school system... for the way she's been treated." She believes the apology was important to see for LGBTQ students and staff throughout the county who can't be out and open and she hopes it sets a tone for moving forward.

"At the same time, words are cheap," she countered. "I want to see change. It's appreciated, but it doesn't change anything. Until something changes, I'm going to keep working to make sure it does. The fact is: When my daughter went to school today, she still had to use a separate bathroom and she still had to change in a staff bathroom. The apology didn't change anything for her because she still has to go to school the next day and deal with the fallout."

The fact is: When my daughter went to school today, she still had to use a separate bathroom and she still had to change in a staff bathroom.

Amy is optimistic about change, but she doesn't want to force that change through legal channels. She wants the school to recognize that it's the right thing to do. Tuesday's school board meeting, she said, "was the first time that I have felt optimistic they were willing to implement policy and trainings because it was necessary and meaningful."

Along the way, there have also been "amazing" teachers who have treated Paige as if she were their own daughter. "If it wasn't for those teachers, I don't think I would have



Scenario 3

Drag Show Fallout

Scenario #3

A UniServ Director receives a call from her local president. One of his members has been put on leave because they allegedly hosted a drag show on campus. Pictures and videos from the show have been posted on social media, including by the teacher now on leave. In these posts, it is clear that at least one of the performers is wearing apparel that allows their buttocks to be fully visible. Additionally, the teacher reminded their students to bring small bills to tip the performers, if they wish, and posted the social media handles of the performers on their Schoology site.

After speaking with the member, the UniServ Director learns that the member, who is also the Gay-Straight Alliance Advisor, obtained permission from the HS administrator for the GSA to host the event which included a drag show component and an anti-bullying Q&A session. This is the third year that the show has been held, with both components. The five performers signed in at the office. The apparel of one of the dancers was more revealing than it had been in the past; however, it was visible to the office staff and principals upon check-in. The only significant difference between this show and the two prior are that the timing of the show was closer to dismissal; as such, the performers were seen by more parents and non-GSA students. The member also feels it is important to know that they are not paid for their advisory work and that the club always meets after hours.

A local government official picks up the story and runs it on his social media as “appalling” and “wildly inappropriate.” The District, large and suburban, becomes the target of anti-LGBTQ hate, from the community, parents, and even teachers.

For what issues presented can/should the union expect reasonable discipline for the teacher, if any?

What messaging should be used with the community?

How can this become an issue that unifies versus divides?

From: Communications Office <communications@hempfieldsd.org>

Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 2:51 PM

To: District Staff <district@hempfieldsd.org>

Subject: District Message to Parents/Guardians

Good afternoon,

As an FYI, the message below is being sent to all district parents/guardians this afternoon in an email and will be posted on all school blogs and the website.

The Hempfield School District administration was made aware of a serious situation that took place at the high school on Monday, April 25, after school hours. Administration was notified of a concerning social media post and photo, and later videos, of a performance that occurred during an after-school event for GSA (Gay Sexuality Alliance) Club students. Immediately following the notification, an investigation into the incident began.

First and foremost, the administration team apologizes to students, parents, and the community on behalf of those involved in this event. We are appalled at what took place and in no way condone this type of activity in our schools. Neither the dress of the invited guests nor the performance was appropriate in our school setting.

We are taking the incident seriously in our ongoing investigation and follow-up actions. It is important to district administrators that the district has the trust and confidence of the community, and we realize that an incident such as this completely undermines that trust. We commit to completing a thorough investigation and holding those involved accountable, up to and including disciplinary action that is commensurate with any findings. Currently, an individual has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation. Since this is a personnel issue, there will be certain information the district is unable to share with the public.

We respectfully request that while the appropriate district personnel investigate and address this serious matter, individuals refrain from speculation and furthering currently circulating misinformation that can get in the way of a thorough and accurate investigation.

Communications Department
(717) 898-5539



1:27



Done

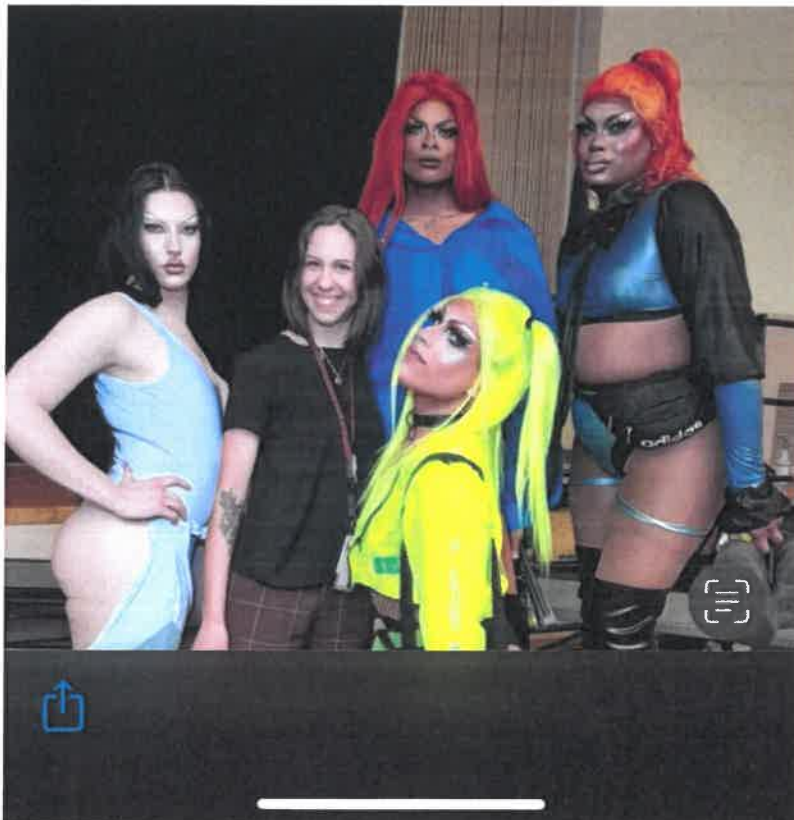
11 of 93



2 mins • 👥



I don't know how to explain the sheer joy i feel in my bones when these queens come take time out of their busy schedules to perform for us (year 3!) and to be with my students. as GSA co-advisor and a queer teacher, it makes me emotional to think of this space we have created-- I would have loved nothing more than to have a space like they have, an opportunity to attend their own drag show... and to have these beautiful role models to support them. to model kindness. acceptance. perseverance. confidence. community. my closeted high school self finds so much healing in days like today. we all want permission to be ourselves. for some of us, we have to be the ones to celebrate ourselves. days like today are my why. je vous aime tous.



https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/gay-sexuality-alliance-club-event-at-hempfield-high-school-draws-backlash-investigation/article_93f7dd8c-c7fe-11ec-a55d-57efdd80e58e.html

Gay Sexuality Alliance Club event at Hempfield High School draws backlash, investigation



CARTER WALKER | Staff Writer

Apr 29, 2022



HEMPFIELDSD.ORG

A Hempfield High School club hosted a dance show at an after-school event for students earlier this week, prompting a strong rebuke and an investigation from the district.

Hempfield School District said in a statement Friday that it had been made aware of a "serious situation" at the district during an after-school event for the Gay Sexuality Alliance Club.

"First and foremost, the administration team apologizes to students, parents, and the community on behalf of those involved in this event," the statement said. "We are appalled at what took place and in no way condone this type of activity in our schools. Neither the dress of the invited guests nor the performance was appropriate in our school setting."

The event, first reported by Harrisburg 100, an online-only news site, featured dancers in tight-fitting and revealing clothing with exposed buttocks. Parents reported that the event was advertised as a drag show.

LNP | LancasterOnline was not immediately able to authenticate photos and videos posted online as being from the Monday after school event.

The club's adviser, French teacher Kelly Tyson, did not immediately return a call or email seeking comment. Another adviser to the club, English teacher Carla Vicidomini also did not return a call seeking comment.

"We commit to completing a thorough investigation and holding those involved accountable, up to and including disciplinary action that is commensurate with any findings," the school district's statement said.

"Currently, an individual has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation. Since this is a personnel issue, there will be certain information the district is unable to share with the public."

State senator Ryan Aument, R-West Hempfield, also weighed in on the event on Facebook, saying he had spoken with Hempfield School District Superintendent Mike Bromirski twice via phone.

Aument currently has a bill in the state legislature seeking to identify and notify parents of what he has described as sexually explicit books in public schools.

Meridith Hilt, whose post about the event in a community Facebook group first drew attention to the event, said her frustration with the event has nothing to do with the sexual orientation or identity of the performers, but rather the performance itself.

"It has nothing to do with them as an LGBT community," Hilt, who has two children in the district, said. "It wouldn't make a difference to me if it was a woman doing this. It's irrelevant that they are drag queens, it's the type of the performance at the school."

Hilt says the exposed buttocks, form fitting clothing and type of dance is what she considers age inappropriate. She hopes that at an upcoming school board meeting, there will be more transparency about how the event came together and how the schools dress code is implemented for visitors.

Melissa Taylor, another parent of students in the district, said she feels some parents in the district are asserting themselves into an issue that does not involve them to the detriment of the community which it affects.

"All they are doing is hurting the kids in that club and the teacher," she said. "if you kids aren't involved in and you're not giving your permission, why are you getting involved? ... They are hyper focused on this teacher now when this teacher was just trying to provide a safe environment for these kids."

Hilt and Taylor, who both do not have kids in the club, said they had heard differing things about if permission slips were required for the event. Bromirski did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Taylor said she hopes that the board will reinstate Tyson and allow her to continue leading the club.

Hempfield School District holds its next meeting May 10 at 7 p.m. in Landisville.

This story will be updated as more information become available.

https://lancasteronline.com/news/local/the-latest-heres-what-we-know-about-hempfield-high-drag-show-fallout/article_3e552d1a-d156-11ec-8199-3f166cd14c92.html

The latest: Here's what we know about Hempfield High drag show fallout

LANCASTERONLINE | Staff

May 11, 2022



Community members rally before the Hempfield School District board meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 2022. Connor Hollinger | LNP Correspondent

Residents of Hempfield School District had their first opportunity Tuesday to speak to the school board since a controversy erupted over an April 25 after-school event during which professional drag queens performed at Hempfield High School.

Upset about the Gay Sexuality Alliance Club event arose on social media days after it took place.

The school district's administration issued a statement April 29 indicating that it had launched an investigation and that one person had been put on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

Here's what we know and don't know about the fallout.

What new came up at the school board meeting?

Two new developments came to light during the meeting, which was attended by a total of more than 400 in person and online.

1 — School board President Grant Keener said that two more individuals have now been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation being led by Superintendent Mike Bromirski and Karen Hall, executive director of human resources and business operations. That means a total of three people are on administrative leave. Keener declined to identify the individuals.

"We understand that in the absence of being able to provide additional information during an accurate investigation, sometimes people rush to judgment or draw their own conclusions without facts, speculate and/or share misinformation," Bromirski said during the school board meeting. "We will not respond to these claims as it could hamper the investigation."

2 — There was confirmation during the meeting that similar events have been held at the high school in the past. Student and Gay Sexuality Alliance Club Vice President Miguel Angel Rosado spoke during the school board meeting. Rosado attended the event and said it has been held for three years without complaint. Rosado said the event was educational and hopes the drag shows will continue at the school in the future.

What happened at Hempfield High School to spark this controversy?

A performance by drag queens took place after school at Hempfield High School on April 25. The performance occurred at an event for Gay Sexuality Alliance Club students.

Drag queens associated with entertainment company Depiro's Divas were at the performance, according to company owner Michael Depiro. Although a report published April 29 by Harrisburg 100 included a link to the Depiro's Divas website when it mentioned the event "featured professional dancers," Depiro said his company wasn't involved in the event, the dancers participated on their own and they had agreed to appear for free.

Performers contacted by LNP | LancasterOnline did not immediately respond to request for comment.

What's next?

In the district's statement, it said it will complete a "thorough investigation" and hold those involved accountable with disciplinary action equivalent to the findings of the investigation.

How long that will take and what, if anything, the district will report back to the community is not clear.

What permissions were sought, if any, to host this event and have students in attendance?

The district has not confirmed if permission was sought by the club to host the event and have students in attendance.

A student who attended the event and a parent of a student who attended the event have told LNP | LancasterOnline that filled out parental permission slips were not required to attend.

At least two district policies might apply to organizing the event.

Policy 907 indicates those wishing to visit a school should make arrangements with the school principal no less than 48 hours in advance. Visitors are required to state, in writing, the nature and purpose of their visit.

The policy also states that only entrances "monitored and capable of controlling visitor entry" should be used by visitors while all other entrances should be locked. Visitors must register at the office when they arrive.

It is unclear if this policy applies to after-school events.

Under Policy 122, "extracurricular activities shall not be organized or instituted without the approval of the administration."

What is the purpose of the club that hosted the event?

The Gay Sexuality Alliance club "brings together LGBTQIA+ and straight students to support each other, provide a safe place to socialize, and work together to improve school climate for all students, regardless of sexual orientation, gender or identity expression," according to a description of the club on the district's website.

Kelly Tyson, a French teacher at Centerville Middle School and Hempfield High School, and Carla Vicidomini, an English teacher at Hempfield High School, are advisors for the club, according to the district website.

There's a video circulating on social media that supposedly shows the event. Has that video been verified?

District officials have not verified that any posts circulating on social media are connected to the event.

However, the district's statement does note that it "was notified of a concerning social media post and photo, and later videos, of a performance that occurred during an after-school event."

https://lanasteronline.com/news/local/hempfield-high-school-student-sheds-light-on-april-25-drag-show-event/article_d8ca0204-d263-11ec-9bbc-0394161264c1.html

Hempfield High School student sheds light on April 25 drag show event



ASHLEY STALNECKER | Staff Writer

May 12, 2022



Community members rally before the Hempfield School District board meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 2022.

Connor Hollinger | LNP Correspondent

What happened, exactly, at the afterschool drag show event at Hempfield High School that has raised questions and spurred controversy?

Several weeks later, that answer is still not clear.

However, through one eyewitness account and photographs and videos reviewed by LNP | LancasterOnline, some details have surfaced.

A student member of Hempfield High School's Gay Sexuality Alliance club has stepped forward to defend the April 25 after-school drag show that sparked an uproar and led to an ongoing investigation.

Hempfield junior and GSA Vice President Miguel Angel Rosado spoke to the school board during the public comment portion of Tuesday's board meeting, which drew hundreds of people online and in person.

"Please listen to what I have to say, as I was physically present at this event," Rosado said during the public comment portion of the meeting. "First and foremost, I feel as if a lot of retaliation has come from a lack of education and context."

At first glance, Rosado said, the event seems like something the school shouldn't allow, but Rosado contends that drag shows hold value, particularly for members of the LGBTQ+ community. Drag shows are an integral part of the LGBTQ+ community and its history, Rosado said.

He regrets that the event, through the lens of social media, has turned into something different and, in his public comment, said "I wish things hadn't turned out the way they did."

So far, the district has placed three individuals, who it has not named, on administrative leave. At Tuesday's meeting, board President Grant Keener said an investigation is still ongoing and that the district couldn't share any further details at the time.

Superintendent Mike Bromirski urged residents to refrain from speculating about the nature of the event in the absence of information released by the district. However, photos and videos allegedly taken at the show, as well as speculation and commentary, have already circulated on social media platforms like Facebook.

How did the queens dress and perform?

LNP | LancasterOnline viewed a few photos and brief portions of videos confirmed to be of the April 25 performance. The viewing was permitted for a short time, and all of the images showed the same drag queen. A drag queen is a man who dresses in women's clothes, typically for entertainment purposes.

The videos viewed by LNP | LancasterOnline did not show the queen dancing in a manner that simulated sexual activity, as has been the case in some videos alleged to be from the event and posted online.

The queen was wearing a short blue dress that fell to mid-thigh and an orange-colored wig. In a Live Photo, the queen was shown dropping down in a semi-squat from a standing position. Live Photos are a feature of iPhones that record what happens 1.5 seconds before and after taking a picture.

One of the concerns voiced about the drag show is the attire of the performers. In a statement issued by the district on April 29 announcing that it was investigating what happened, it wrote that "Neither the dress of the invited guests nor the performance was appropriate in our school setting."

The dress, Rosado told the school board on Tuesday, wasn't different from that of many other extracurriculars, though.

"Yes, some of the outfits showed a little more skin," Rosado said during the public comment period of the board meeting, noting that the performers were not nude. "But, the performers were all wearing bathing suits, leotards, jumpers, skirts or dresses." The photos and videos viewed by LNP | LancasterOnline matched these descriptions.

"Heteronormative" activities, such as wrestling, cheerleading, swimming, homecoming and prom allow similar outfits, Rosado said. Things that are described as heteronormative are considered to denote a world view that promotes a female to male relationship as the preferred sexual orientation.

And, in some fashion design classes taught in the high school, Rosado claimed, students can design and make the outfits a drag queen performers would normally wear.

Aside from dress, another point of contention has been the nature of the performance, which some parents have described as “sexual.”

“I feel like we’re promoting sexually explicit behavior,” parent William Crawford said during the public comment portion of Tuesday’s board meeting.

Rosado sees it differently.

Drag shows, Rosado said, showcase dancing – a form of art – not stripping or a “sex show.”

“It doesn’t seem fair to condemn this medium of art, deeming it inappropriate and sexualizing when the school allows students to submit actual (depictions of) nudity for art assignments in art classes,” Rosado said to the board.

And those pieces, Rosado said, can sometimes be found in art shows with students below the high school level.

Additionally, Rosado said that a dance or performance like the drag show is not much different from those of school-related extracurricular activities like gymnastics and musicals.

Students in attendance at the event were not brought onto the stage to dance with the performers, either, Rosado told the board.

An event three years running

The dress and dance moves at the April drag performance for the club were no different than they had been in the past three years that the event has been held, Rosado said. In previous years, no complaints or problems had arisen from the performance, either, he told the board.

“I don’t understand how the school said they were appalled at what took place when it’s been hosted for this long with videos and pictures being shared from previous events on the Schoology page, which is monitored by advisors and administrators,” Rosado said during public comment.

Schoology is a learning management system that Hempfield School District uses to create, manage and share assignments and resources in its schools. Students are only able to see posts by groups they belong to like the Gay Sexuality Alliance club or a specific class. Membership in groups is by invitation by an advisor, teacher or employee only.

One of the Gay Sexuality Alliance advisors, French teacher Kelly Tyson, shared a post on Schoology following the April 25 event thanking students for attending. And, a high school student involved with the club shared reminders about the upcoming event with members.

Several parents at Tuesday's school board meeting called for more accountability from the district and questioned how the event could have gone unnoticed or unapproved. In its initial statement, the district said it does not condone "this type of activity" in its schools.

"The school has a reputation to uphold and a moral high ground to set," parent Angela Hess said at Tuesday's meeting. "By allowing this to happen, it sets the tone that this type of thing is OK in school."

In an effort to "debunk some misconceptions about the event," for people who weren't there. Rosado explained at the meeting that the drag queens all wore visitor passes on their clothing.

And, Rosado continued, drag queens volunteered their time and didn't receive payment on the taxpayer's dime.

A form of gender expression

The event wasn't merely for entertainment purposes, according to Rosado.

To the LGBTQ+ community, Rosado said drag performance has historical value.

"Drag is a very big part of the community itself, but also its history," Rosado said in public comment, adding that, though the event was open to all students, it was mainly for students in the Gay Sexuality Alliance club or who belong to the LGBTQ+ community.

Drag dates back to the late 1800s, when anti-cross-dressing laws were used to enforce dress normative to one's gender at the time. And, drag had a start – out of necessity – in Shakespearean theater. Men had to dress as women to play female roles in the late 16th and 17th centuries, when women were barred from performing.

“Drag is a form of gender expression that can be expressed through performances,” Rosado said in public comment. “It is focused on blending, blurring or even erasing the boundaries of gender. And by condemning this event, we’re denying queer students of their own history.”



Hempfield School District places three individuals on administrative leave in drag show investigation

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HHS GSA



hello everyone! tomorrow, **MONDAY, APRIL 25TH from 3:00 to 4:30 in Hackman auditorium** will be our annual **drag show** meeting!!! feel free to bring some cash with you to tip the queens, who are coming all the way from pittsburgh! (NOT REQUIRED!) can't wait to see you there!!!

Apr 24 at 3:10 PM • Like 😊 5

Comment..

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HHS GSA



thank you all for attending the show today! the Queens' interactions with you and their support of our GSA makes me emotional. what special humans! Here are the social media handles for our Queens. Go follow and support them!!! :)

Hexxa: @h

Majestee: @th

Enigma: @th

Nebula: @n

Apr 25 at 5:07 PM • Like 😊 3

Comment.

Post



1



Book	Policy Manual
Section	100 Programs
Title	Extracurricular Activities
Code	122
Status	Active
Adopted	October 11, 2005
Last Revised	November 10, 2020

Purpose

The Board believes that the district's goals and objectives are best achieved by a diversity of learning experiences, some of which are more appropriately conducted outside the regular curricular program of the schools.

All learning experiences offered by the schools, curricular and extracurricular, shall be planned and integrated toward attainment of the district's educational objectives.

Definition

Extracurricular Activities - Those activities that are sponsored by the Board, but are not offered for credit toward graduation; voluntary participation in an activity where students serve as leaders and representatives of the district, both within the school and in the community, and for which participation is not required as a condition of passing a graded course. Extracurricular activities are considered a privilege and not a right.

Authority

Any activity shall be considered sponsored by the Board when it has been approved by the Superintendent or designee and reported to the Board for its information. A list of extracurricular activities is included in the Student Handbook and may be supplemented during the year, as approved by the Superintendent or designee and reported to the Board.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

The Board shall maintain the programs of extracurricular activities in a fiscally responsive manner for participating students. Where applicable, a fee structure for supplies, participation, and/or necessary staffing shall carry the same exemptions as listed in the Board's policy on regular school activities.[\[5\]](#)

Students may assume all or part of the costs for travel and attendance at extracurricular events and trips.

Where eligibility requirements are necessary or desirable, the Board shall be informed and must approve the establishment of eligibility standards before they are operable.

Off-Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would violate the Code of Student Conduct if:[6]

1. There is a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, such as an agreement to complete a transaction outside of school that would violate the Code of Student Conduct.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and disseminate procedures to implement the extracurricular activities program.

Extracurricular activities shall not be organized or instituted without the approval of the administration.

Announcements made by students, placed on public display, made as part of the daily news show, or sent via electronic media, must be approved by the building principal.[7]

Guidelines

Guidelines shall ensure that the program of extracurricular activities:

1. Assesses the needs and interests of and is responsive to district students.
2. Involves students in developing and planning extracurricular activities.
3. Ensures provision of competent guidance and supervision by staff who maintain appropriate clearances.
4. Guards against the exploitation of students.
5. Provides a variety of experiences and diversity of organizational models.
6. Provides for continuing evaluation of the program and its components.
7. Ensures that all extracurricular activities are open to all students and that all students are fully informed of the opportunities available to them.[8][9]

Students in the school buildings and on the school grounds must at all times be under the general supervision of the appropriate credentialed staff during the school day.

Students are expected to conform to the policies, rules, and regulations of the administration and the Board; obey instructions of staff; maintain proper conduct in school buildings and grounds; and refrain from use of improper language. Upon dismissal at the end of the day each student shall immediately leave school property unless they are waiting for transportation, are under the supervision of a teacher, or are attending a regularly scheduled event.

Students who go on school-sponsored trips must be accompanied by a sponsor teacher(s). Each student shall submit to the building principal's office written permission from his/her parent/guardian to be absent from school and to attend the school-sponsored activity where applicable.

Eligibility

Because participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, the school administration, together with the advisors, shall determine requirements for eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities.

A student who violates Board policy or school rules and regulations jeopardizes his/her opportunity to continue participation in an extracurricular activity.[6][10][11]

A student who has been prosecuted under Act 29 shall not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the following marking period.

Academic Eligibility

A student must meet basic academic requirements to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

The school administration shall determine the academic requirements for participation.

Attendance Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity substantial attendance is required on the day of the activity. A student who is absent from school on Friday may participate in Saturday or Sunday activities only with a note from his/her doctor explaining the student's absence.

A student who has received a failing grade in any course as a direct result of the attendance policy shall not be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for the following marking period.

Equal Access Act

The district shall provide secondary students the opportunity for non-curriculum related student groups to meet on the school premises during non-instructional time for the purpose of conducting a meeting within the limited open forum on the basis of religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings. Such meetings must be voluntary and student-initiated and not sponsored in any way by the school, its agents, or employees. Non-instructional time is the time set aside by the school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends.[2]

The meetings cannot materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the educational activities in the school.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish the necessary parameters of feasible operation.

The district retains the authority to maintain order and discipline on school premises in order to protect the well-being of students and employees and to ensure that student attendance at such meetings is voluntary.