

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



HEMPFIELSDSD.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.