

**Seattle School District No. 1
Board Resolution**

Resolution No. 2019/20-28



A RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors of Seattle School District No. 1, King County, Seattle, Washington on Inclusion for Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, and Community.

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools is a district of more than 53,000 students and more than 12,000 full-time and part-time staff where we value and celebrate diversity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, a 2019-20 Focus Goal of the Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan is to provide schools where students feel safe and welcome and that goal is rooted in the belief that students should be celebrated for being their authentic selves, recognizing that when students are provided healthy, safe, engaging, supportive, and academically rigorous school environments they are able to learn to their full potential; and

WHEREAS, the recent community debate focused on the exclusion of LGBTQIA+ teaching staff in a school in our region has invited the Board to reflect on our long-held beliefs and commitment to inclusion, knowing that educational environments where students recognize the diversity that makes them special in adult role models at school helps to create an atmosphere where students feel empowered as scholars to succeed; and

WHEREAS, systemic transphobia, biphobia, and homophobia can push LGBTQIA+ youth out of school and cause long-lasting negative educational and mental health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, we know LGBTQIA+ youth, particularly LGBTQIA+ youth of color, still face significant discrimination and barriers to inclusion as compared to their peers, including disproportionate rates of school disciplinary action and are two-to-four times more likely than their peers to be physically assaulted or threatened at school, leading them to be less likely to attend school, according to a national study (2017 RTI Report, "Violence and LGBTQIA+ Communities"); and

WHEREAS, affirming diverse sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions is one of the most effective mental health interventions for supporting LGBTQIA+ youth; and

WHEREAS, inclusive curriculum has been shown to improve educational health and personal safety, as shown in the 2017 GLSEN National Climate Survey, as well as to increase the level of peer acceptance of LGBTQIA+ students and foster school communities where LGBTQIA+ youth were less likely to hear homophobic and transphobic remarks, were less likely to feel unsafe, experienced lower levels of victimization, and performed better academically; and

WHEREAS, Board Policy No. 3210, Nondiscrimination, Acts of Hostility and Defamation, expresses our commitment to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, respect, and inclusiveness, and the Policy is implemented and enforced through a robust system of procedures overseen by a nondiscrimination compliance officer; and

WHEREAS, the District has long-supported and affirmed the rights of our transgender and gender-expansive students by establishing and continually enhancing a comprehensive Superintendent Procedure (3210SP.C) that details a student's right to be referred to by the name and pronouns that affirms their identity and to use restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to gender identity and not sex-assigned at birth. In addition, the District has created and provided gender identity book kits for instruction in grades K-5 and hosts an annual LGBTQIA+ Family Dinner to bring our LGBTQIA+ families together; and

WHEREAS, the District is continually in a process of improvement and refinement in relation to creating identity-safe spaces for all including work targeted toward greater inclusion for LGBTQIA+ staff and students, including, but not limited to, coordinating our electronic student systems so students are able to be recognized by the name that affirms their identity and continuously promoting the expansion of gender-neutral spaces in all of our schools; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that creating LGBTQIA+ and gender-expansive inclusivity in the District is not complete with any one action, and it does not happen holistically with the change of a policy, or the passage of a resolution, but depends on a systematic shift in paradigms and by increasing the understanding of sexual and gender diversity, recognizing that this creation requires appropriate communication, professional development, collaboration with our labor partners, and a commitment from the Board, District staff, and students; and

WHEREAS, the students of Seattle Public Schools should have the opportunity to learn about significant LGBTQIA+ events and groups, such as the Society for Human Rights, the Lavender Scare, Daughters of Bilitis, the Supreme Court Case, "One, Inc v Olesen," Don't Ask/Don't Tell, DOMA, 1987 AIDS March on Washington, the riots at Stonewall Inn, the Compton Cafeteria riots, Upstairs Lounge arson attack, the White Night riots; and, meaningful contributions of LGBTQIA+ historical figures such as James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Josephine Baker, Bayard Rustin, Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P Johnson, Frida Kahlo, Jack Baker and James Michael McConnell, Harvey Milk, Oscar Wilde, Virginia Woolf, Walt Whitman, TS Eliot, Edith Windsor, Kathy Kozachenko, Mia Yamamoto, Margaret Chung, Brandon Teena, Yone Noguchi, Pedro Zamora, Alice Nkom, Michael Sam, Audre Lorde, Magnus Hirschfeld, We'wha (Zuni), Lozen & Dahteste (Chiricahua Apache), Billie Jean King, Sally Ride, Matthew Shepard, and so many more; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Superintendent will direct a District facilities assessment be completed, and a report provided to the Board, detailing schools: with a student single stall or multi-stall gender-neutral restroom; without a gender-neutral restroom including the feasibility and estimated costs to convert existing restrooms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District will commit to including at least one accessible, multi-stall gender-neutral restroom in all new facilities construction and take the necessary steps to ensure these restrooms will be present in all future educational specifications, floor plans, and capital planning; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the District supports all students and staff by affirming their right to be their authentic selves, including the right to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity and to speak about their personal and family lives in the same manner as their non-LGBTQIA+ peers, recognizing it is never appropriate to discipline or shame a person who in good faith comes out to another member of the Seattle Public Schools community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the District encourages its schools to display on their flag poles and the volition of its employees to display in classrooms, offices, or halls, a rainbow Pride flag, Transgender Pride flag, or other sign of support for LGBTQIA+ students or staff, because these symbols are consistent with the District's commitment to the creation of identity-safe and welcoming schools and illustrate our sincere belief that we must serve all without judgment, discrimination, or alienation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the District will continue to honor and respect a student's self-reported gender identity and gender expression at school regardless of outside adult acknowledgement or acceptance; the District will work to educate and support adults important to a student on greater acceptance and acknowledgement; however, the District will not wait for such adult acceptance or require parent/guardian consent before honoring the student's self-reported gender identity and gender expression; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board, District, and appropriate stakeholders commit to both the urgency and the need for long-term, sustainable, and well-informed action around LGBTQIA+ inclusivity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District and our schools be proactive in decreasing anti-LGBT language, feelings, behaviors, and bullying by:

1. Promoting positive images of LGBTQIA+ individuals; and
2. Making available age appropriate LGBTQIA+ inclusive instructional materials and books for elementary and secondary schools; and
3. Requiring that newly-adopted United States history, social studies, and English language arts instructional materials, and reasonably include in all other instructional materials,

significant events, societal contributions, and/or representations of LGBTQIA+ individuals ; and

4. Offering LGBTQIA+ sensitivity training for staff and volunteers; and
5. Reminding staff of their duty to ensure that all students are safe and affirmed in our school communities, and to create a school culture that both prevents and proactively intervenes with acts of name-calling (such as racist, sexist, transphobic, and homophobic remarks), bias, harassment, or bullying that they see, including, but not limited to LGBTQIA+-biased language and bullying; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent shall consider this resolution a proposal of the Board to change the name of an existing school building to a distinguished individual to be specifically identified through an engagement process including students, staff, parents, alumni, and community residents, who has served the local community, state, or nation, in the promotion of LGBTQIA+ rights; and

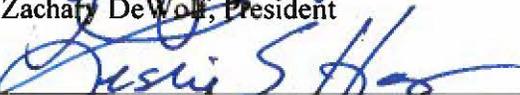
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent will distribute or inform principals, teachers, and families of this resolution, and translate it into the top five languages within Seattle Public Schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent shall report back to the Board on the status of, and plan for, implementation of each point in the above resolution.

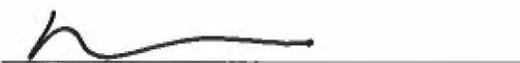
ADOPTED this 10th day of June, 2020



Zachary DeWolf, President



Leslie Harris, Member-at-Large



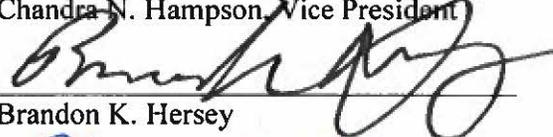
Eden Mack



Lisa Rivera-Smith



Chandra N. Hampson, Vice President



Brandon K. Hersey



Liza Rankin

ATTEST: 

Denise Juneau, Superintendent
Secretary, Board of Directors
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