

Dear Seattle Public Schools Community:

Happy Pride Month!

This month and every month, Seattle Public Schools stands with our LGBTQIA+ students, families, staff, and community members.

Across the country, LGBTQIA+ children are being targeted in ways that are painful and wrong. In some places, there are efforts to make schools less welcoming and less affirming for LGBTQIA+ students, including transgender and gender-expansive students. That is not who we are.

In Seattle Public Schools, LGBTQIA+ students are an essential part of our school communities. They are part of every school and community across Seattle Public Schools, and they are brilliant, creative, joyful, and full of promise.

We want every student to come to school as their full self, to be respected for who they are, and to be surrounded by adults who care for them, support them, and expect great things.

One of the most meaningful parts of my first four and a half months as superintendent has been visiting schools and seeing how belonging is created every day through student-led clubs, visible signs of pride, and conversations with students about why it matters that we stand clearly and proudly with our LGBTQIA+ community.

I have heard that same message across our broader community. In conversations with more than 1,500 students, families, staff, and partners, people consistently emphasized the importance of trust, caring educators, strong supports, and schools where students feel seen and connected. Members of our LGBTQIA+ community shared clearly that they want schools where students can be themselves and know they are supported not just in words, but in action.

Education is about academics, but it is also about helping young people understand themselves and one another, and live in community with kindness, curiosity, and care.

You will hear more in the months ahead about creating supportive school environments as part of our broader work on school improvement and student success. And we will not assume we are getting this right. We will continue to listen, survey, and learn from our students.

To our LGBTQIA+ students and staff: You belong in Seattle Public Schools. You are valued here.

Pride is a celebration, and it is also a commitment. We will continue to stand with our LGBTQIA+ community during Pride Month and every month.

With appreciation,

Ben Shuldiner
Superintendent