

The Superintendent's Policy Statement on LGBTQ Youth and Their Safety in School

Dear Santa Cruz City Schools Community,

The District has an affirmative obligation under California and federal law to provide a safe (free from harassment and discrimination) educational environment for its lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQQ) students and staff. An essential part of that obligation includes advocating acceptance and respect for LGBTQ students and staff. More than a legal obligation, it is imperative that our learning community is dedicated to creating school climates that are welcoming, safe and inclusive for every student, family and staff member in order to support the success of every student.

Specifically, our school administrators have an affirmative duty to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender LGBTQ students and those perceived to be LGBTQ from verbal and physical abuse from their peers. California Education Code §§ 200, 201, and 220, in particular, place upon the District the affirmative obligation to combat racism, sexism, and other forms of bias, including sexual orientation and gender identity bias, within its schools. Similarly, both the state and federal constitution guarantee the District's students and staff equal protection under the law.

Please note that our school district will enforce AB 537: Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act. Further, it is Santa Cruz City School Board policy (BP 5145.3) to specifically protect our LGBTQ students, providing them with a safe place to learn.

It is also the school district's responsibility to protect a teacher's or a student's constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression and speech. California, in particular, has a strong public policy in favor of free speech on school campuses as evidenced by Education Code § 48907.

It will be our continued commitment to protect the safety of all students on all of our campuses.

Our AB 537 Compliance Officer is: the Director of Student Services who can be reached at 831 429-3410 x215.

Sincerely,



Kris Munro

Superintendent