

<p>THE BOARD OF EDUCATION NORTH OKANAGAN-SHUSWAP SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 83</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>REGULATION</b></p>	<p>Category:       <b>1023</b></p> <hr/> <p>Adopted:       2015-06-09</p>
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## Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

*In response to the policy: District Code of Conduct  
Personnel Practices and Employees*

*In accordance with regulations:  
Regulation 1021: Harassment, Discrimination, & Inappropriate Behaviour  
Regulation 1070: Safe Caring & Orderly Schools*

**Rationale:**

The Board of Trustees (the “Board”) is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all members of the school community (including students, parents, teachers, support staff and anyone involved with the district) those who identify as members of a sexual minority or are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity, or who are two-spirit persons. The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity regulation is written in accordance with section 15 of the *Canadian Charter for Human Rights*, the *BC Ministry of Education Safe, Caring & Orderly Schools* mandate and *School District Code of Conduct* with the intent and recognition that public schools need to be safe for everyone.

The Board recognizes and values the diversity found within the district and recognizes that individuals who are members of a sexual minority face a unique set of challenges within our schools. Individuals who are dealing with or those perceived to be dealing with issues of sexual orientation or gender identity, are frequently targets of discrimination, harassment, physical and sexual violence, and /or social and emotional isolation.

**Regulation:**

The District Code of Conduct requires that appropriate behaviours and attitudes should be reflected in classroom instruction and modeled by adults in the school learning and work environments, and that students are expected to exhibit behaviour that enables all to participate effectively in the educational community. Therefore, this regulation prohibits any form of discrimination, intimidation, or harassment against any person based on gender/gender identity or sexual orientation/perceived sexual orientation.

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## REGULATION

Specifically, this regulation recognizes that:

1. Homophobic and gender-based comments, discrimination, and bullying are demeaning to all regardless of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
2. Any language or behaviour that deliberately degrades, denigrates, incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination, or harassment towards individuals on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identification will not be tolerated. Schools shall include the prohibition of such language and behaviour in their students' codes of conduct.
3. All employees have an obligation to intervene in any interaction involving the use of homophobic epithets and slurs, and behaviours regardless of the speaker's intentions, and to convey that such comments are against Board policy and will not be tolerated in the educational community.

The **Safe, Caring and Orderly schools** mandate of the Province of British Columbia requires that schools strive to “develop positive, welcoming school cultures and are committed to fostering optimal environments for learning”. All school therefore must be consistently active in promoting a positive and welcoming culture and take specific action in order to promote the establishment of this culture for all, and specifically for individuals dealing with or perceived to be dealing with issues of sexual orientation or gender identity.

All school and district counselors employed by the Board shall be educated in the knowledge and skills required to deal with sexual orientation and gender identity issues. School and district counselors shall be informed and be familiar with all policies with respect to the requirements of the federal and provincial human rights provisions and school district policy with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity issues. Where students request and where staff are willing to volunteer their time, Gay/Straight Alliance clubs (GSA's) will be encouraged at secondary schools in the district.

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**Responsibility:**

This regulation applies to the behaviour of all members of the school community including students, parents, teachers, support staff and anyone involved with the district. Any breaches of this regulation will be responded to in accordance with the requirements of the *District Code of Conduct*, the district *Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools* regulation; and the district *Harassment, Discrimination, & Inappropriate Behaviour* regulation and other provisions of district policy and regulations that are applicable.

Resolution to complaints to school authorities arising from this policy should be resolved in a respectful and restorative manner and focused on fixing mistakes, providing education and the opportunity for all impacted to move forward in a positive manner.

Issues involving district employees will be responded to in accordance with the district regulation on *Harassment, Discrimination, & Inappropriate Behaviour*.