

**20 SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY**

In accordance with our Mission Statement of School District No. 46, (*to enable and inspire our students to realize their full potentials, as knowledgeable, confident and contributing citizens in a global community*), the Canadian Human Rights Act, the British Columbia Human Rights Code, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom the Board of Education of School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) has developed this policy.

- 20.1 The Board of Education is responsible for providing an educational system that is safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming for all students, staff and community members.
- 20.2 The Board recognizes and values the diversity within its school communities and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the district's culture.
- 20.3 The Board also recognizes that students and other school community members identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, intersex, queer or questioning face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities.
- 20.4 Individuals who are dealing with or those perceived to be dealing with issues of gender identity, gender expression, intersexuality or sexual orientation, as well as their families, are frequently the targets of homophobic, transphobic, an/or heterosexist behaviours. This often has profound social consequences, including discrimination, harassment, physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm and suicide.
- 20.5 Each member of the school and district community must bear the responsibility for creating a safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive and affirming environment for all individuals.