

District Gender & Sexuality Alliance

Notes

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Conference Room A School Board Office 556 Boleskine Road

1. Welcome and Introductions - Name, School, Preferred Pronouns
2. School Updates

Oak Bay: the GSA is hoping to establish a local GSA movie night.

Lambrick Park: there is a bake sale fundraiser to support Purple Shirt Day on October 20th. The Love is Love conference will go ahead either at Lambrick Park or another location such as Oak Bay; more information to come.

Mt. Doug: the group is hoping to get more people out with their Club Day happening on Thursday.

Esquimalt: the first meeting will be held tomorrow.

Reynolds: looking forward to promoting more events throughout the year.

Lansdowne: welcome to Mr. Pollitt.

Cedar Hill: this is their first group and they have already have a mission statement. We are looking forward to working with Cedar Hill.

Rockheights: the lock is finally being changed on the gender neutral washroom. Looking forward to providing updates on activities throughout the year.

Alix MacAdams: Alix runs a support group for transgender families the third Wednesday of the month.

Jordan Watters: the Gender Identity and Expression Policy will be going to the board on Monday night. The meeting begins at 7:00 pm and all are welcome.

**Media Release
For Immediate Release**

New Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy for Greater Victoria Schools

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

VICTORIA, BC – Monday night, a new Gender Identity and Expression policy was approved by the Board of Education that outlines the expectations, behaviours, language and actions required to support inclusion, and prevent marginalization or discrimination within schools. The policy guides how schools discuss gender and health, and ensures all schools to introduce gender neutral washrooms and change rooms for students and staff. Every school will have at least one adult who acts as a resource for transgender and gender non-confirming and sexual minority students, staff and families.

"We have an important responsibility to ensure all of our students and staff in our schools are safe and supported within our school community," noted Board of Education Chair, Edith Loring-Kuhanga. "The gender identity and expression policy was introduced to ensure our commitment to supporting those who are transgender and/or gender non-conforming is clear, and that our schools and programs reflect the safe and inclusive community we all want for our children within the Greater Victoria School District."

The Greater Victoria School District has been working diligently in this area over the past year. In addition to the changes to the anti-bullying policy required by the Province of British Columbia, the District introduced a standalone policy regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

A link to the policy is available here: www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2016/09/Sept-26-2016-Regular-Packup.pdf (page 34)

3. Guiding Question

The GSA as a committee was dissolved by the Board of Education in the fall of last year in order to proceed with the development of the Gender Identity and Expression Policy. The GSA as it was, would contravene contract language with respect to policy development and hence the dissolution of the committee. Moving forward our GSAs became clubs within schools and our focus moved to supporting what students were doing in schools to support our Queer and Transgender students. What is our purpose this year and how do we encourage participation? We will be exploring how we maintain our presence in schools and at these meetings and how we can champion our voice in our communities.

4. Year Ahead Planning

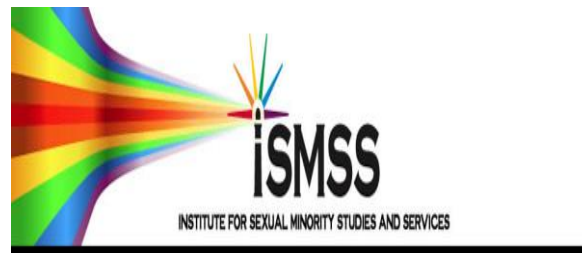
- Love is Love Conference: we will be exploring options for this event. It was an excellent event last year and we look forward to supporting it at Lambrick Park or Oak Bay. Matt Treble would like to remain involved.
- Pride Parade: we had an excellent turnout for the parade and look forward to providing a float in next year's parade. Chris Wignall at Esquimalt has a trailer that would make a great float.
- Anti-Homophobia/Transphobia Week: we are asking that people share potential resources for this event that can be sent out to our schools. Harold will collect these resources. Kelli has sent the following along for possible discussion at our next meeting:

A wonderful friend/educator/queer activist from my cohort, Lindsay Cavanaugh, published a paper

about “queer affirming” vs. “queer safe” spaces this past year, and I was wondering if I could share it with the GSA group? I found it really interesting & thought-provoking, and I thought it could be a good discussion piece (and perhaps inspiration!) for our next meeting.

<https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/arbutus/article/view/15690>

5. Growing into Resilience Survey



GROWING INTO RESILIENCE: A Survey for Sexual and Gender Minority (LGBTIQ2SA) Youth

This survey is for Canadian sexual and gender minority (LGBTIQ2SA) youth and young adults between 12 and 29 years old. Dr. André P. Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca), Director of Research at the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS) is conducting this research, which the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta has approved. You are invited to participate.

While we have made progress in achieving sexual and gender minority rights in Canada, many young people still experience discrimination and other problems based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Challenges and difficulties often increase when other factors like age, ethnocultural group, religion, and where one lives (for example, urban, rural, and northern) are taken into account. As a result, many individuals experience health problems and take risks in dealing with their situations. Still some young people overcome adversity and trauma and find ways

to thrive. Through this survey we want to learn about all sexual and gender minority youth and young adults and your challenges, difficulties, risk taking, sources of supports, and ways of surviving and thriving. The results of this survey will be used to help young Canadians through improvements in education, healthcare, foster care, group homes, youth justice, and other spaces that should provide recognition and support. This survey gives youth and young adults across Canada an opportunity to provide key input to help us in this work.

The **Growing into Resilience** survey asks you to respond to items about the many factors impacting your everyday life. These items focus on interactions at school and in healthcare, families, faith groups, and the larger community. The survey is designed so you can talk about the factors

that affect your health and happiness; that is, the factors that affect how you become more resilient. It can take you up to 30 minutes to complete. However, please take the time to complete the entire survey. You will be helping all LGBTTIQQ2SA youth and young adults who need supports. You might consider some of the items to be sensitive and stressful to answer. If you have concerns and need assistance and support from us, please email Jeffrey Hankey (jrhankey@ualberta.ca).

To participate in the survey please follow this link:

For English Version: <http://ers.fluidsveys.com/s/resilience-survey>.

For French Version: <http://ers.fluidsveys.com/s/resilience-fr/>

To thank you for your participation, upon completion of the survey you will have the opportunity to enter an optional prize draw.

Adjourn 5:00 pm

Meeting Dates and confirmed locations:

September 20, 2016	School Board Office
October 25, 2016	Mt. Doug
November 22, 2016	Esquimalt
January 24, 2017	Oak Bay
February 21, 2017	Lambrick Park
April 18, 2017	Rockheights
May 23, 2017	School Board Office