

Guidelines for Best Practices: Creating Learning Environments that Respect Diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions

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Alberta Education (2016)

Description

The goal of this 21-page *Guidelines for Best Practices* is to support the creation of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments to support children and youth with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.

Salient Points

The document provides a list of 12 best practices addressing the following topics: supports for learners, the right to self-identification, respect for privacy and confidentiality, dress codes, gender-segregated activities, equitable participation in activities, accessibility to washrooms and change rooms, providing professional development opportunities for staff, responding to bullying, building student capacity, welcoming all types of families, and ensuring staff are protected from discrimination.

A brief rationale is provided for each best practice. Also, each best practice is supported by specific indicators that demonstrate the best practice in action.

School authorities are encouraged to use these best practices as they develop policies, regulations and procedures that foster “welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging” for all students and staff.

Questions for Reflection

As you examine this document, consider the following questions:

- The document is written with the K-12 school system in mind. Some of the suggested best practices may be less relevant to adult ESL contexts. Read through the list of best practices in the table of contents. To what extent do you think the listed best practices are relevant to your context?
- Select one or more best practices that you think are met in your teaching context. Go to the best practice and read through the indicators. Do you still think the best practice is being met? Is there anything that you could do in your context to improve practice?

Now identify one or more relevant best practices that are probably not met in your teaching context. Again, go to the best practice and read through the indicators. Are there actions

that could be put into practice in your teaching context? What would be your first step in advocating for that change?

Keywords

Best Practices, Guidelines, School Act

Reference

Alberta Education. (2016). *Guidelines for Best Practices: Creating Learning Environments that Respect Diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions*. The Crown Right of Alberta, as represented by the Minister of Education. Retrieved from <https://education.alberta.ca/media/1626737/91383-attachment-1-guidelines-final.pdf>