
Considerations for Building Safe and Supportive Schools for LGBTQI+ Students

LGBTQI+ students often face systemic and societal barriers to success. Schools can proactively work to support their LGBTQI+ students by taking simple steps to build a safe and supportive environment for them to learn and grow. This document provides guidance to schools seeking to establish a more inclusive learning environment.

Inclusive Curriculums

A safe and supportive learning environment begins with the adoption of an inclusive curriculum. An inclusive curriculum is one that is affirming to all students. Representation of those from diverse backgrounds is an important part of building a healthy school culture and climate. Inclusive curriculums should seek to elevate positive lived experiences of those from diverse backgrounds without avoiding painful past events. Inclusive curriculum should be coherent and aligned to the [Kentucky Academic Standards](#).

Use of Preferred Names and Pronouns

Educators should seek to use the preferred names and pronouns of students should the student request it. The use of preferred names is not a new phenomenon and children from a variety of backgrounds and identities choose to use a name other than the one listed on their birth certificate. For more information about the use of preferred names and pronouns, please see KDE's guidance document "[Considerations for Using Student Preferred Names](#)".

Responding to Anti-LGBTQI+ Behaviors

Classroom decorum is a key element of a safe learning environment for all students. Name-calling, bullying, and harassment of LGBTQI+ students should be addressed immediately. Have a plan to provide support for the impacted student and remember that impacted students may not be limited to the target of the aggressor. Above all, promote yourself as a safe adult in the building. For more resources about addressing problematic or bullying behaviors please see the following resources:

- [Kentucky Center for School Safety](#)
- [KDE's Bullying and Harassment Website](#)
- [KDE's School Safety and Resiliency Act Website](#)

Additionally, each Kentucky public school district maintains policies related to bullying and discrimination that may be beneficial for review.