



Date: August 27, 2025 **Agenda Item:** 7.4

To: Board of Trustees

From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

Originator(s): Committee of the Whole
Shawna Warren, Superintendent

Subject: **Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities**

Recommended Motion:

THAT the Board of Trustees approve recommended changes to Board *Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities*, as presented at the August 27, 2025, Public Board meeting.

Background:

Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities has been reviewed and updated to reflect recent changes to the *Education Act, 2025 (formerly Bill 27 and Bill 29)*. These legislative amendments come into effect on September 1, 2025 and require school divisions to ensure their local policies are consistent with updated provincial legislation.

The revised policy maintains the Board's commitment to supporting the rights, safety and well-being of students and staff regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Updates were made to ensure that the policy is aligned with the new legislation and that it accurately reflects the Board's obligations under provincial law.

Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):

This report aligns with the [SLQS](#) in the following way:

COMPETENCY:

INDICATORS:

- (1) Building Effective Relationships
 - a. collaborating with community and provincial agencies to address the needs of students and their families;
 - d. modeling ethical leadership practices, based on integrity and objectivity;
 - e. establishing constructive relationships with students, staff, school councils, parents/guardians, employee organizations, the education ministry and other stakeholder organizations; and
 - f. facilitating the meaningful participation of members of the school community and local community in decision-making.

COMPETENCY: (4) Leading Learning
INDICATORS: a. fostering in the school community equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and
b. providing learning opportunities, based on research informed principles of effective teaching, learning and leadership, to support building the capacity of all members of the school community to fulfill their educational roles.

COMPETENCY: (7) Supporting Effective Governance
INDICATORS: b. ensuring that all students and staff are provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging; and
g. implementing board policies and supporting the regular review and evaluation of their impact.

Governance Implications:

Education Act

Board responsibilities

33(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

- (d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging

Responsibilities re parental notification and consent for preferred name and pronouns

33.2(1) In this section, “new preferred name or pronouns” means a name or pronouns that

- (a) vary from the name or pronouns that teachers, teacher leaders and other school staff have regularly used when referring to the student, and
- (b) the student prefers for reasons related to the student’s gender identity.

Board Procedures Regulation

Policies and procedures

4 The board must

- (a) establish policies and procedures governing the conduct of meetings of the board and the administration and business of the board, and
- (b) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the established policies and procedures on a regular basis.

Board Policy 2: Role of the Board

Governance and Organization

26. Develop, approve and monitor the implementation of policies to guide the Division and the Board.

28. Monitor the development, revision and implementation of policy

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the August 27, 2025, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s) and/or link(s):

1. Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities - Clean Copy
2. Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities - Tracked Changes

Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities

POLICY

The Board believes in the importance of and is committed to establishing and maintaining a welcoming, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy learning and working environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging for members of the school community. This includes students, staff, and families who identify or are perceived as two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, gender fluid, or those who are questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression (2SLGBTQ+). The Board expects that all members of this diverse community be welcomed, respected, accepted and supported in every school and workplace.

All members of the school community and those employed by the Board have the right to learn and work in an environment free from prejudice, harassment and discrimination. This right is guaranteed under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Alberta Human Rights Act* and *Alberta Education Act*. As such, these rights are to be supported and enforced so that all members of Sturgeon Public Schools may work together in inclusive, equitable, safe, healthy and respectful environments.

The Board believes that all 2SLGBTQ+ students, staff and families have the right to:

- have their confidentiality respected, in accordance with the Education Act and relevant legislation;
- request recognition of their preferred name and pronouns, subject to legislative requirements regarding parental involvement for students under 18; and
- have their unique identities, families, cultures and communities included, represented, valued and respected within all aspects of the school environment.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions: For the purposes of this policy the most current definitions can be accessed at the following link:

GSAs and QSAs in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers

Sexual and Gender Minority Terms and Definitions:

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Human-Rights/Issues/PD-80-6%20GSA-QSA%20Guide%202018.pdf>

GUIDELINES

The Board is committed to establishing environments where all 2SLGBTQ+ students, staff and families have the right to:

- be fully included and represented in an inclusive and respectful manner by all school personnel in accordance with legislative guidelines;
- have equitable access to supports, services and protections provided to all students, staff and families;
- have a mechanism by which to address harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying and/or violence; and
- have their unique identities, families, cultures and communities represented and valued in all facets of the school environment.

The Board believes that staff members are better prepared to respond to and support matters associated with sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression when they have the benefit of related education and professional development opportunities, as well as an awareness of, and access to, research and/or professional readings relative to this topic. The Board is committed to:

- supporting school-based leaders to develop, implement and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities and administrative guidelines to ensure that sexual and gender student minorities and their families are welcomed and treated with dignity and respect in all facets of the school community while adhering to the legal rights of parents and the requirements under the Education Act; and
- supporting principals and schools in implementing educational initiatives and developing school environments that respect the sexual and gender minority's unique identity, families, cultures and communities, in compliance with provincial legislation.

The Board of Trustees may establish a task group or groups to provide input and recommendations relative to the implementation of Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities.

- The membership of any task group(s) may vary based on the identified goals and objectives established by the Board of Trustees relative to Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities.
- Prior to forming any task group(s) the Board of Trustees will identify:
 - The specific objectives,
 - Membership representation,
 - Preferred timeline and
 - Reporting process for the task group(s).

The Board will comply with requirements established by the Minister.

References:

Administrative Procedures:

AP712: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities

AP717: Workplace Violence and Harassment

Section 1, 2, 16, 18(1)(2), 19, 33(2)(3), 35, 52, 53, 58, 196, 197, 222 *Education Act*

Policy 1: *Vision, Mission and Values*

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Alberta Human Rights Act

GSA's and QSA's in Alberta Schools: ATA

Guidelines for Best Practices: Alberta Government (2016)

Access to Information Act (ATIA)

Access to Information Act Regulation 133/2025

Personal Information and Protection Act

History

2019 Mar 27 Initial Approval

2020 Jan 29 Amended

2021 Oct 27 Reviewed

2022 Jun 22 Amended

2023 Apr 26 Reviewed

2025 Aug 27 Amended

Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities - Tracked

POLICY

The Board believes in the importance of and is committed to establishing and maintaining a welcoming, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy learning and working environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging for members of the school community. This includes students, staff, and families who identify or are perceived as two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, gender fluid, or those who are questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression (2SLGBTQ+). The Board expects that all members of this diverse community be welcomed, respected, accepted and supported in every school and workplace.

All members of the school community and those employed by the Board have the right to learn and work in an environment free from prejudice, harassment and discrimination. This right is guaranteed under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Alberta Human Rights Act* and *Alberta Education Act*. As such, these rights are to be supported and enforced so that all members of Sturgeon Public Schools may work together in inclusive, equitable, safe, healthy and respectful environments.

The Board believes that all 2SLGBTQ+ students, staff and families have the right to have:

- have their confidentiality ~~protected and~~ respected, in accordance with the *Education Act* and relevant legislation; ~~and~~
- ~~self-identification and determination; and~~
- request recognition of their preferred name and pronouns, subject to legislative requirements regarding parental involvement for students under 18; ~~and~~
- have their unique identities, families, cultures and communities included, represented, valued and respected within all aspects of the school environment.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions: For the purposes of this policy the most current definitions can be accessed at the following link:

GSAs and QSAs in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers

Sexual and Gender Minority Terms and Definitions:

GUIDELINES

The Board is committed to establishing environments where all 2SLGBTQ+ students, staff and families have the right to:

- be fully included and represented in an inclusive and respectful manner by all school personnel **in accordance with legislative guidelines;**
- have equitable access to ~~the same~~ supports, services and protections provided to all students, staff and families;
- have a mechanism by which to address harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying and/or violence; and
- ~~see~~ **have** their unique identities, families, cultures and communities ~~are~~ represented and valued in all facets of the school environment.

The Board believes that staff members are better prepared to respond to and support matters associated with sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression when they have the benefit of related education and professional development opportunities, as well as an awareness of, and access to, research and/or professional readings relative to this topic. The Board is committed to:

- supporting ~~school-based leaders~~ **administration** to develop, implement and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities and administrative guidelines to ensure that sexual and gender student minorities and their families are welcomed and treated with dignity and respect in all facets of the school community **while adhering to the legal rights of parents and the requirements under the Education Act;** and
- supporting principals and schools in implementing educational initiatives and developing school environments that respect the sexual and gender minority's unique identity, families, cultures and communities, **in compliance with provincial legislation.**

The Board of Trustees may establish a task group or groups to provide input and recommendations relative to the implementation of Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities.

- The membership of any task group(s) may vary based on the identified goals and objectives established by the Board of Trustees relative to Policy 20: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities.
- Prior to forming any task group(s) the Board of Trustees will identify:
 - The specific objectives,
 - Membership representation,
 - Preferred timeline and

- Reporting process for the task group(s).

The Board will comply with requirements established by the Minister.

References:

Administrative Procedures:

AP712: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities

AP717: Workplace Violence and Harassment

Section 1, 2, 16, 18(1)(2), 19, 33(2)(3), 35, 52, 53, 58, 196, 197 222 Education Act

Education Act: Sections 33 (2), (3), 35.1

Policy 1: Vision, Mission and Values

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Alberta Human Rights Act

GSA's and QSA's in Alberta Schools: ATA

Guidelines for Best Practices: Alberta Government (2016)

Access to Information Act (ATIA) ~~Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act~~

Access to Information Act Regulation 133/2025

~~Personal Information and Protection Act~~ Personal Information and Protection Act

Commented [1]: As of June 11, 2025, the Access to Information Act (ATIA) has replaced part of the FOIP Act to modernize access to information laws in Alberta.

History

2019 Mar 27 Initial Approval

2020 Jan 29 Amended

2021 Oct 27 Reviewed

2022 Jun 22 Amended

2023 Apr 26 Reviewed

2025 Aug 27 Amended