

## 2.19 LGBTQ+ Inclusion

*Resolution passed 2017*

**Whereas**, all children, youth, and teens should be able to attend school in a safe, accepting, and inclusive environment free from discrimination, be able to freely access their school campus, facilities, and community environment, and freely participate in school and community programs; and

**Whereas**, all families, guardians, and foster parents should have the right to be safe, included, and free to participate in schools and community programs; and

**Whereas**, history has shown that civil rights laws are effective in contributing to such environments; and

**Whereas**, explicit federal statutory protections currently address discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and sexual orientation, but not gender identity. However, Washington state law prohibits discrimination against any person based on his or her sexual orientation or gender identity; and

**Whereas**, the lack of awareness and understanding of issues facing LGBTQ+ children, youth, teens, and families has contributed to a higher rate of isolation, depression, drug and alcohol use, and suicidal ideations and attempts; and

**Whereas**, one of Washington State PTA's purposes is to promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth; and

**Whereas**, education regarding LGBTQ+ issues increases understanding, cultivates acceptance of and respect for LGBTQ+ children, youth, teens, and families; and

**Whereas**, harassment and bullying policies that specifically mention sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are associated with: students feeling safer, lower levels of bullying, decreased incidents of harassment related to sexual orientation, increased teacher/staff intervention, and greater reporting of incidents.

### **Therefore, be it**

**Resolved**, that Washington State PTA supports the right for all children, youth, teens, families, guardians, and foster parents to be safe, included, and free to participate equitably in schools and community programs; and be it further

**Resolved**, that Washington State PTA encourages state, councils, and local PTAs to review school policies regarding bullying, and supports revisions and amendments to those policies that specifically address the topics of sexual orientation and gender identification/expression as they relate to harassment, intimidation, bullying, and violence; and be it further

**Resolved**, that Washington State PTA will work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to incorporate standards regarding age-appropriate, medically accurate and culturally sensitive information on LGBTQ+ issues into existing health and other appropriate curricula; and be it further

**Resolved**, that Washington State PTA and its local PTAs and councils seek and support legislation that creates a safe, supportive and accepting environment in schools, specifically with training for educators and other school-related professionals to support all students, updating health education standards that deal with the issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.