

LGBTQ Legal Checklist for New England Principals and School Administrators



Is your school meeting its obligations to LGBTQ students?

First Amendment/Expression

- Are LGBTQ students free to discuss their identities, including dating and romantic interests, on the same terms as other students?
- Are LGBTQ students free to engage in displays of affection on the same terms as other students?
- Prom/Dances:
 - o Can LGBTQ students attend school dances on the same basis as other students?
 - o Can LGBTQ students dress according to their gender identity?
 - o Can LGBTQ students bring a date of their choosing, regardless of gender?
- Have you verified that your school's internet filtering program does not filter positive LGBTQ sites? Use the checklist at www.glad.org/youth/internet to find out.

Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs)/LGBTQ Clubs

- Does your school have a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)?
- Do you apply the same rules to the GSA as to other clubs? (For example, school must permit the GSA to advertise events in the same ways available to other clubs.)



Schools must allow LGBTQ clubs to form on the same basis as any other non-curricular club.

Bullying

- Does your anti-bullying policy enumerate categories including gender identity and sexual orientation?
- Is the procedure for reporting bullying clear to students?
- Do school administrators provide leadership on how to address anti-LGBTQ bullying, such as telling teachers how to respond to comments such as "That's so gay" or use of anti-LGBTQ slurs?
- Does your school respond effectively to reports of bullying behavior?
- Do you have a plan in place for addressing off-campus conduct that interferes with a student's education, including cyberbullying?

Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students

- Have you and other staff/administrators at your school read the DESE guidance for implementing the state gender identity non-discrimination law in public schools?
- Do you have a policy for ensuring that transgender students are referred to by their preferred name and pronoun?
- Do you have a policy for ensuring the confidentiality of school and medical records?
- Are students able to dress in a way that fits their gender identity?
- Are transgender students able to use bathrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their gender identity?
- Does your school avoid gender-differentiated graduation gowns? (Gender-differentiated gowns can be distressing for transgender students; consider using one color robe for all students.)
- Are transgender students able to participate in extracurricular activities – including athletics – according to their gender identity?

Non-discrimination

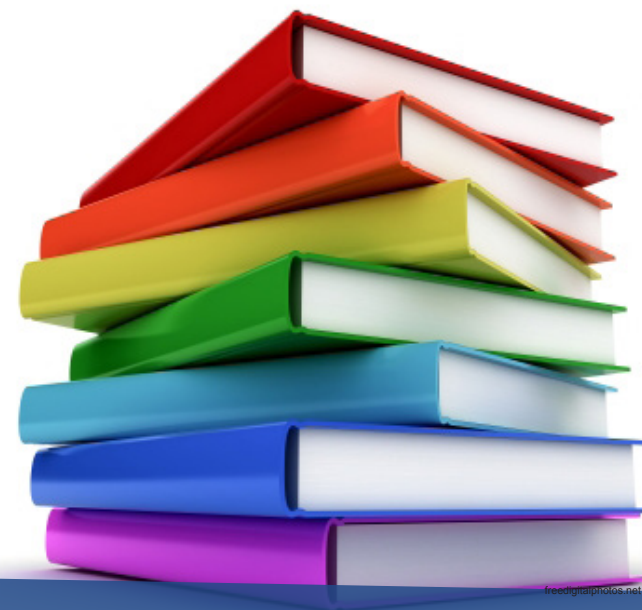
- Does your nondiscrimination policy include gender identity and sexual orientation?
- Is positive information about LGBTQ subjects and people available in the library and included in school curriculum? Does your health and sexual education curricula offer information that is positively inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities?
- Are your nurses trained to work with LGBTQ youth?
- Are your forms up-to-date and inclusive?



CT and MA have issued guidance for the safe and respectful treatment of transgender students:
CT: <http://bit.ly/chrogenderidentity>
MA: <http://bit.ly/desegenderidentity>

How Welcoming is Your School?

- Do you cultivate a safe and affirming environment for all students?
- Does your school participate in the annual Day of Silence?
- Do school personnel participate in professional development that includes sexual orientation and gender identity issues?



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