



Facts

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) is not a separate curriculum. SOGI-inclusive education encompasses a broad range of topics including identity and inclusion. Its purpose is to increase representation as a form of harm reduction, thus reducing bullying and discrimination. It is not centred in sexuality.

SOGI-inclusive education is an approach that fosters a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all students, representative of sexual orientation and gender identity. It promotes diversity, empathy, and respect, fostering a welcoming, culturally safe, and responsive, inclusive learning environment.

SOGI-inclusive resources in our school district promote understanding and acceptance of every member of our community, including their race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity.

Sexual orientation and gender identity are protected under the BC Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and provincial legislation. School District no.8 Kootenay Lake is committed to ensuring that every classroom in our district is welcoming, and all students feel safe and supported. Our commitment extends to fully supporting teachers and schools as they integrate age-appropriate references to diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity. This approach is aimed at fostering representation, dignity, and respect, thus, reducing incidents of violence and discrimination against students, staff and community members who identify as 2S&LGBTQIA+.

There are often misconceptions about what SOGI-inclusive education is and what it looks like in our schools. Broad misconceptions may lead thinking and conclusion to bias, discrimination, and oppression. Here are some facts about SOGI-inclusive education:

FACT

SOGI-inclusive education supports sexual orientation and gender identity and is designed to create a safe, brave, and inclusive environment for all students, representative of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It aims to combat discrimination by fostering representation of all types of people within classroom resources and enhancing awareness of the experiences and challenges faced by 2S&LGBTQIA+ individuals.



FACT

There is no pornographic or explicit content in any curriculum taught in our schools. SOGI-inclusive education and resources appropriately address topics like diverse identities, family diversity, stereotypes, bullying and name-calling. These resources help teachers ensure everyone feels included when teaching any subject area, including social studies, English and arts education.

FACT

SOGI-inclusive education is meant to complement parents' efforts in teaching essential values of compassion, empathy, respect, and acceptance of all people. It does not undermine parental rights but rather contributes to a greater understanding of diversity and inclusion for all students and families.

FACT

SOGI is a distinct and separate topic from sexual health education. SOGI-inclusive education is designed to promote representation, understanding, inclusivity, and support for all students, and encompasses a broader range of topics, including identity, respect, and belonging. Sexual health education, on the other hand, is part of BC's Physical and Health Education curriculum and focuses on the biological, physiological, and reproductive aspects of human sexuality. Sexual health education is taught separately and follows specific guidelines. Parents or guardians, in consultation with their school, may arrange for alternative delivery for certain topics contained in the Physical and Health Education curriculum for K-10 students.

FACT

SOGI-inclusive education aims to create representation, understanding, acceptance, and inclusion for 2S&LGBTQIA+ individuals. It does not seek to recruit or influence students' sexual orientation or gender identity, rather moves everyone toward safe and brave spaces. Teachers deeply respect and value the unique individual identities of students, and work hard to create classroom environments that are inclusive.



FACT

All students learn about topics such as respect, compassion, diversity, empathy, and representation while more complex topics such as discrimination, oppression, bias, and injustice may be explored in a developmentally and age-appropriate manner. SOGI-inclusive resources play a pivotal role in addressing fundamental human ideals such as diversity, acceptance, and a sense of belonging. SOGI-inclusive education is **essential** for every child.

FACT

These issues are relevant to every student. SOGI-inclusive education is intended to foster inclusivity and respect, representation, and empathy to address issues of discrimination, bias, oppression, and bullying, and build understanding among all students. Furthermore, 2S&LGBTQIA+ students are members of our school communities and often face unique challenges related to their identity. Studies show that having inclusive classrooms and SOGI-specific policies improve the school climate, reducing discrimination, depression, anxiety, substance use, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts for ALL students. SOGI resources help ensure schools are welcoming for every person and allow teachers to address important topics in a safe, brave, and age-appropriate manner.

FACT

SOGI-inclusive education, like the inclusion of diverse cultures, has been part of the broader goal for diversity and inclusion in our schools for decades. Although SOGI has gained increased attention recently, it is not a new concept and is supported by many educational organizations, school districts, and child development and health experts. We have learned from SD8 Aboriginal Education & Diversity Education staff that what we now know to be Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) has existed on these Lands for thousands of years and that First Nations hold specific teachings to this. This affirmation of identity is also upheld and affirmed in [UNDRIP](#) and [BC DRIPA](#).

“Indigenous Peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their Indigenous origin or identity.” - Article 2, UNDRIP

Sexual orientation and gender identity are also protected under the BC Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and provincial legislation.



FACT

School libraries and learning commons are safe spaces for children and youth. Schools ensure that the books selected are age-appropriate and reflect our diverse community, including 2S&LGBTQIA+ students and families.

Within our secondary schools, a wide range of books are available that address diverse and, at times, mature subject matter. School libraries offer a controlled environment where students can explore these topics safely and in a structured manner. Having access to resources that delve into diverse and mature subjects is vital for older students, eliminating reliance on potentially unreliable or harmful internet sources. Moreover, it guarantees that a trusted adult is on hand to provide support if required.

If you have any questions about your child's education, please talk to your school. We value and encourage open communication with parents and caregivers, and work hard to ensure parents and caregivers are well-informed and actively engaged in their child's educational journey.