

BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, it is the right of every child to access a free public K-12 education and the District welcomes and supports all students;

WHEREAS, the District has a responsibility to ensure that all students who reside within its boundaries can safely access a free public K-12 education;

WHEREAS, the District recognizes that there are employees and educators of the highest caliber who are LGBTQ+, and that all employees are valued members of the school community

WHEREAS, the District recognizes that the families in our community come in many different forms and the District values all our families and students' caregivers,

WHEREAS, The State of Connecticut prohibits discrimination, including discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation;

WHEREAS, in a landmark opinion *Bostock v. Clayton County* decided on June 15, 2020, the United States Supreme Court recognized that discriminating on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity is always a form of sex discrimination, and federal law prohibits sex discrimination in employment and education;

WHEREAS, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer/Questioning ("LGBTQ") students experience high rates of bullying, victimization, and harassment at school on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, or that of their associates;

WHEREAS, this bullying, victimization, and harassment has led to negative educational outcomes for LGBTQ students, including higher rates of dropping out, higher rates of absenteeism, and lower postsecondary school aspirations;

WHEREAS, LGBTQ+ students also report higher rates of anxiety and depression;

WHEREAS, school-age years are a critical time for LGBTQ+ youth as they often "come out" or to disclose their LGBTQ identities to others during that time;

WHEREAS, creating a welcoming and safe school environment for our LGBTQ+ students, staff, families, and caregivers makes our school community more welcoming and safe to all;

WHEREAS, the District supports education that celebrates our different identities; integrity in how we treat others; and courage to do what's right by listening to, learning from, and respecting diverse viewpoints;

AND WHEREAS, educational personnel are often the primary sources of support, resources, and information to assist and support students and student learning, which includes their social and emotional health;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the District prohibits discrimination against all persons, whether student, family/caregiver of a student, or District employee, on the basis of actual or perceived

sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, or the actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of their associates;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District prohibits bullying and harassment against all persons, whether student or District employee, on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, or the actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of their associates;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board declares the District to be a Safe Space for its students, meaning that the District is a place for students to learn, to thrive, and to seek assistance, information, and support free from discrimination and bullying; and as such Teachers and Employees of the District are permitted to display LGBTQ+ Pride Flags as signs of diversity, equity, and inclusion to Stonington students;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District shall, within 30 days of the date of this Resolution, review and modify its antidiscrimination policies to ensure that those policies prohibit LGBTQ discrimination;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the District shall, shall within 30 days of the date of this resolution, work with the relevant exclusive bargaining representatives to determine how LGBTQ anti-discrimination policies can best be incorporated in existing or future collective bargaining agreements;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the District shall post this Resolution at every school site and distribute it to District staff, students, and parents using usual means of communication, and that the Resolution will be translated into all languages spoken by students at home;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Superintendent shall report back on compliance with this Resolution to the Board at its next meeting;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board affirms that certificated District employees have the academic freedom to discuss this Resolution during class time provided it is age-appropriate; and students are to be made aware that District counselors are available to discuss the subjects contained in this Resolution