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New Research Reveals Paths to Implementing LGBTQ-Inclusive Lessons

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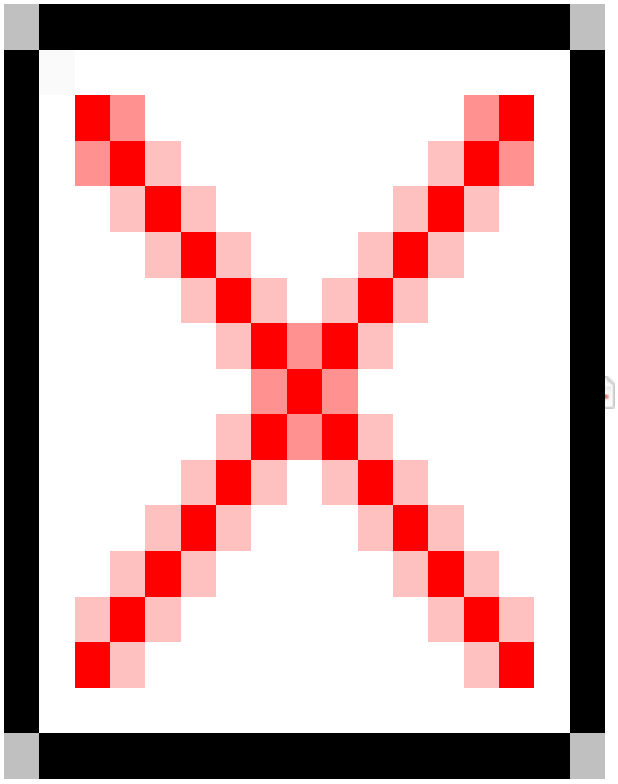
Gay-Straight Alliance Network releases "Implementing Lessons That Matter: The Impact of LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum On Student Safety, Well-Being, and Achievement," including practical implementation action guide [1] for advocates



[2]San Francisco –A report released today by Gay-Straight Alliance Network examines the effectiveness of different approaches to implementing

lessons that are inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) people. The findings illustrate the critical impact administrator support for LGBTQ-inclusive lessons can have, as well as the need to engage all stakeholders in the school community, from students to state education officials.

“This new research underscores the importance of LGBTQ-inclusive lessons in keeping all students safe and connected to school,” said Carolyn Laub, Executive Director of Gay-Straight Alliance Network. “Further, this report builds on that research to outline clear paths for students, teachers, administrators, and policymakers to effectively advocate for lessons that are factual and relevant to all students.”

Using a mix of quantitative and qualitative research, the report lifts up the experiences of students, documents various paths to implementation and their subsequent impact on student feelings of safety in three different schools, and examines lessons learned from earlier campaigns to implement ethnic studies curriculum. The report translates this research into an implementation action guide that contains clear steps for state policymakers, state education administrators, local district officials, teachers, students, and community members.

“Today’s report clearly shows that LGBTQ-inclusive lessons increase school safety,” said Stephen T. Russell, an author of the report and University of Arizona Professor. “At a time when there is more concern than ever about LGBTQ bullying and safety in schools, this research confirms that students need to see themselves reflected in lessons. When they do, they feel safer and more connected at school – and the school climate is healthier for everyone.”

The research primarily took place in California after the passage of the FAIR Education Act, which updated state education guidelines to end the exclusion of LGBT people and people with disabilities from social studies and history classes. Despite the law, there is significant work left before LGBTQ-inclusive lessons are a reality in every California school. The report outlines the path to implementation in California, as well as steps for advocates in other states to move toward LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum.

The *Implementing Lessons That Matter* report expands on previous research that found a correlation between schools with LGBTQ-inclusive lessons and student-reported feelings of safety.

The full report is available for download here: Implementing Lessons That Matter: The Impact of LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum On Student Safety, Well-Being, and Achievement [2]

Download the action guide: Implementation action guide for advocates [1]

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Gay-Straight Alliance Network (GSA Network) is a national youth leadership organization that empowers youth activists to fight homophobia and transphobia in schools by training student leaders and supporting student-led Gay-Straight Alliance clubs throughout the country. In California alone, GSA Network has brought GSA clubs to 56% of public high schools, impacting

more than 1.1 million students at over 900 schools. GSA Network's youth advocates have played a key role in changing laws and policies that impact youth at the local and state level. GSA Network operates the National Association of GSA Networks, which unites 37 statewide networks of GSA clubs throughout the country. GSA Network is also the founder of the Make It Better Project, which aims to stop bullying and prevent suicide. www.gsanetwork.org [3] http://gsanetwork.org [4]

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