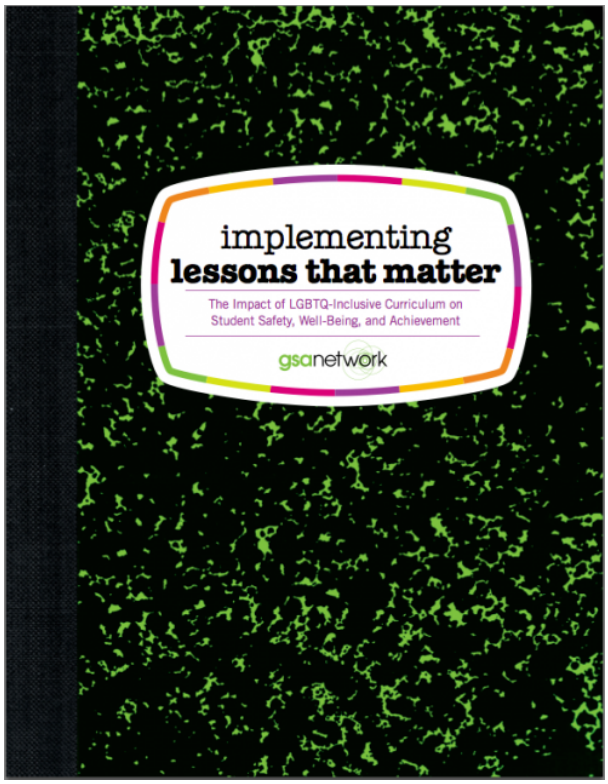
Published on *Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network* (http://gsanetwork.org)

How YOU Can Implement Lessons that Matter

Jan. 9, 2013 ? Hilary



As a student, you know that LGBTQ-inclusive lessons can have a dramatic impact on how safe you feel in school. Today, we?re releasing a research report [1] that backs you up ? and gives you tools to advocate for LGBTQ-inclusive lessons in your classes.

Implementing Lessons that Matter: The Impact of LGBTQ-Inclusive Curriculum on Student Safety, Well-Being, and Achievement looks at different ways of implementing LGBTQ-inclusive lessons and how well they work in making schools safer. The report shows the importance of administrator support for implementation, as well as the need to engage all members of the school community, from students to state education officials.

Read the full report here [2], or download the implementation guide [3] to start taking action in your school!

In addition to conducting research in three different schools and speaking to key people who were involved in ethnic studies inclusion efforts, we also interviewed students like YOU about school safety and LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum. Here?s what youth had to say:

Anti-LGBTQ slurs and harassment are common in school, especially in PE.

> ?A friend of mine in freshman year was mercilessly bullied in his classes?and he ended up having to transfer and be home-schooled.?
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> ?After being outed, I couldn?t change anywhere, I couldn?t be with?female-identified people because they were all ?oh you?re gonna check me out, oh, you?re gonna look at me,? and I?m like, ?no?just because I identify a certain way doesn?t mean I?m all attracted to you.? And they didn?t understand that, and then I would get a failing grade because I would refuse to change, because that sucked, being ridiculed and what not.?

LGBTQ-inclusive lessons are isolated, disparaging and/or missing and often students take it upon themselves to make sure lessons are LGBTQ-inclusive.

> ?You?re sitting in class, you hear people make these comments and you?re like, ?no one?s doing anything,? and well, we kind [of] take it into our own hands to make sure that [LGBTQ-inclusive subjects get] mentioned and it gets [brought up?]?I think kids do it mostly because teachers aren?t."
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> ?[My health teacher] goes out and looks for guest speakers all the time about stuff he doesn?t feel comfortable talking about?[but] he didn?t bring anyone in about LGBTQ [issues], even though I asked him about it?he just didn?t do it at all. So whenever he?d have us do a project, I would usually pick something where I could get into the [LGBTQ] thing so people could be educated.?

LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum positively impacts students? safety, well-being, achievement, and future aspirations.

> ?I think the only way you can really achieve in high school is if you feel comfortable with yourself, and you feel confident, and you feel that you can approach your teachers, and you can say things in class.?
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> ?You don?t feel safe if you think that you?re going to be ridiculed or even, if like, someone?s like, ?oh, I?m gonna kill you because you?re gay,? you?re not gonna want to go to class??
>
> ??including [LGBTQ] curriculum into our [lessons] at school would help because there are so many kids who kind of give up on their dreams because they don?t know that there are people like them who made it?one of my friends wanted to become a politician, and hold government office, but then thought, ?oh wait, I?m gay, they?re going to bash me for that and nobody?s going to elect me???
>
> ?I gave a speech on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act [which] was something I really care about and I really focused on and I did really well on [it]. I think that if there were passionate kids and stuff they were interested in, they?ll be more likely to focus and try to achieve.?

These stories show the importance of LGBTQ-inclusive lessons. Just as importantly, they show the impact that youth can have when they decide to take action! Check out the implementation action guide and organize your GSA club to advocate for relevant and factual information about the roles and contributions of LGBTQ people and issues in class. Print a copy of the report and share it with your principal, teachers, or GSA club.

And if you?re in California, LGBTQ-inclusive history lessons are the law ? so check out the FAIR Education Act section of our website [4] to tell us if your school is FAIR or unFAIR. You?ll also find sample Powerpoint presentations you can use, curricular resources, a video, and more to help you make history at your school!

Source URL: http://gsanetwork.org/news/blog/how-you-can-implement-lessons-matter/01/09/13

Links
[1] http://gsanetwork.org/news/new-research-reveals-paths-implementing-lgbtq-inclusive-lessons/010913
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