



Lavender Futures

GENDERS & SEXUALITIES ALLIANCE NETWORK OF CALIFORNIA ISSUE AGENDA:

**A Call To Action for Safe and Inclusive
School Environments for Trans, Queer,
Two-Spirit and Black, Indigenous and
Youth of Color in California schools.**



GSA Issue Agenda Survey Key Findings and Insights for Students, Parents, Educators, and School Administrators

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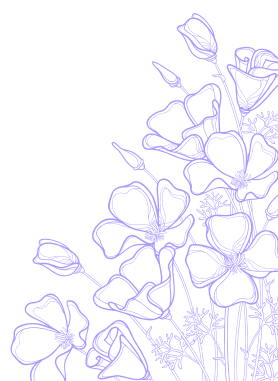
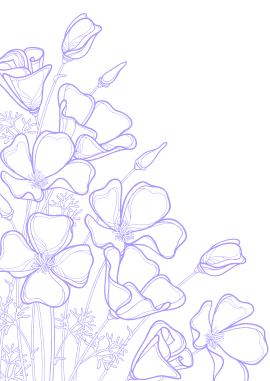
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Introduction

Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), and youth of color in California schools have been and continue to be targeted and attacked. We refuse to allow these efforts to grow any further! The Genders and Sexualities Alliance Network of California (GSA Network) has conducted a comprehensive survey to identify key issues affecting Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+) youth of color in California public schools. The survey results were used to form our issues agenda and will drive our Statewide Lavender Futures Campaign aimed at implementing inclusive learning environments where all students feel safe, seen, and have a sense of belonging — fostering acceptance, community, and equity in education through targeted community-driven programs, policies, tools, and practices. In this report we will share the survey results, the key issues affecting Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+) youth of color in California schools, and solutions we will need to work together to implement and improve inclusive learning environments.

Survey Overview and Methodology

Why did we survey our GSA base?

We listen to young people. The GSA Issue Agenda Survey was designed to identify the most significant challenges that Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), and youth of color in California face in their school environments. Centering youth input ensures our work reflects real needs, drives relevant and accountable campaigns, and builds power through youth-led data. The survey results will inform future actions and create opportunities for coordinated efforts at the local level so that every student feels valued, safe, and supported.

Survey Overview

- **Duration:** November 2023 - July 2024
- **Participants:** 350 students from across California, who voluntarily and anonymously shared their insights on school climate and the challenges they face.
- **Target Demographics:** Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), Black, Indigenous, and youth of color, including GSA and LGBTQ+ club members.

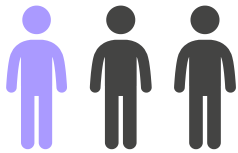


Key Findings: What Students are Saying

Through collecting, collating, and disaggregating the open-ended data collected from students, the GSA Network Statewide Campaign Committee and staff have worked together to analyze the data and identify major and minor themes, ideas, or other pertinent information.

1. Safety and Acceptance are Our Top Priorities

- **1 in 3 students** expressed that feeling safe and accepted in school is their most pressing concern. This need for safety is echoed by students across various identities.



- **Cisgender Woman, Nonbinary, Bigender, Genderqueer, Gender Diverse, and Trans Man/Masculine** students made up **65%** of students who wish to gain acceptance and safety in 10 years.

What This Means: Schools must foster environments where students can express themselves freely without fear of harassment or discrimination. Students deserve and are requesting to feel safe in their learning spaces. When students feel safe, it contributes to their academic and personal success.

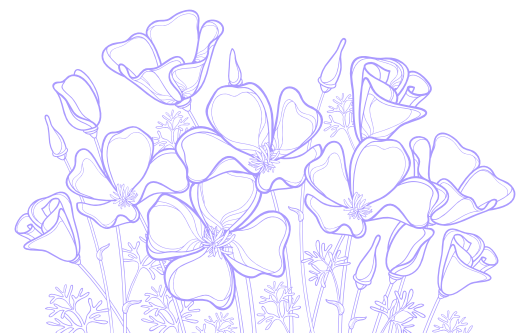
2. Harassment and Discrimination Continue to Impact Our Lives

- **1 in 4 students** reported experiencing harassment and discrimination, highlighting the need for schools to actively combat bullying.



- **Cisgender Woman and Nonbinary, Genderqueer, Bigender, Gender Diverse** made up **48%** of students who currently or have experienced Harassment and Discrimination as a Trans, Queer, and Two-Spirit (TQ2S+) youth or ally.
- **Latine/o/a and White or Caucasian** made up **75%** of students who currently or have experienced Harassment and Discrimination as a Trans, Queer, and Two-Spirit (TQ2S+) youth or ally.

What This Means: Schools must actively work to combat bullying and discrimination through policies, support systems, and educational programs. Ensuring that students of all backgrounds feel welcome is essential to creating a positive learning environment.



Key Findings: What Students are Saying

3. There is still a lack of Tools, Training and Curriculum

- **1 in 6 students** indicated that schools are not equipped with the necessary tools, training, or curriculum to adequately address the needs of TQ2S+ students.



- **Cisgender Woman, Nonbinary, Bigender, Genderqueer, Gender Diverse, and Trans Man/Masculine** students made up **65%** of students who believe Tools, Training, and Curriculum are not working in schools.

What This Means: Schools need to invest in inclusive tools, training, and curriculum that support TQ2S+ students. Without proper resources, educators cannot create safe and affirming environments. Students are calling for meaningful changes to ensure their identities are respected and their needs are met.

From the data, it's clear: students are calling for schools to take immediate and sustained action to create safer, more affirming environments for all. TQ2S+ youth and their allies are expressing a deep need for change—starting with safety, followed by stronger protections against harassment, and more inclusive tools and curriculum.

Students are saying that schools must:

- Implement strong anti-discrimination policies
- Provide comprehensive staff training on gender and identity inclusion
- Adopt inclusive and affirming curricula
- Ensure that students of all identities feel seen, supported, and valued

These steps are not optional! They are essential to creating learning environments where **all students** feel safe, represented, and have a sense of belonging.

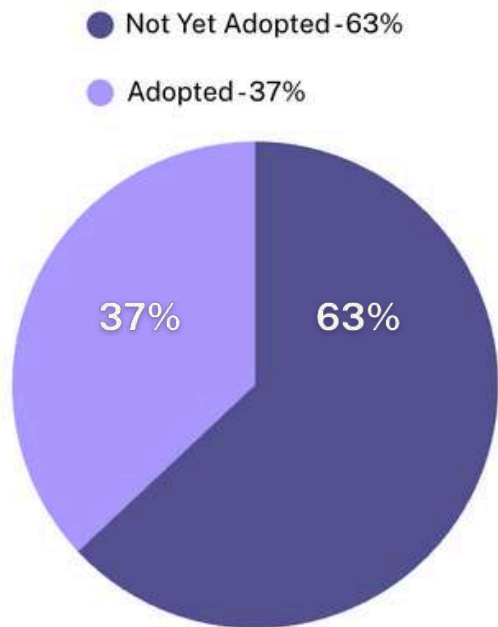


Supportive Findings from the Field

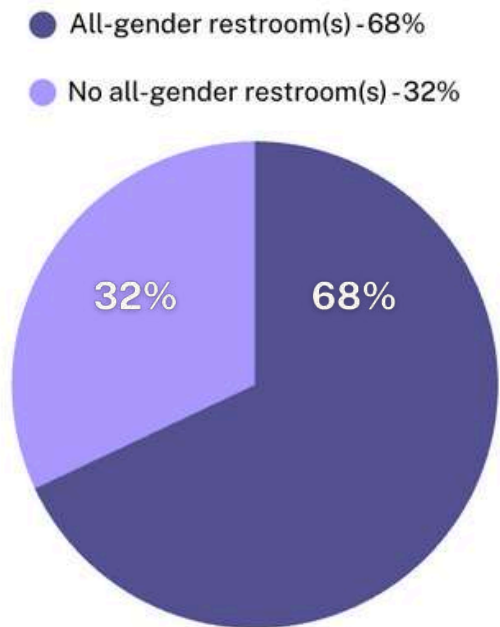
Our GSA Issue Agenda Survey key findings align with the [California Healthy Kids Survey](#) data on chronic sadness. In 2021-22, students were asked, “**During the Past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless every day for two weeks or more that you stopped doing your usual activities?**” -- **73%** of students who identify as **transgender** experienced chronic sadness, and **70%** of students who identify as **Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual, not Heterosexual**, experienced chronic sadness. This data was shared with us from Dignity in School Campaign California.

While California has taken meaningful steps to protect LGBTQ+ students through legislation, recent data shows that **many school districts are failing to implement these protections effectively**. Equality California’s: [2024 Safe and Supportive Schools Survey](#), which included self-reported responses from 146 unified school districts across the state, revealed alarming gaps in compliance with existing laws.

63% of districts have not yet adopted TQ2S+ inclusive textbooks or instructional materials.

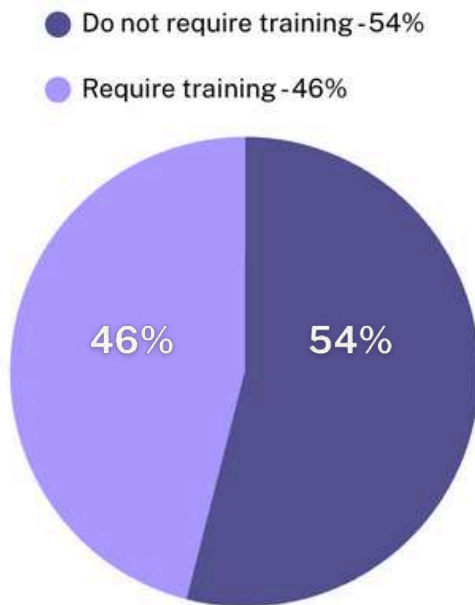


32% of districts did not have at least one all-gender restroom available for student use.



Supportive Findings from the Field

54% of districts did not require staff to complete TQ2S+ cultural competency training.



74% of districts did not include TQ2S+ specific training or initiatives among their LCAP goals and activities.



These findings highlight **an urgent need for stronger implementation measures** to ensure that TQ2S+ students receive the protections and support they deserve.

According to GLSEN's [National School Climate Survey](#), more than 80% of TQ2S+ students regularly hear homophobic remarks at school, nearly 60% experience discriminatory policies or practices, and roughly 30% report being physically harassed or assaulted due to their sexual orientation or gender identity.



Key Issues: What Students are Experiencing

Based on the survey's open-ended questions, the following themes must be prioritized to fully serve our Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), and youth of color needs. Through a robust organizational process, the membership of the GSA Network of California has voted to adopt these key issues as our team's priority areas over the next 5 years.

1. Lack of Acceptance & Safety

- TQ2S+ students often feel unwelcome or unsafe.
- Bullying, exclusion, and verbal abuse are common.
- Fear of discrimination leads to anxiety, depression, and isolation.
- Many avoid school activities to protect themselves.

2. Outdated and Ineffective Tools, Training, and Curriculum

- Teachers often lack training on TQ2S+ inclusion.
- School lessons rarely cover TQ2S+ history or issues.
- Lack of representation makes students feel invisible.

3. Harassment and Discrimination Without Resolution

- Bullying based on gender identity or sexual orientation often goes unresolved.
- Schools may not take reports of discrimination seriously.
- Students feel ignored, unsafe, and unsupported.

4. Weak or Nonexistent Policies

- Schools may have TQ2S+ protections on paper but fail to enforce them.
- Reporting systems for discrimination are unclear or missing.
- Without strong policies, students lack official support.

5. Few or No Safe Spaces

- TQ2S+ students need places to feel safe and supported.
- Many schools lack dedicated safe spaces for them.
- Without these, students can feel isolated and unwelcome.

6. No Gender-Neutral Facilities

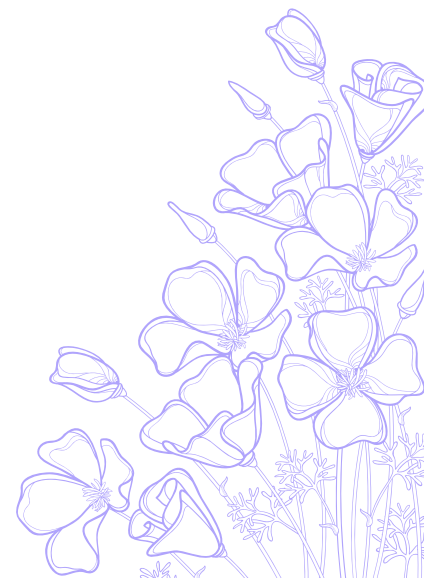
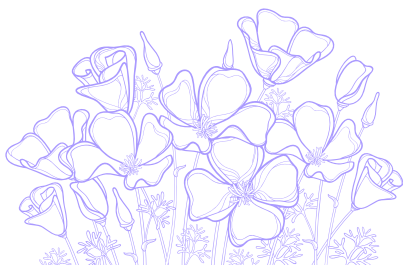
- Lack of inclusive bathrooms or locker rooms affects transgender and nonbinary students.
- Students may avoid restrooms, leading to discomfort and health issues.
- Inclusive facilities help all students feel respected.

7. Lack of LGBTQ+ Representation

- Few TQ2S+ teachers or role models on campus.
- Limited representation in school materials.
- Seeing TQ2S+ individuals in leadership can boost student confidence.

8. Absence of Visible Support from Staff

- Some staff fail to openly advocate for TQ2S+ students.
- Without strong allies, students feel alone.
- Schools should actively support TQ2S+ inclusion through policies, mentorship, and events.



Recommendations: What Our Students Need

In response to these findings and priority issues, GSA Network of California offers the following set of actionable recommendations aimed at improving school climate and supporting Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), Black, Indigenous, and youth of color. These recommendations are also in alignment with many of the laws and education codes that have been put in place to improve inclusive learning environments where all students feel safe, represented, and have a sense of belonging.

Recommendation 1: Empower and Sustain GSA/TQ2S+ Clubs on Every High School and Middle School Campus

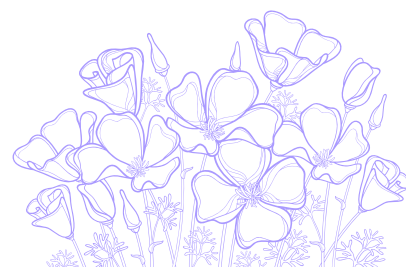
GSA/TQ2S+ clubs are vital lifelines for peer support, leadership, and community building. These clubs cultivate inclusive spaces that directly combat harassment and discrimination while fostering acceptance and safety in schools, particularly for TQ2S+ youth and TQ2S+ youth of color. A district-wide commitment to establishing and maintaining these clubs will create a network of support, equipping students with the resources and confidence to thrive both academically and personally. It's crucial to ensure that every student has access to this vital support system. *California Education Code, 200, 220, 221.5, 234-234.5 (Seth's Law) 48930-48938, Federal Equal Access Act (20 U.S.C. § 4071) and Title IX*

Recommendation 2: Institutionalize the Trans and Queer (TQ) School Climate Committee Model Across All Districts

A robust Trans and Queer School Climate Committee model will transform school environments by prioritizing the voices and leadership of TQ2S+ youth, with a focus on Black, Indigenous, and other youth of color. Fostering collaboration among students, educators, and administrators is key, as these committees will evaluate policies, address campus challenges, and implement sustainable, equity-driven solutions. District-level and school-site support is critical to ensure these committees operate effectively, champion diverse student voices, and hold all stakeholders accountable through clear policies and measurable goals to foster safe and inclusive campuses. *California Education Code Section 218, 218.3, 32281, PRISM for LGBTQ+ Students, Assembly Bill 1955 (AB 1955) – SAFETY Act*

Recommendation 3: Create and Implement a Comprehensive TQ2S+ Support Guidebook for All Stakeholders

A standardized guidebook is essential to address the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ students, particularly TQ2S+ youth of color, and to counter homophobia and transphobia effectively. This guidebook will be developed to support students, parents, teachers, school staff, administration, and district staff by providing clear protocols, actionable resources, and evidence-based intervention strategies. Consistent and ongoing training will ensure that all school staff are prepared to provide informed, compassionate, and equitable support, creating a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all. *California Education Code Section 220, 51204, 51930–51939, The FAIR Education Act, The California Healthy Youth Act, Safe Place to Learn Act, California Healthy Youth Act, Assembly Bill 1078*



Recommendations: What Our Students Need

Recommendation 4: Combat Homophobia and Transphobia with Public Accountability and Systemic Action Routinely

Discrimination against LGBTQ+ youth, particularly those who are TQ2S+ and youth of color, requires swift, visible, and systemic responses. A district-wide initiative—including dedicated web resources, school-specific support pages, social media outreach, assemblies, and public service campaigns—will promote awareness and accountability. Restorative and Transformative Justice models will empower schools to address incidents constructively, fostering a culture of belonging. *California Education Code Section 200-220, 221.5 - 231.7, 234-234.5, 48930-48938, 49055, 49428.5, 56520-56525, Safe Place to Learn Act, SAFETY Act, School Success and Opportunity Act, Sex Equity in Education Act, FAIR Education Act, Title IX*

Recommendation 5: Build Inclusive and Gender-Neutral Facilities to Promote Equity and Respect

Gender-neutral facilities are more than physical spaces—they are symbols of safety, respect, and inclusion for transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming students. Implementing these facilities across schools will dismantle barriers faced by TQ2S+ youth, reducing harassment and fostering an equitable school climate. This essential step affirms every student's, particularly those from historically marginalized communities right to access safe, affirming, and inclusive spaces. *California Education Code Section 221.5-231.5, 17585, 35292.5, Equal Restroom Access Act, Sex Equity in Education Act, School Success and Opportunity Act, Senate Bill 760 (SB 760), Title IX*

Recommendation 6: Center Student Voices in TQ2S+ Training and Accountability Systems

Student input is critical to creating interventions that are both relevant and effective. Integrating the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ youth, especially TQ2S+ youth of color, into training programs and accountability frameworks will ensure transparency and trust. This approach empowers students and reinforces the district's commitment to addressing their concerns with actionable solutions. *California Education Code Section 218, 200, 220, 234-234.5, 51930-51939, The Safe and Supportive Schools Act, PRISM Training, California Healthy Youth Act, SAFETY Act*

Recommendation 7: Create and Mandate TQ2S+ Representation in Student Leadership Roles

LGBTQ+ youth, particularly TQ2S+ youth of color must be included in all school decision-making processes, with representation in leadership roles such as School Site Councils (SSC), student government, clubs, and other positions. Every student, especially TQ2S+ youth of color deserves the opportunity to lead, inspire, and drive change. This inclusive approach ensures that policies are more equitable, impactful, and reflective of the diverse student body. *California Education Code Section 220, 221.5(f), 234-234.5, 35012, 48907, 48930-48938, 52852, School Success and Opportunity Act, FAIR Education Act*

Recommendation 8: Amplify Allyship Through the OUT for Safe Schools Campaign

By joining the OUT for Safe Schools campaign, districts can establish a visible network of support. The campaign encourages school staff to publicly identify as TQ2S+ allies within their school communities. By training ambassadors and providing staff with intervention tools, the campaign empowers adults to effectively address homophobia and transphobia, creating environments where all LGBTQ+ youth—especially TQ2S+ youth of color—feel valued, seen and protected. *California Education Code Section 218, 234-234.5, 32282, Safe and Supportive Schools Act, Out for Safe Schools Training*

Call to Action: What You Can Do

GSA Network of California urges students, educators, administrators, and community members to take action. Below are call to action designed to improve school climate and ensure meaningful support for Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), Black, Indigenous, and youth of color.

Students can:

- 1. Engage in GSA/TQ2S+ Clubs:** Join or actively participate in GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) or TQ2S+ clubs at your school to foster a sense of community, advocacy, and support for LGBTQ+ youth. *California Education Code sections 48930-48938, Equal Access Act and Title IX*
- 2. Speak Up Against Harassment:** If you experience or witness harassment or discrimination, report it to school staff. Advocate for more inclusive policies and safe spaces for all students, especially for those who identify as Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit, or TQ2S+ youth of color. *California Education Code Section 234.1(b), Safe Place to Learn Act, "Support Academic Futures and Equality for Today's Youth (SAFETY) Act."*
- 3. Be a Peer Ambassador:** Consider taking on a leadership role in fostering acceptance and safety in your school. By becoming an ambassador, you can help create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for TQ2S+ youth.
- 4. Support Your Peers:** Show solidarity with TQ2S+ classmates by actively supporting them, participating in awareness campaigns, and helping create a culture of acceptance and respect within your school.

Parents can:

- 1. Advocate for Safe School Environments:** Speak with school administrators about the need for stronger policies on TQ2S+ youth safety, including clear anti-bullying policies and more inclusive curricula. *California Education Code Section 220, Title IX*
- 2. Support TQ2S+ Students at Home:** Create an open, supportive environment at home for your TQ2S+ children. Show them they are loved and accepted, which can help mitigate the discrimination they might face at school.
- 3. Encourage School Engagement:** Encourage your child to join a GSA or TQ2S+ club and advocate for more safe spaces and acceptance within their school environment. *California Education Code sections 48930-48938, Equal Access Act and Title IX*
- 4. Collaborate with Schools:** Work with teachers and school administrators to ensure your child's school offers proper tools, training, and support to reduce harassment and ensure that TQ2S+ students feel safe and accepted. *California Education Code sections 51100-51140*



Call to Action: What You Can Do

Teachers can:

1. Create an Inclusive Classroom Environment: Make sure your classroom is a safe space for all students, including TQ2S+ youth. Use inclusive language, display TQ2S+ affirming posters or materials, and ensure the curriculum reflects diverse identities and experiences. *California Education Code Section 220, 60040-60045, 60048, and 60200 Safe and Supportive Schools Act*

2. Provide Consistent Intervention: If students report harassment or discrimination, intervene promptly. Ensure that students know how to report incidents and feel confident that their concerns will be addressed. *California Education Code Sections 220, 221.5, 234.1, 49055, 56520 - 56525*

3. Implement Anti-Discrimination Training: Participate in professional development programs focused on TQ2S+ inclusion. This will help you become an ally and advocate for TQ2S+ youth in the classroom. *California Education Code Section 218, The Safe and Supportive Schools Act, PRISM Training*

4. Incorporate TQ2S+ Issues in Curriculum: Work with your school to integrate TQ2S+ issues into the curriculum. This not only provides representation but also promotes awareness and empathy among students. *California Education Code Section 51204, 51500, 51930-51939, The FAIR Education Act, The California Healthy Youth Act*

5. Listen to Student Voices: Regularly check in with your students, especially those who identify as Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit, or TQ2S+ youth of color, to ensure they feel heard and supported in the classroom. *California Education Code Section 35012, 48907, 48930 - 48938, 52852*



Call to Action: What You Can Do

School Administration can:

- 1. Implement TQ2S+ School Climate Committees:** Establish a Trans and Queer School Climate Committee within your district. This committee should include students, teachers, and administrators who work together to assess and improve school climate, policies, and practices around TQ2S+ inclusion and safety. *California Education Code Section 32281*
- 2. Mandate TQ2S+ Representation on Decision-Making Bodies:** Ensure that there are student representatives on leadership roles such as School Site Councils (SSC), student government, clubs, and other positions who specifically represent TQ2S+ youth. This will help ensure that their concerns are reflected in school decisions. *California Education Code Section 35012, 48907, 48930 - 48938, 52852*
- 3. Create and Fund Safe Spaces:** Establish clear, visible, and accessible safe spaces for TQ2S+ youth. Empower and Sustain GSA/TQ2S+ Clubs and wellness centers on Every High School and Middle School Campus. These spaces should be welcoming and provide a refuge for students to seek support, engage with peers, and express themselves freely. *California Education Code sections 48930-48938, 49428.5, School Success and Opportunity Act*
- 4. Fund and Support Teacher Training:** Provide ongoing professional development for teachers on TQ2S+ inclusion, anti-bullying policies, and the needs of TQ2S+ youth. Ensure that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support students in a meaningful way. *California Education Code Section 218, The Safe and Supportive Schools Act, PRISM Training, Out for Safe Schools Training*
- 5. Build Inclusive and Gender-Neutral Facilities:** Establish gender-neutral facilities to promote safety and respect, reducing barriers for transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming students. *California Education Code Section 221.5 Equal Restroom Access Act*
- 6. Address Harassment and Discrimination Publicly and Regularly:** Take strong, visible action against homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of discrimination. Ensure that incidents are addressed quickly and publicly, and that all students know what steps are being taken to address these issues. Using Restorative and Transformative Justice models is highly recommended. *California Education Code Section 234.1(b), 234.1, 49055, 56520 - 56525, Safe Place to Learn Act, "Support Academic Futures and Equality for Today's Youth (SAFETY) Act.", Title IX*
- 7. Ensure Access to Tools, Training, and Curriculum:** Ensure that schools have the necessary tools, Comprehensive TQ2S+ Support Guidebooks, training, and curriculum to address TQ2S+ issues effectively. The curriculum should be inclusive and provide students with knowledge and understanding of TQ2S+ history and culture. *California Education Code Section 51204, 51930-51939, The FAIR Education Act, The California Healthy Youth Act*

The call to actions outlined above are not limited to any specific group. We encourage all stakeholders to collaborate with their school sites and districts to implement as many of these recommendations as possible. By taking action each group—students, parents, teachers, and school administrators—can play a crucial role in creating safer, more inclusive, and supportive school environments for all students, particularly for those who identify as Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit and youth of color.

Toward Lavender Futures

This report marks the beginning of ongoing evaluation efforts led by GSAs and TQ2S+ youth clubs across California, centering the voices of Trans, Queer, Two-Spirit (TQ2S+), Black, Indigenous, and youth of color. We are committed to investing in and uplifting their voices and lived experiences.

The results of this survey have illuminated areas in need of resourcing and also highlighted the incredible potential for change throughout California. By implementing these recommendations, schools can build a more inclusive, safe, and supportive environment for all students, particularly Trans, Queer, and Two-Spirit youth. Prioritizing acceptance, safety, tools and training, and equitable representation will help ensure that all students can thrive in a school system that values their young people.

Students, parents, educators, and school administrators all have a role to play in creating a sense of community and interconnected school environments. By working together, we can build a supportive space where every student feels valued, respected, and empowered. Let's continue to listen to the voices of our students and leverage your power to ensure their needs are met.

GSA Network of CA is a project of the national GSA Network that empowers and trains queer, trans, and allied youth leaders to advocate, organize, and mobilize an intersectional movement for safer schools and healthier communities. We have a dedicated team of organizers in California who support students in partnering with districts to make their schools more welcoming, healthy, and effective as learning environments for all students.

For more information about GSA Network of CA, training and partnership opportunities, campaign support, and ongoing initiatives, visit our website at www.gsanetwork.org/ca and follow us on social media at [@gsanetworkca](https://twitter.com/gsanetworkca).



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