

SUPPORTING SEXUAL MINORITY STUDENTS, STAFF AND FAMILIES

Alberta Education has developed guidelines to help school divisions support and protect sexual minority students, staff members and families. To complement those guidelines, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) created *Administrative Procedure 311, Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments For Students* to help guide interactions.



PRIVACY and CONFIDENTIALITY

If a student tells us about their sexual orientation or gender identity, and isn't ready to tell anyone else, it's imperative their privacy is respected until they're prepared to share.

Our goal in these situations is to help students feel safe and supported by encouraging them to talk to their parents and working with them to bridge that conversation.



WASHROOMS and CHANGE ROOMS

All students can use a washroom that meets their needs for privacy and comfort.

Students may ask to use a different washroom or change room for a number of reasons, including medical, cultural and gender identity. There are many ways we can meet their needs, depending on the situation and what kind of washrooms are available. School staff need to work with the young person to create solutions that work for them.



NAME

Using a student's preferred name is an important part of helping that person feel respected and supported.

The same is true of words such as she or her, he or him or they or them. If a student wants to change their name or what they're called, talk to them about it and encourage them to involve their parents in the decision. A student also needs to be informed of the limitations—chosen name, gender identity, or gender expression in relation to official school records that require legal name designations.



INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT for ALL

The school division will use respectful and inclusive language in its communication to students, staff, families and the community.

The unique identities of sexual minority students, families, cultures and communities are valued by schools through non-gendered language in regular communication tools—for example, websites, newsletters, social media sites—and the open identification of an inclusive environment for all.



REPRESENTATION

Teachers are encouraged to help students acquire the skills and knowledge to understand the unique perspectives and lived realities of sexual and gender minorities.

Teachers can demonstrate representation by using language, educational resources and inclusive approaches. These approaches should be age appropriate and respectful of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.



MORE QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about how EIPS' *Administrative Procedure 311* works in your school, talk to your principal or contact Diane Hansen, a Specialized Services Consultant with EIPS at diane.hansen@eips.ca.