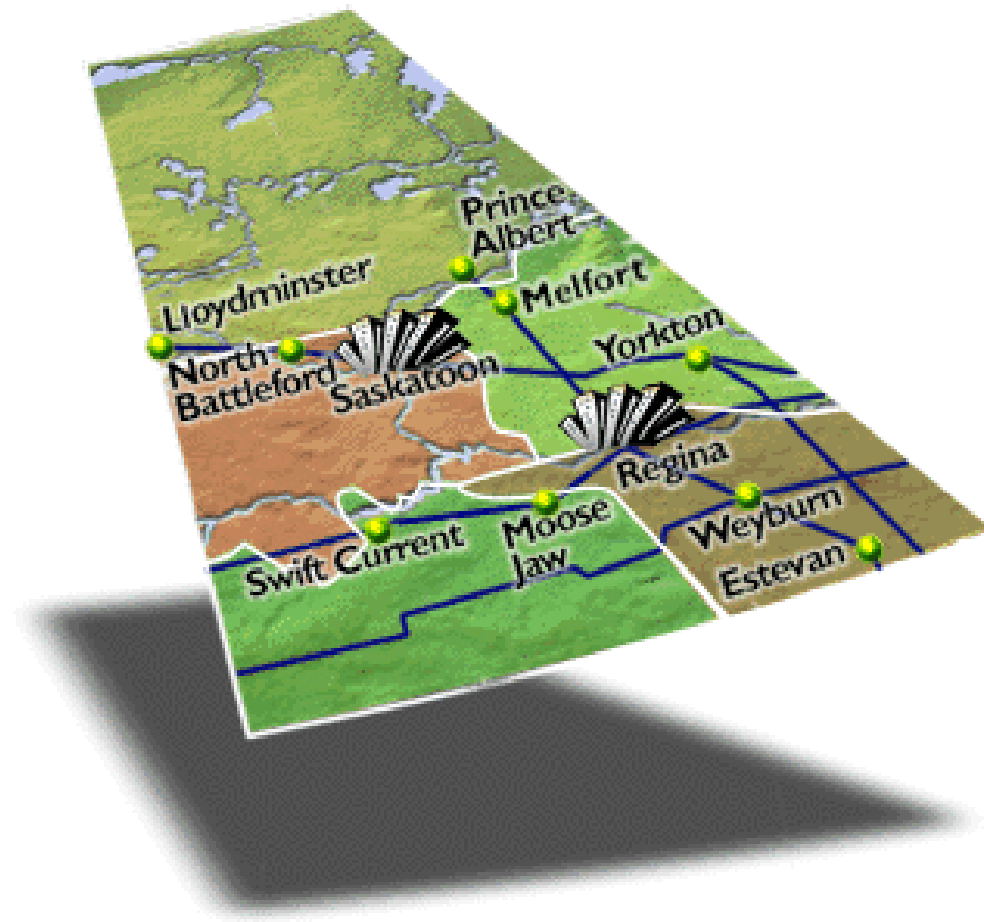
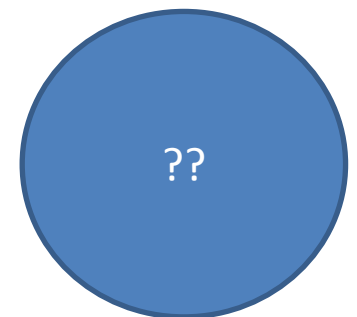
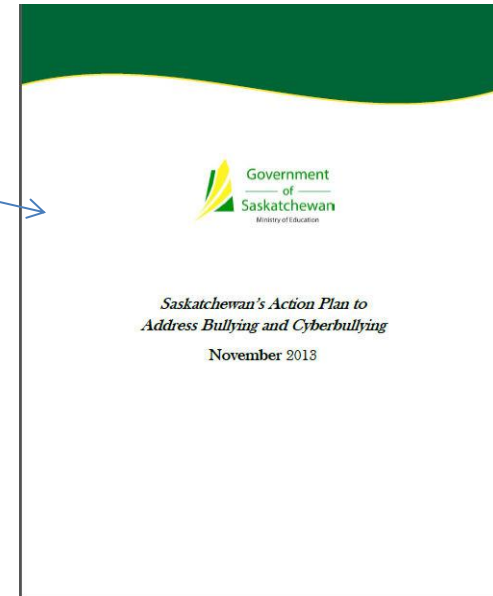
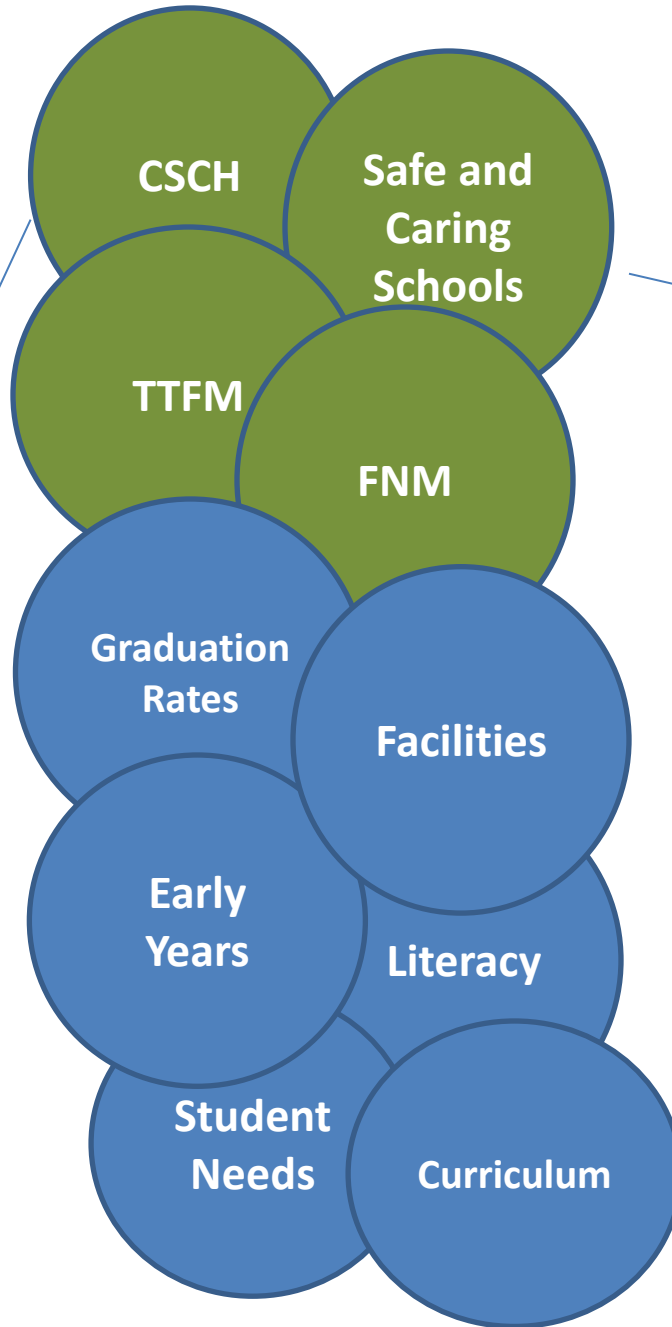


February 5, 2016
SSBA Spring Members Council

**Gender and Sexual Diversity
Saskatchewan fly**

How does GSD fit in the big picture of education?





SK fYrefly Goals

- 1) To ensure all children and youth, including students who are GSD, feel protected, included and empowered in school.
- 2) To create schools and community environments that include, protect and empower all children and youth, including those who are GSD.
- 3) To build leadership and strengthen capacity in school divisions to create learning environments where all students feel protected, included and respected.

Pilot with SECPSD



Deepening the Discussion:
Gender and Sexual Diversity

Saskatchewan Ministry of Education 2015



Initial Reflections

If you were to have a guest observe your school division and schools for a typical week, what would this guest see, hear and learn that would affirm/confirm the message that students and their families, who are GSD, are welcomed and accepted by your community and school division?

Sex and Gender

Sex and gender are two words that are often used interchangeably, but there are distinct differences in their definitions. Sex is generally understood to be based on a person's genitals and reproductive organs; these anatomical details are thought to define a person as male or female. Gender is regularly understood to refer to gender identity, meaning one's internal sense of self as female, male or other, regardless of biology.

What SK students are saying ...

The worst thing about homophobia in my school is knowing that the teachers won't stop it. They pretend it isn't happening, some even join in. It's bad enough without teachers patronising you by saying things like "It'll go away" or "We don't hear anyone saying anything".

SK Grade 9 Student

I went to see the principal about it. He said ... basically... "There is nothing I can do about it because it's such a large group. If it was two or three boys then I could sort it out, and I could have them in the office." And then he sent me to see the counsellor who didn't know what to do.

Liam, aged 16

Saskatchewan fYrefly

1. Camp fYrefly



2. fYrefly in Schools





Canada's largest, volunteer-based, summer leadership retreat for LGBTQ+ and allied youth



CAMP flyreel

An educational, social,
and personal learning
retreat



Helps youth develop the leadership skills
and resiliency necessary for them to
become change agents in their schools,
families, and communities

fYrefly in Schools?

Provides informative **workshops, training** and **consultation** on sexual and gender diversity, focusing on enhancing inclusion of GSD in the school system



Youth peer educators

Volunteers are 16-24 years old, identify as LGBTQ+ or allies, and seek to make a difference for GSD youth in Saskatchewan



fYrefly in Schools

- Interactive workshops that align with provincial curricula
- Professional Learning Opportunities
(e.g., Heterosexism, FNM, Privilege and Oppression, High-quality Teaching and Learning, Effective Policy and Administrative Procedures, Creating Safe Environments, Family and Community Engagement)

Why do we need to understand gender and sexual diversity?

Student Safety

- Many incidents of bullying and harassment are gendered in nature; they isolate and target individuals who do not conform to 'masculinity and femininity'.

School Culture

- The silencing and marginalization of students and their families who are or who are perceived to be gender and/or sexually diverse tells community members that they are not welcomed or valued for who they are.

Student Physical and Emotional Health

- Feeling ostracized and isolated in schools has long-term negative impacts on one's physical and emotional well-being. When students feel threatened, they may try to escape these negative environments through unhealthy behaviours.

Student Engagement and Academic Success

- Students who attend schools where they feel safe and welcomed while experiencing a less oppressive environment are more likely to attend school, learn and succeed.

Diversity and Equity

- Provincial curricula are designed to prepare students to become engaged citizens and to develop social responsibility. Educators need to find ways to teach inclusively about the "hidden and marginalized experiences as well as the dominant and mainstream perspectives."

(Adapted from Elizabeth Meyer, 2010)

Heterosexism

“Most people assume everyone’s straight. Teachers making analogies will assume that girls have boyfriends and that marriage is always hetero. It’s like, unless your start talking, the subject of being gay doesn’t come up.”
(SK Student, 2014)

People are not born homophobic or heterosexist ...
Homophobic and heterosexist attitudes are, therefore, learned, shaped, and maintained through communication. It is also through communication that such attitudes can be eradicated. (Gust, 1997)



Oppression of Silence

Even in schools where attempts are made to minimize verbal and physical harassment, GSD youth can still experience the “oppression of silence.” This silence may come in the form of avoidance of discussions of LGBTQ issues or in the absence of positive information or images of LGBTQ youth, adults and same-gender-parented families.



(Dr. K. Wells, 2006)

Oppression of Silence

Because homophobia and heterosexism are pervasive in our culture, failing to act against them allows them to continue. Inaction signals

acceptance of homophobia and heterosexism.

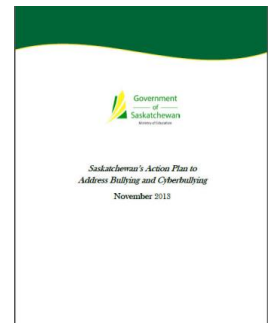
Taking action against homophobia and heterosexism is the responsibility of all of us.



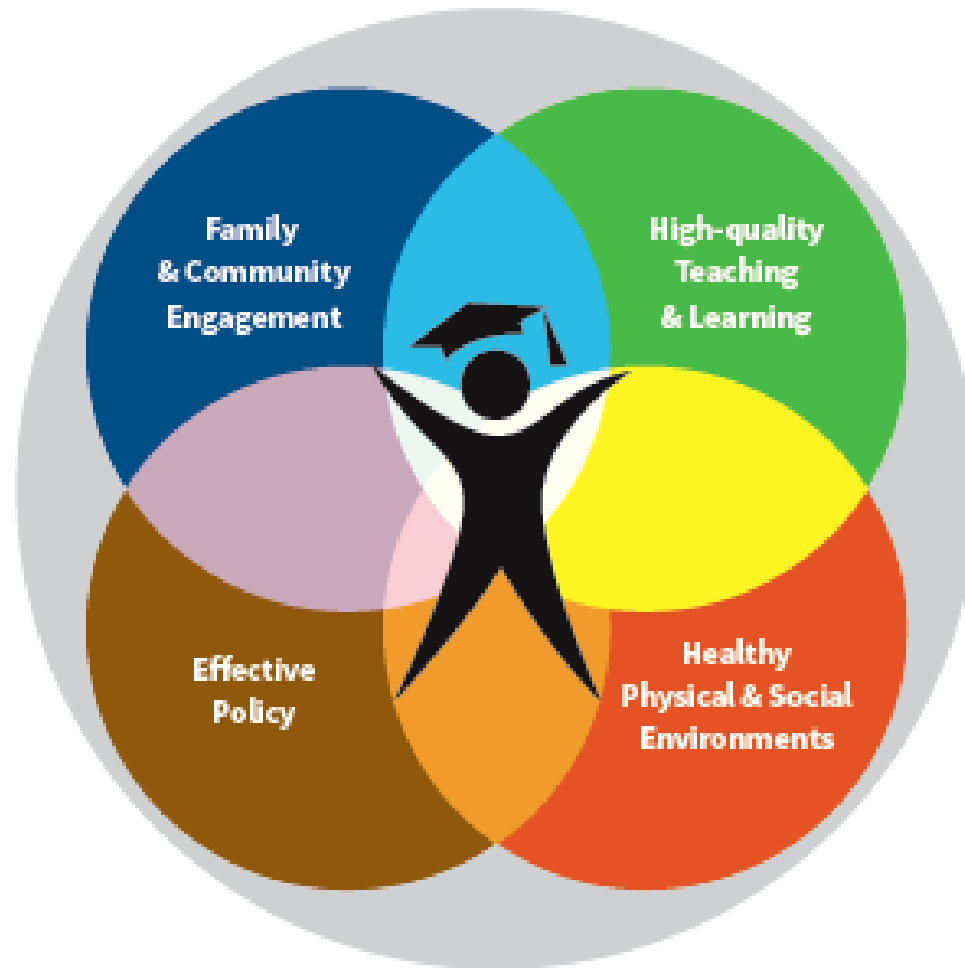
Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH) (pp. 20-32)

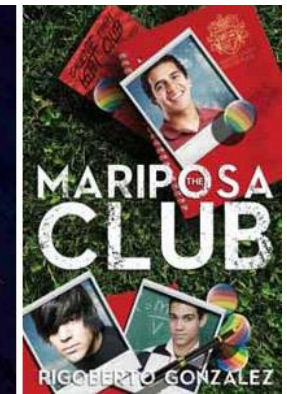
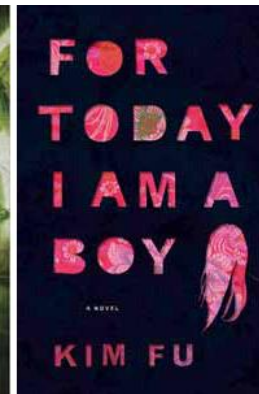
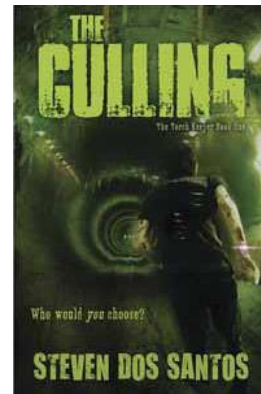
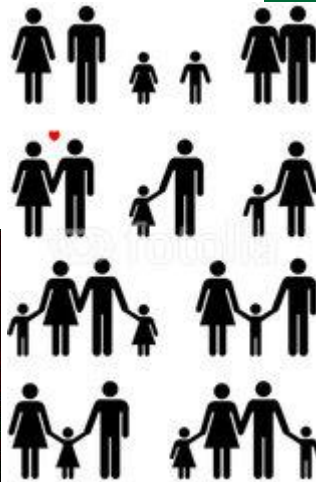
“In Saskatchewan, the Ministries of Education and Health should continue to address health and safety issues of children and youth through a Comprehensive School Community Health approach. This approach engages school divisions, schools, families and community partners to improve student achievement and well-being” (p. 20).

CSCH - <http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/csch/>



Comprehensive School Community Health (CSCH)





CSCH: High-quality Teaching and Learning

Gr. 1 – In what ways are families similar or different? What is a family? What makes a family special?

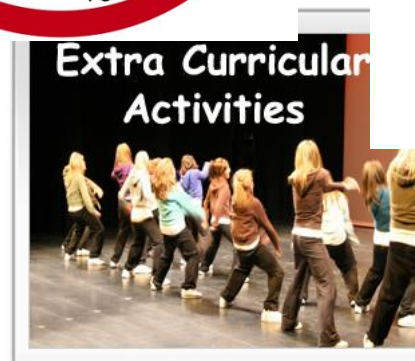
Gr. 3 – What is a stereotype? Where do we see stereotypes? What can be done to change them?

Gr. 5 – Where do our beliefs come from? Are they fair, just, moral?

Gr. 8 – When is it necessary to question the status quo?

Gr. 10 – What is my role and responsibility in addressing inequalities?

Effective Policy (and Administrative Procedures)



CSCH: Effective Policy

Generic safe school policies that do not include specific measures on homophobia are not effective in improving the school climate for gender and/or sexually diverse students in regards to their sexual orientation.

Sexually diverse students from schools with anti-homophobia policies reported significantly fewer incidents of physical and verbal harassment due to their sexual orientation but not in regards to their gender expression. (EGALE Canada, 2011)

SK Ministry of Education Policy

Policy Statement

- The Ministry of Education encourages and supports school division discussions, policy development and safe school practices for all students.
- The ministry expects that all school divisions will respond positively to students' requests to establish a student alliance for gender and sexual diversity in their school.
- In the event any student's request for an alliance is denied, the ministry will work with the school division to ensure that the needs of each individual student are being met.

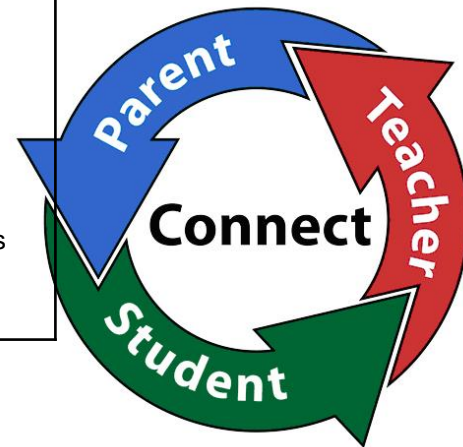
Family and Community Engagement



 **SASKATCHEWAN**
School Boards
ASSOCIATION

Potential Stakeholders/Members:

- Student Services/School Counsellors
- Community Members
- Students
- Families
- Bus Drivers
- Custodians
- Community Coaches
- Volunteers
- Guest Speakers
- Substitute Teachers
- Admin Assistants
- Professional Staff
- Educational Assistants
- SCC
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Consultants, Coordinators, Superintendents
- School Board
- SSBA/SCSBA/MoE



CSCH: Family and Community Engagement

Depending upon community norms and perceptions, gender and sexual diversity (GSD) may be perceived as controversial for some people while accepted without question by others.

Communication built on misinformation, or absence of information, often reinforces assumptions or stereotypes that create distance between schools, families and students. If communication is responsive and respectful, school-family communication can provide an opportunity to live out the values of inclusiveness and equity, which are really at the heart of student well-being and success.

Healthy Physical and Social Environments



Healthy Physical and Social Environments

It is important for educators to acknowledge that gender-variant youth exist in the school system. Schools should be proactive in creating responsive cultures and administrative procedures, and not wait until a gender-fluid/ gender-creative student comes forward to address the issues (e.g., appropriate bathrooms, segregated classes, overnight school travel arrangements, participation in extra-curricular activities, dress codes, or name changes).

CSCH: Healthy Physical and Social Environments

Alliances for GSD can become:

1. Safe Places
2. Supportive Spaces
3. Activist Areas



Physical and Social Environments

Anti-oppressive Visuals
Gay Straight Alliances
Active Student Participation
Gender-neutral Bathrooms

Teaching and Learning

Teaching Provincial Curricula
Inclusive Resources
Informal Learning Opportunities
Validation of Students' Identities
First Nations Métis Perspectives and Ways of Knowing

CSCH

Community Engagement and Partnerships

Work with School Community Councils
Community Involvement in Policy Development and Implementation
Involve Gender and Sexual Diversity Services

Policy

Policies that Include Gender and Sexual Diversity
Increased and Consistent Supervision
Student Voice
Gender-segregation Practices

Questions for Discussion

1. How can our school environments be responsive to and supportive of equal access and success for staff, students and their families who are GSD?
2. How have decision-makers established board of education/ school standards to ensure that policies and procedures are followed and that all people are accountable for adhering to them?
3. What is the process for students, parents, and/or employees to seek redress for unfair treatment, harassment or intimidation? Do they perceive it to be accessible and fair?
4. What measures are in place to ensure that individuals who suspect or witness incidents or potential acts of violence feel confident that their reports will lead to appropriate action and that necessary support will be provided to them, as well as to others involved?
5. What are our School Division's beliefs and expectations regarding GSD and how are they communicated and demonstrated?

Conclusion

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Canadian Census (2011) reported that there were 64, 575 same-sex families in Canada, a 42 per cent increase since 2006.
(Government of Canada, 2014)