GSA Club Advisor
Handbook
2021 - 2022

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I. Legal Supports and Hillsborough County Public School Policy and Procedures for School Clubs

A. United States Federal Law

1. 1984 Equal Access Act

Although research consistently highlights the positive effects of GSAs (e.g., promotes school safety, decreases victimization, and improves social-emotional well-being), these clubs are frequently the center of legal challenges. In response to these legal challenges, Congress passed the Equal Access Act in 1984, prohibiting schools with a Limited Open Forum (i.e., non-curricular club formation on campus is allowed) to deny access to any non-curricular club. This legally clarifies that a public school can only deny access to a non-curricular student club if it prohibits all clubs.

B. Florida State Law

In 2008, Florida high school students successfully challenged their school board when it prohibited them from forming a Genders and Sexualities (or Gay-Straight) Alliance (GSA; ACLU, 2008). Hillsborough County Public Schools treats the establishment and membership procedures to join a GSA consistent with those of other established clubs on campus. Importantly, this allows students to join GSAs without obtaining written or verbal parent consent. However, in 2019, the Florida Education Committee countered with House Bill 1171 (Parental Rights to the Health and Human Service Committee) which states: "*The Legislature finds that important information relating to a child should not be withheld, either inadvertently or purposefully, from his or her parent, including information relating to the child's health, well-being, and education, while the child is in the custody of the school district*" (CS/HB 1171, 2019). If this bill becomes a law, school districts such as Hillsborough County will have to communicate with parents, in writing, about their child's membership in clubs. If passed, this bill could have presented a potentially dangerous situation for students who are "out" (i.e., have disclosed their LGBTQ+ identity) at school and not at home. Fortunately, this bill was blocked on May 3, 2019, filed as "indefinitely postponed" and withdrawn from consideration; it eventually died in Judiciary Committee.

C. Landmark Court Cases

People Recognizing Important Social Movements (PRISM) v. Seidel is a 2000 case involving a student club seeking approval as a curriculum-related club at East High School in Salt Lake City, Utah. The school denied access to the club citing that "the organizing subject matter of the club narrows to 'the impact, experience, and contributions of gays and lesbians' in historical and current events, institutions, and culture," which were NOT considered to be taught in current school courses. While the court initially agreed, it discovered the school's "No narrowing" policy had never been applied to any other club and thus violated the First Amendment rights by applying its policy in an unconstitutional manner.

Carver Middle School in Lake County, FL threatened to deny access to all clubs because of a middle school student's tireless fight to establish a GSA at her school in 2013. Bayli Silberstein,

who was 14 at the time, pushed for the creation of GSA at Carver. This was in response to anti-gay bullying endured by her and her friends. Silberstein filed the first lawsuit, followed by 12-year-old Hannah Faughnan who filed another lawsuit later that same year. In December 2016, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a ruling holding that a federal nondiscrimination law that prohibits schools from discriminating against student clubs applies to Florida's public middle schools. Finally, after 3 years of litigation on behalf of students represented by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), administrators at Carver Middle School in Lake County have approved the application of a GSA student group at the school. In 2013, Amber Hatcher of DeSoto County High School in Arcadia was discriminated against by school officials when they violated her First Amendment rights by blocking her participation in a peaceful silent protest in support of anti-LGBTQ+ bullying at her school. The National Day of Silence is an annual student-led endeavor sponsored by GLSEN in which students from all over the nation are silent for all or part of the day to draw attention to LGBTQ+ harassment and discrimination. A federal Judge deemed the school officials liable for blocking the protest but found there was no need for an injunction.

More information about these landmark court cases can be found at the links below:
http://www.watermarkonline.com/2016/12/07/us-appeals-court-favors-gay-straight-club-carver-middle-school/

2013-02-25_verified_complaint_with_civil_cover_sheet.pdf (lambdalegal.org)

D. Hillsborough County Public School District Policies

The vison of Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) is "Preparing Students for Life." Accordingly, it is the goal of the district to provide students with a top-tier education in a learning environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination (which is consistent with the Florida Education Equity Act). Moreover, HCPS supports student education and citizenship rights (HCPS Policy 5780 Student/Parent Rights).

HCPS' Anti-Harassment Policy (5517and 1362), Bullying and Harassment Policy (5517.01), Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity Policy (2260), and Racial Equity Policy (2260.03) statements includes gender identity and sexual orientation in the list of categories for which discrimination and harassment are prohibited. The district's policies state that sexual preference and sexual identity cannot be used to discriminate against any student. Every student has the right to learn in a safe school environment, and the laws of the nation and the state ensure that students are provided a discrimination free environment in which to learn (see United States Federal Laws, *Florida State Laws, and Landmark Court Cases)*.

HCPS Equal Access for Nondistrict-Sponsored, Student Clubs and Activities Policy (5730): Except as provided by this policy, a student-initiated group granted permission to meet on school premises shall be provided the same rights and access and shall be subject to the same administrative procedures that govern the meetings of student organizations sponsored by this Board. Participation in a student-initiated meeting must be available to all students who wish to

attend and cannot be denied on the basis of a student's race, color, creed, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or social or economic status.

E. Hillsborough County Public School District's Guidelines for Clubs and Organizations

Clubs and organizations can provide learning experiences that broaden the cultural horizon of students, supplement the formal curriculum by increasing knowledge and skills, extend participation in vocational and technical education programs, afford constructive use of leisure time, provide services to the school and community, and promote and recognize students' academic achievements and accomplishments. Students have opportunities to join four types of clubs: an honor club, an interest club, a service club, or a co-curricular club. Research clearly indicates involvement in clubs and organizations is beneficial for most students. Students are encouraged to become a member of at least one club. Clubs are available to everyone; however, each club has certain standards that must be met before becoming a member.

GSA Clubs are within the following category: Interest Club
Purpose - To give all students an opportunity to supplement formal studies in an area of special interest
Membership - Open to all students
Student Led Clubs and Equal Access: https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/Page/4872

F. Hillsborough County Public School District's Creating Safe Schools for ALL Students - LGBTQ+ Critical Resource and Support Guide for Staff

The HCPS Office of Diversity, in collaboration with the members of the Equity Committee, created a LGBTQ+ Critical Resource and Support Guide for Staff. The purpose of this guide for staff is to: 1) increase awareness to the unique needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer+ (LGBTQ+) students (see Figure 1), 2) share best practice information, procedures, and protocols relevant to the protection of LGBTQ+ students from bullying, harassment, and discrimination and 3) increase equity and inclusion among all students in a manner that is in alignment with school board policies (Office of Diversity, 2019).

Figure 1. Facts and statistics related to the needs of our LGBTQ+ students in Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS)

- 20.1% of HCPS students reported identifying as LGB or unsure
- 38.7% of HCPS LGB students reported seriously considering attempting suicide
- 22.4% of HCPS LGB students reported being electronically bullied on school property
- 27.5% of HCPS LGB students reported drinking at least 1 drink of alcohol on at least 1 day in a 30-day period
- 29.9 % of HCPS LGB students reported being forced to do sexual things they did not want to do

Source: HCPS 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) conducted in High Schools.

II. Getting Started

A. The Purpose of a GSA Club

Bullying in the United States can be described as an epidemic – it is rampant, widespread, pervasive, and its effects can be catastrophic. Students who have been bullied report higher rates of depression, suicidal ideation, misuse of drugs and alcohol, risky sexual behavior, and academic problems. While anyone can be the target of bullying, LGTBQ+ youth are at an increased risk for bullying. Data collected from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Center for Disease Control) show that U.S. high school students identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual self-report being bullied on campus and being the recipient of cyberbullying more than their heterosexual peers. Even more troubling, results from the Trevor Project (2019) indicated LGBTQ+ youth "are almost five times as likely to have attempted suicide" as heterosexual kids. In addition, youth also reported not going to school due to safety concerns more often than heterosexual students did. These statistics are not just applicable to students who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, but the trend is the same for students who are perceived as being queer or unsure of their sexual orientation. Gay-Straight Alliance, or to be more inclusive since 2016, Genders and Sexualities Alliance can help to provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment that improves the school culture and climate not just for LGBTQ+ students, but ALL students (GLSEN, 2019).

GSA is a student-led school club that works to promote respect and inclusion for all students, as well as address the issues faced by many LGBTQ+ students in schools (e.g., name-calling, bullying and harassment, prejudicial treatment, etc.). Contrary to popular belief, GSAs are inclusive and open to ALL students, regardless of their identified sexual orientation. Allies are welcome!

GSAs must have a faculty advisor (see *Role of the GSA Faculty Advisor*). GSAs as with other student clubs must have established board members/officers, a constitution, and by-laws. These additional elements help to outline rules and expectations for the GSA. Another crucial piece of the GSA is establishing a schedule for meetings. It is during this time the "real work" occurs. Meetings provide opportunities for education regarding anti-LGBTQ+ bias, its deleterious effects, and ways to combat bias and prejudice to create safer and more welcoming school environments.

As can be seen, GSA clubs can play a crucial role in making secondary schools safer by organizing support groups to discuss various issues. Moreover, GSAs can also positively affect school climate, as well as the health, education, and well-being of LGTBQ+ youth.

B. Role of the GSA Faculty Advisor (Middle and High School)

Middle School: GSAs in middle school are far less common than in high schools. It is important to note the tween years extend from ages 10 to 15, which spans upper elementary school into high school, with the majority being the middle school years. This is a key period for LGBTQ+ youth as kids from a survey conducted by San Francisco State University (2009) reported being "attracted to another person of the same gender at about age 10." Adolescents are much more likely to be

open about their gay or transgender identity when they are not afraid of rejection, ridicule, or negative reactions from family and friends.

Importantly, findings from the 2007 National School Climate Survey show LGBTQ+ middle school students often face more hostile school climates than their high school peers yet have access to fewer supportive resources in school. GSAs in middle schools can help students feel safe and supported during this critical time.

Research shows that GSAs at the middle school level can benefit school climate and individual social and emotional health for all students. A GSA helps both LGBTQ+ and heterosexual tweens. While middle schools are slower to host GSAs on their campus than high schools, it can (and should) be done. Here are some important points to consider as you begin a GSA at your middle school.

- *GSAs should be treated as all school clubs/organizations.* GSA clubs should be student led, not run by adults. Therefore, while an adult offers safe space for meetings and conversations, the activities and decisions must come from the student members themselves. The students drive the conversations, events, and meeting agendas. An adult is vital, however, to provide the students a routine place to meet, to teach them how to schedule events on the school calendar, to provide informed outreach to the rest of the staff, and facilitate communication between club officers and school administration. The advisor serves as an adult helping students to navigate how to run the organization *they* want to run.

- *GSAs should have a focused mission/purpose.* While students run the show, they might need help in basic communication and leadership practices. Advisors should expect to guide them in creating a mission statement. This can be facilitated by educating students on the different roles of a GSA (i.e., education, advocacy, and/or social support) and helping them identify what types of events, activities, learning opportunities, they may want to create or engage in over the course of the school year. Advisors also help GSA student leaders learn how to establish group norms and bring a meeting to a consensus.

- *Advisors should protect student privacy.* Learning more about privacy issues is key when becoming an advisor of a GSA. It is the role of the advisor to help ensure the school understands student privacy is paramount. When starting your GSA, you will have students who have already disclosed, as well as students who have not. You will have students who are questioning, who are allies, and students who are just curious about the club. In all cases, students have rights to privacy.

- *Teach students to respect others.* Respecting all people is a key tenet of the GSA. There are many ways to teach students to respect others, regardless of gender expression, sexual orientation, or gender identity. This can be done school wide through Social Emotional Lessons (SEL) or other sponsored activities (e.g., GLSEN's No Name-Calling Week), or be included within group meeting activities. It is also important that educative practices be inclusive of positive representations of LGBTQ+ people and history.

- *Engage other school staff and personnel.* Advisors can also help other educators become supportive allies for LGBTQ+ students by: 1) being a role model for others (e.g., use appropriate/sensitive terms and correct others when/if you hear incorrect or derogatory language), 2) discuss information with others (e.g., experiences of LGTBQ+ students at your school, behavioral incidents you've witnessed, and/or changes you would like to see), 3) distribute helpful information in staff meetings, mailboxes, or on bulletin boards, and 4) advocate for professional development related to the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth (which can be done by you as the advisor or through coordinated efforts with community organizations; Adapted from GLSEN Safe Space Kit, 2016, p. 23).

- *Connect with the GSA of a local high school.* Create an opportunity where students from the high school program can help those in the younger program through mentorship/advice or coordinated activities/projects.

High School: GSAs in high school are *student-led* clubs and the role of the advisor is to be knowledgeable about the appropriate conduct such a club must present. Typically, as an advisor, you would meet regularly with your board members to identify and discuss activities organized by the students. You will serve as a resource, and a liaison between other adults and your GSA members. You may need to aid in facilitating meetings to discuss improvement on school wide LGBTQ+ inclusiveness. As an advisor, it is your responsibility to be fully aware of what type of GSA your school has. This could be, (any or all), a social, educational, support, and/or advocacy club. *Please note that the information within the bullets included above in the Middle School Advisor Role description also apply to High School Advisors.*

C. How GSA Clubs Support Positive School Climate and Culture

The following section summarizes key findings in the field:

Everyone deserves to feel safe and respected at school. Most young people spend many of their waking hours at school, surrounded by teachers, administrators, and peers who often have different views and opinions than they do. For LGBTQ+ youth, school can be a difficult place to explore who they are and how they identify, especially if they face harassment, discrimination, or a lack of resources. GSAs can be a vehicle that advocates for positive changes in the climate and culture of schools.

One benefit of GSAs in schools is the immediate social support network available to LGBTQ+ students. While adolescence may be a time of profound loneliness, GSAs can provide a safe space for students to develop positive relationships. GSA members have an opportunity to connect with classmates dealing with similar issues, such as coming out, forming relationships, identifying supportive staff, and developing coping strategies. Being part of a group can help students feel less lonely and give them a platform to express themselves freely and honestly.

Research has also suggested whether students are members of a GSA or not, they may benefit from the presence of a GSA in their school. In fact, one study found that the on-campus presence of a GSA is even more predictive of positive outcomes than membership in a GSA concerning

levels of bullying and student well-being (Toomey, Ryan, Diaz, & Russell, 2011). Students who attended schools with a GSA reportedly felt safer, were less likely to hear homophobic remarks, experienced less bullying and harassment, reported that school personnel were more likely to intervene against bullying, and identified supportive adults who were made visible by the group (GLSEN, 2017). As a result, GSAs can help students feel more connected to their school.

Even with such promising research supporting the inclusion of GSAs on school campuses; schools, families, and communities may still exhibit both passive and active resistance to having a club on campus. Here are some tips to help you address stakeholders who may have concerns or give outright pushback to the launch or continuation of a GSA at your school site.

Table 1

Addressing Opposition when Establishing GSAs at your School
1. Be direct and educate. Discuss the exact purpose of the GSA (i.e., helping to ensure the school is a safe space for all students, regardless of sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender identity).   2. Demonstrate the necessity for change (i.e., Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data). It is important stakeholders understand why a GSA is needed in the first place. This is a great opportunity to share some statistics regarding the prevalence of anti-LGBTQ+ language and behavior and its deleterious effects on students. This can come from a comprehensive study, such as GLSEN's National School Climate Survey or school climate data collected from your own site. You may even wish to include personal anecdotes from students or behavior you have witnessed on campus.   3. Focus on safety. Stakeholders value safety in schools. This has become even more salient in our current climate in which instances of school violence has become more prevalent across the nation. Discuss how statistics/anecdotal accounts and observations negatively affect school culture, climate, and safety. Such a hostile environment is likely impacting students' comfort, safety, and sense of belonging. It is also important to highlight how poor school climates can also negatively affect academic indicators – such as grades, test scores, and attendance. These effects not only extend to students from the LGBTQ+ population, but to the entire school.   4. Include benefits to the school community. Share information on how changes result from the support, advocacy, and education provided through a GSA can result in a more positive school climate and improve achievement. Actions developed through a GSA can help the school to be a safer, more friendly and inclusive place for everyone.   5. Include pertinent information from the HCPS LGBTQ+ Critical Resource and Support Guide for Staff. Hillsborough County Public Schools both supports and advocates for the inclusion of GSAs in schools. Under the Federal Equal Access Act, a public school permitting any non-curricular club must also allow students to form a GSA. Furthermore, the school must treat the GSA the same as it does any other non-curricular club with access to facilities, resources, opportunities to advertise, and participation without parent permission (as

Table 1 - Addressing Opposition when Establishing GSAs at your School (Continued)
applicable due to students rights to confidentiality). Many other helpful resources and talking points will help to assuage any pushback you may receive from school administrative staff or other stakeholders.

Adapted from GLSEN Safe Space Kit, 2016

Before embarking on your journey to launch a GSA at your school, it may be helpful to assess your schools' readiness for change. This assessment will identify potential barriers to the successful implementation of the GSA and may help allow you to pre-emptively problem-solve these barriers or highlight targeted areas for change. GLSEN identifies four separate school climate outlines, ranging from most resistant (i.e., the Hostile School) to most inclusive and accepting (i.e., the Inclusive School) of LGTBQ+ students.

The Hostile School	The Resistant School
1. School policies do not protect the rights of LGBTQ+ people.	1. Non-discrimination policies may include sexual orientation.
2. Curricula are devoid of LGBTQ+ themes.	2. Curricular inclusion of LGBTQ+ issues is limited to clinical references in health or sexual education classes.
3. Book and materials with LGBTQ+ content are nonexistent.	
	3. Access to books and materials with LGBTQ+ content is limited.
4. Organized and vocal opposition to any LGBTQ+ inclusion exists; homosexuality is characterized as "sickness and sin."	4. Adults feel discomfort and may believe there is danger in exposure to LGBTQ+ people or issues.
5. LGBTQ+ themed clubs are nonexistent and strongly discouraged.	5. LGBTQ+ themed clubs appear infrequently; students feel unsafe attending.
6. Athletic programs are unwelcome spaces for LGBTQ+ or gender-nonconforming students.	6. Athletic programs are moving toward gender equity, but anti-gay attitudes remain an issue.
7. Health and guidance support for LGBTQ+ students and families is nonexistent.	7. Health and guidance staff show compassion, but information and support regarding LGBTQ+ issues are not generally accessible.
8. Anti-LGBTQ+ language and harassment are rampant.	
9. LGBTQ+ people are invisible and feel unsafe being open about their sexual orientation and gender identity.	8. Anti-LGBTQ+ language is common in hallways, locker rooms and schoolyard, though not in classrooms.
	9. A "don't ask, don't tell" atmosphere exists for LGBTQ+ people.

Adapted from GLSEN Safe Space Kit – Assess your School, 2019

The Passive School	The Inclusive School
1. Non-discrimination policies are inclusive of sexual orientation, and students are made aware of this.	1. School policy both protects and affirms LGBTQ+ people; proactive education about such policies exists.
2. LGBTQ+ themes are occasionally included in English, history and health classes.	2. LGBTQ+ themes are fully integrated into curricula across a variety of subject areas and grade levels.
3. A variety of books and materials with LGBTQ+ content are available.	3. Books and materials with LGBTQ+ content are visible and available to all students and staff.
4. The adult community is open to LGBTQ+ inclusion but may not be sure how to achieve it.	4. The adult community has prioritized LGBTQ+ inclusion as part of a larger commitment to social justice.
5. LGBTQ+ themed clubs are tolerated and attended by a core group of people.	5. LGBTQ+ themed clubs are visible, regularly attended and considered as valid as other clubs.
6. Coaches interrupt anti-gay behavior; LGBTQ+ athletes are relatively safe, though not very visible.	6. Education around anti-gay bias is a part of athletic programming; LGBTQ+ athletes are treated as equals on and off the playing field.
7. Health/guidance staff have had training on LGBTQ+ issues and offer information and support.	7. Health and guidance staff work with outside agencies to provide outreach, support and education to LGBTQ+ people.
8. There are few instances of intentional harassment against LGBTQ+ students.	8. Anti-LGBTQ+ language and behavior are rare and dealt with swiftly and decisively; anti-bias education that embraces respectful, inclusive language is common in classrooms.
9. LGBTQ+ people are moderately visible; they may be seen as "different," but a safe and respectful atmosphere exists.	9. LGBTQ+ people are visible and fully integrated into school life; there is a high degree of comfort and acceptance regarding LGBTQ+ people.

Adapted from GLSEN Safe Space Kit – Assess your School, 2019, p. 31

III. Establishing a GSA Club

    A. Being an Advocate beyond the Club

        1. Continued Learning Opportunities

The HCPS Department of Professional Development offers a quarterly opportunity for training to foster more inclusive school environments; *Creating Safe and Welcoming Environments for LGBTQ+ Students* centers on classroom culture and educates teachers on how to provide support for our LGBTQ+ students in the classroom. HCPS Comprehensive Health Education program also offers various professional development opportunities to support LGBTQ+ students from year to year such as: *Step In, Speak Up* which provides participants with the opportunity to recognize when students are in distress, engage students with the ability to express your concern, and refer students and parents to support services.

HCPS Trainings can be accessed through the web-based Professional Development System (PDS) in the HCPS Staff Hub https://hillsborough.sharepoint.com/sites/staffhub/. Staff are encouraged to reference PDS regularly as new and updated trainings are added throughout the school year. In addition to district professional development opportunities, there are also various resources offered through numerous organizations (*see Resources*).

        2. Staff Trainings

The Division of Equity and Diversity may be contacted to provide consultation on site-based trainings centered on specific needs. Please contact the Division of Equity and Diversity for any questions related to staff trainings. The link below can be used to access resources and contact information for the Division of Equity and Diversity: https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/Domain/3904

        3. Teachable Moments

According to GLSEN (2017), schools that are supportive of LGBTQ+ students and allies are safer overall. It is crucial for school leaders (including administration, faculty and staff) to support a safe environment for our LGBTQ+ students. Such an environment can be fostered by: 1) developing and implementing inclusive policies and procedures at your school site (e.g., anti-bullying/harassment policies), 2) starting and supporting GSAs, 3) providing staff and teachers training for best practices, and 4) allowing for access to LGBTQ+ inclusive curricular resources.

It is important to note if for some reason your school is classified as *Hostile* or *Resistant* based on the previous GLSEN Assess your School guide (page 12), you are encouraged to contact the Division of Equity and Diversity for supports. As an educator, you are also expected to uphold professional ethics that support your practice to implement strategies to support LGBTQ+ students and allies that do not require administrative approval such as:

- Let your students know that they are all protected in your classroom and you do not tolerate any form of harassment.

- Let your students know that you will interrupt and correct homophobic remarks (e.g., "*That's so gay*," "*dyke*," or "*faggot.*" Let them know this type of derogatory language is unacceptable.

- You can fuse LGBTQ+ topics in existing curriculum by highlighting LGBTQ+ people who have contributed significantly to society.

- Create a safe space for all students and allow them to confide in you.

- Have a conversation with your administration regarding in-house professional development dedicated to creating a safe and supportive school environment for LGBTQ+ students and allies.

- Address students by their affirmed name and gender pronoun (i.e., he/him, she/her, they/them, she/they, he/they, ze/hir).

- With student consent, inform pertinent school personnel of transgender/gender non-binary students' affirmed name and gender pronouns.

B. Determining a Student Leadership Structure

One of the first steps in organizing a GSA club is to determine a Student Leadership Structure that will be most effective at a school site. When establishing a GSA club, a key factor to remember is, it must be student-led. This can be done by choosing a Student Leadership Structure that will fit the students' needs. It is important to consider the needs of the students because a leadership structure that is successful at one school may not work in another. It is also important to revisit the leadership structure decision with students each year since what works with one group of students may not be successful the following year with a new group of students.

1. Hierarchy-Based Leadership

A Hierarchy-Based Leadership Structure generally includes four leadership officer positions that are elected annually: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. This leadership structure is often seen in Student Government clubs. The officers of the club would make decisions regarding club business and run all the meetings. This style requires the officers to commit extra time to the club, as they must meet outside of regular scheduled club time to make decisions, create agendas for meetings, and brainstorm event or fundraising ideas.

When choosing this Leadership Structure, it is important to consider how varying grade levels can best be represented. At a high school, the club may choose to have the four officer positions but also allow a delegate or representative from each grade level to serve on the leadership team

as a way of promoting equity across grade levels. At a middle school, it may be preferred for all the officer positions to be held by 8th graders based on maturity.

Though this Leadership Structure allows for clearly defined roles and responsibilities, it may lead to conflicts with club members that do not serve on the leadership team. Non-officer club members may feel like they are not able to contribute ideas depending on the personalities of the leadership team. This Leadership Structure could also cause issues if the officers are not completely committed to the club's mission and vision allowing it to become disorganized.

2. Board-Based Leadership

A Board-Based Leadership Structure is like a Hierarchy-Based Leadership Structure as it has a clearly identified group of students responsible for much of the decisions and activities of the GSA club. Board-Based Leadership allows for more flexibility and can be more equitable than Hierarchy-Based Leadership. This Leadership Structure elects a board of people that would oversee the decisions and ideas of the club. The board may choose to have clearly defined roles like Event Coordinator or Fundraising Coordinator, but it is not required. The board makes decisions regarding club business as a team versus the President in a Hierarchy-Based Leadership Structure.

This may be an excellent Leadership Structure at a middle school as it allows for equity of voice and can be adapted to include students from multiple grade levels serving on the board. This Leadership Structure can be used at high school if the board remains organized with a clear vision and mission for the club. A possible drawback with a Board-Based Leadership Structure is if board members are not responsible and focused, it can be easy for responsibilities to be blurred or even dropped due to lack of being held accountable by a President.

3. Committee-Based Leadership

A Committee-Based Leadership Structure is one of the best ways to allow for leadership while still ensuring equity of voice among all students. This Leadership Structure allows different committees to be formed to focus on club specific objectives or goals. Students would be able to choose which committee they would like to serve on based on their interests. Possible committees include events, fundraising, and advocacy. Each committee would choose a committee chair to serve as a leader and be responsible for overseeing the plans for their specific committee.

A Committee-Based Leadership Structure would be a great way to allow students to start developing leadership skills especially in a newly organized club. This may also be an effective Leadership Structure for the middle school level or for large clubs that need equitable representation across grade levels. It is possible to use this Leadership Structure in combination with one of the two above by having the committee chairs meet and serve as a leadership team.

4. Collective Leadership

A Collective Leadership Structure is by far the most relaxed and flexible way to run a GSA club. Collective Leadership allows for all GSA club members to choose when and how involved they are in club activities. There is no set leadership team in this structure so club members must have a majority-rules mentality and volunteer to assist with projects or planning ideas. All club members must be provided with opportunities to share their ideas when making decisions, establishing objectives, and planning events/fundraisers. The club members must collectively work together to determine what is the best decision for the group rather than relying on a leadership team to make the decision for them. This Leadership Structure would be best for smaller clubs or newly established clubs. For larger clubs, this would not be an effective Leadership Structure as it can easily lead to disorganization or conflicts between club members.

C. Advertising the GSA Club
   1. Middle School Examples provided by HCPS GSA Club Advisors

Starting a brand-new GSA at your middle school may seem challenging. Many people feel that students have not yet solidified their individual identities, let alone sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression – which may lead folks to believe a GSA in the middle-school environment, is not needed. This could not be further from the truth. Findings from the 2017 National School Climate Survey show that LGBTQ+ middle school students often face more hostile school climates than their high school peers, yet have access to *fewer* supportive resources in school.

Getting the word out to your students gives you, the advisor, a way to creatively connect to students and build interest and excitement around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students can be one of your best resources. They know how to communicate with one another (e.g., word of mouth, written notes, and social media). They know the places at school where kids frequently hang out. They even understand what will grab the attention of their peers. Spending some time talking with students you already have working relationships with (whether they choose to join the GSA or not) about advertising is sure to generate some great ideas for promoting the club.

When it comes to advertising, visibility is paramount. Consider asking students to help you come up with catchy slogans, cool art and colorful graphics (Tip: Consider asking the teacher/sponsor of your art class or club if their groups can assist). Poll your faculty (via email) for favorite quotes supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Not only can posters advertise the start of your GSA (and meetings) but can also educate your school and prompt important conversations. One HCPS middle school has posted rainbows and important LGBTQ+ messages (as well as where to go for support for any issues) around the campus – even in student locker rooms and restrooms.

Using the school morning show is also a helpful tool. Students can create infomercials, PSAs, or choose various clips from YouTube or other streaming platforms to advertise the formation of the GSA. The cafeteria (during both breakfast and lunch) is also a great place to host an advertisement table and small giveaways (e.g., supportive LGTBQ+ lanyards, bookmarks, pencils,

stickers, etc.). Teachers can also assist with promoting GSAs. Most middle schools have 5-10 minutes of homeroom before the start of 1st period. This time can be used to pass out information and/or sign-up sheets regarding the purpose of the GSA. You can also use district-approved platforms to send out messages to students, but this will only work if your student body consistently reviews their accounts/messages.

2. High School Examples provided by GSA Club Advisors

Similar to the middle school setting, as the GSA advisor, you should support students in figuring out the best way to advertise at your school. It may be a combination of school bulletin announcements, flyers, starting a social media page, apps (e.g., Remind), and word-of-mouth. If the flyers are defaced or torn down, do not be discouraged. Keep putting them back up. Consider printing signs out on the computer that can be saved and easily reprinted.

Advertising for your group and having words such as "gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning" or "end transphobia" can be part of educating the school and can actually make students feel safer – even if they never attend a single meeting.

Remember there are straight allies at your school who may be interested in working with your group. Do not forget to reach out to siblings of LGBTQ+ students and students who have LGBTQ+ parents/guardians. It is important to increase the support and participation of affirming peers for our LGBTQ+ youth and school community.

Here are more ideas to draw more members to GSA meetings:
- Provide food at your meeting.
- Put an announcement in the daily bulletin or assembly; read on daily announcements.
- Advertise at club day- have a table and pass out lollipops or ribbons with a sticker with the name of your GSA.
- Participate in school pride or spirit week at your school.
- Set up an informational table at lunch or special events in a visible place.
- Reach out to straight allies.
- Pass out rainbow ribbons or GSA buttons to supporters.
- Make flyers or posters about specific meetings.
- Ask teachers to permanently post your group's flyer in their classroom.
- Hold a "bring a friend day" at your meeting.
- Make presentations at other clubs' meetings about your group; invite these clubs to make presentations at your meetings.
- Send representatives to classes to announce your group's meetings or activities.
- Make a website or social media page for your group.
- Set up a remind account for your group. Spread the word!

Retrieved from GSA Advisor Handbook from the National Association of GSA Networks (pg. 6 - 7)

IV.   What to do in the GSA Club

A.   Establish Constitution and By-Laws

Most high schools require a constitution and bylaws for every established club. Bylaws are your club's guidebook of established procedures for holding elections, organizing meetings, quorum requirements, membership structure, and other essential rules. Your Bylaws will serve as your organizational manual and will help guide you through the orderly operation of your club. Bylaws are not difficult to create and you can find various samples online. Keep in mind, as you create your bylaws there is a significant difference between the words "shall" and "may."

Below is a sample constitution and by-laws that was adapted from the University of Wisconsin's Gender and Sexuality Alliance (2021). This is a resource for you, the GSA advisor. Please feel free to copy, paste, and edit as necessary to fit your club's individual needs.

Sample Constitution of GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance) Club

ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1: The name of the recognized organization shall be Gender and Sexuality Alliance, which is a student organization of Hillsborough County Public Schools

ARTICLE II: ORGANIZATION PURPOSE

Section 1: The purpose(s) of this organization shall be:

1. To provide a safe, supportive, and all-inclusive space for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-binary, queer/questioning, asexual members, and allies of the LGBTQ+ Community and to educate the HCPS faculty, staff, student body, and community. This shall include the following:

- All-inclusive language
- No outing
- LGBTQ+ non-derogatory language
- A place where people feel comfortable
- No discrimination
- A place for information
- Provide a safe space
- Openness
- Confidentiality
- Supportive environment

(Section 1 continued)

- No physical or verbal abuse/ no sexual harassment and all other HCPS policies
- No excessive profanity, don't direct it at people
- RESPECT for self, others, and varying opinions
- Leave problems at door, don't take your problems out on other group members
- Professionalism
- Cell phone courtesy
- No excessive public display of affection

2. To hold regularly scheduled confidential meetings, activities, and to maintain a safe space.

Section 2: Facilitating activities and events that pertain to current issues within the community:

- Encouraging administration to sponsor and support faculty's understanding and awareness of issues within the community, whether it be global, national, or local.
- Encouraging faculty to implement LGBTQ+ topics (i.e., history, individuals who have made significant contributions to society at the local and national level, current events) into their curriculum.
- Being a source of information and referral for other students and faculty.

Section 3: Be a LGBTQ+ presence on campus by:

- Having an active voice in the Student Government Association (SGA) and its procedure.
- Responding to incidents of homophobia by supporting the victim and responding appropriately.

Section 4: To provide social opportunities by:

- Planning enriching activities on and off campus.
- Bringing to campus speakers and sponsoring LGBTQ+ activities.
- Having open and welcoming meetings for all students, faculty, and community members.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Student membership is open to all LGBTQ+ youth and allies that are enrolled HCPS. Student members have all rights to the organization including the right to vote and receive funding for organizational events.

- Members are defined as students who have either:
  o Attended one scheduled GSA meeting per month for each semester for which they have been active
  o Attended three GSA sponsored events

Section 2: Membership may be terminated by:

- Disclosing personal information about members.
- Not maintaining a safe space during meetings and any sponsored event or activity.
- Acts of violence and/or any form of harassment.
- No members shall be removed from membership without first having an open hearing by all executive board officers and advisor or 2/3 of all members.

Section 3: All members shall abide by the code of conduct established by Hillsborough County Public Schools' Student Code of Conduct.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

Section 1: The officers of this organization shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Event Committee Chairperson, Historian, and Promotions Coordinator.

Section 2: Tasks and duties of each officer position are as follows:

- President
  o Shall hold regular scheduled meetings.
  o Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.
  o Oversees secretary and event coordinator positions.

- Vice President
  o Shall hold regular meetings if president is unable to do so.
  o Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.
  o Will hold icebreakers and activities during meetings.
  o Oversees treasurer, historian, and promotions coordinator.
  o Introduces guest speakers.

- Secretary
  o Shall keep minutes at meetings and send out minutes via email after meetings.
  o Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.
  o Manages group emails and is responsible for sending reminder emails to all group members.
  o Keeps a record of all current members.

- Treasurer
  - Shall keep accurate record of financial matters.
  - Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.

- Historian
  - Documents archives of Gender and Sexuality Alliance.
  - Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.
  - Responsible for taking pictures at events/meetings and sharing with Promotions coordinator for maintenance of social media.

- Events Committee chairperson
  - Will form a committee to assist promotion of events (create posters, flyers, promotional materials)
  - Shall keep accurate information and contacts for events on campus.
  - Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.
  - Run and coordinate events.

- Promotions Coordinator
  - Acts as a representative on campus for the organization.
  - Shall work closely with events committee chairperson and Historian to   manage and update website and all social media.
  - Update events and promotional materials on social media platforms.

Section 3: All officers shall be elected once per academic year.

Section 4: Provisions for removal of an officer.

- Officer does not attend meetings/events regularly.
- Officer does not contribute to a safe space environment.
- Officer does not fulfill duties as listed above.

Section 5: Removal of an officer.

- No officers shall be removed from board without first having an open hearing by all officers or 2/3 regular members.
- Removal of an officer shall take place at a board meeting.
- Officer may resign of their own free will.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

Section 1: Election of Officers

- An elected office lasts for one academic year.
- Elections are held the third to last meeting of every school year.
- All nominees for every position must be either self-nominated or nominated by another member. Each nomination must receive a seconded vote to be on the election ballot.
- Any persons who wish to run for the Presidency as Co-Presidents must be nominated as a duo to be considered for a Co-Presidency position.
- Nominees may only run for two positions in each election.

Section 2: The quorum for election shall consist of 2/3 of regular members and board members.

Section 3: To be eligible for Presidency, a student must have had one-year executive board experience in the Gender and Sexuality Alliance or an equal student organization working within the school or previous school with faculty recommendation.

Section 4: Officer vacancies will be filled by special election at the next meeting where vacancy occurs OR responsibilities of vacant office will be absorbed by remaining executive board members, at current executive board's two- thirds vote.

Section 5: If there are not enough people to fill executive positions the order of seats to be filled are as follows: President, Treasurer, Vice President, Secretary, Events Committee Chairperson, Promotions Coordinator, and Historian. In the event of officer vacancies duties and responsibilities shall be reallocated by remaining members of the board.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 1: There shall be two kinds of meetings: social and executive board meetings.

Section 2: The executive board may call special meetings if an emergency arises or if asked by another member of the organization. Must give 24-hour warning in advance.

Section 3: All members must be notified of special meetings as soon as possible before the time of the meeting.

Section 4: The constitution shall be presented to all members at the beginning of each semester.

Section 5: Executive board meetings will be held at least once per week.

ARTICLE VII: ADVISOR

Section 1: This organization shall consist of at least one advisor.

- One of the advisors shall meet with the president on a regular basis.
- The advisor shall provide suggestions and/or help in any situation that they find appropriate.
- There shall be at least one HCPS faculty or staff advisor.
- There shall be an optional student advisor.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1: Proposed amendments to the constitution shall be presented at an executive board meeting at least one executive board meeting prior to being voted upon.

Section 2: Having been properly presented, amendments may be adopted by 2/3 majority vote of members at a social meeting.

Section 3: All amendments go into effect immediately after approval.

Adapted for HCPS from University of Wisconsin-Stout at:
[Documents - Gender and Sexuality Alliance| University of Wisconsin - Stout (uwstout.edu)](uwstout.edu)

>   B.   Creating a Mission, Vision, and Club Name

Creating a Mission Statement

Any club or organization working to educate and/or advocate should have a mission statement. A mission statement is a brief, but focused, statement that will lead the club's direction regarding goals, projects, and events. A mission statement serves a variety of purposes including outlining the goals of the group and explaining the focus of work. The statement should remain simple and easy to remember, as all club members should be able to recite or explain the mission statement to non-members and stakeholders when prompted. A mission statement for a GSA Club should be established by students and revised every year to determine if changes need to be made. As a GSA Club Advisor, it is important to remember the club will change from year to year, so all items related to the club organization and structure should be revisited and/or revised each year.

10 Tips for Writing an Effective GSA Mission Statement

1. **Stay focused.** A mission statement should say who you are, what you stand for, what you do, and how you do it.

2. **Keep it concise.** Mission statements tend to be two or three precisely written statements.

10 Tips for Writing an Effective GSA Mission Statement (continued)

3. *Describe your goals.* Mission statements often include an infinitive that indicates a change in the status of a situation or in your school climate: for example, *to increase, to decrease, to prevent, to eliminate.*

4. **Be honest.** Clarity and frankness are the ideal characteristics of a mission statement.

5. **Invite input.** An effective mission statement is best developed with ideas from all members of your group.

6. **Be inclusive.** Even if your membership does not currently include individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or straight, it is important that your mission statement convey the fact that your group is inclusive of LGBTQ+ issues and open to straight allies.

7. **Examine other mission statements** to get ideas for your own. Simply copying other groups' statements, however, probably will not accurately reflect what your group is about.

8. **Take your time.** Effective mission statements usually take a while to develop. Revisiting your mission statement drafts during a couple of meetings allows for additional input and final editing.

9. **Distribute copies** of the completed statement to everyone in your group. Your mission statement should lead your group's efforts in planning its goals and projects.

10. **Share your mission statement widely.** Consider posting copies around your school, having it published in the campus newspaper, submitting it to your school's administration, printing it for your group archives, and including it in all your published materials – flyers, posters, event programs, website pages and so on.

Retrieved from The GLSEN Jump-Start Guide (Activity 1.2 p.10)

Creating a Vision Statement

The purpose of a vision statement for a GSA club is to reveal to non-members what is the club's purpose. Like a mission statement, a vision statement should be brief but direct. It should state the club's goals and where it plans to be in the future. It should state the purpose of the club, the impact it has on the school community, and offer clarity to any potential members. The vision statement would be an accurate place to outline the GSA Club Structure as well as the Leadership Structure.

Student Club Name: GSA Club

The term GSA is an umbrella term for any club providing a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ Youth. The label "Gay Straight Alliance" is considered outdated, as it is not inclusive of all identities within the LGBTQ+ community. Many schools and organizations still use the term

"GSA" but define it as a "Gender and Sexuality Alliance" to be more inclusive. In previous years, some HCPS secondary schools chose to create a name for their club that was unique to the school culture or to the purpose of the club. **During the 2021-2022 school year, all schools are encouraged to use the name GSA Club.** Naming the club as it is nationally and locally recognized ensures greater allyship and pride for our LGBTQ+ students and increased awareness and education for the school community.

C.   GSA Club Structure

1.   Educational

An Educational Club Structure is most often utilized with younger students eager to understand and learn about the LGBTQ+ community. This would be a great way for a leadership team to kick-off a new year with students eager to get involved but still need to learn about what a GSA Club is. Many times, an Educational Club Structure is used in conjunction with other club structures to educate members, the advisor, or even students/staff within the school building.

2.   Social

A Social Club Structure is a club focused on having a fun and safe place for student members. This type of club will be interested in planning social events on campus and in the community. This type of club may also enjoy reaching out to other local GSA Clubs to meet new friends/allies and form networks for future events. A Social Club Structure is all about finding LGBTQ+ students and allies, making friends, and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community at the school and in the community.

3.   Support

A Support Club Structure is a GSA Club centered on creating a safe and welcoming environment for students to ask questions, discuss issues relating to the LGBTQ+ community, and talk about their feelings. This would be an appropriate club structure for student members not affirmed in their personal lives or within their community. This club structure allows students to form networks with students that may have similar experiences and to help struggling students feel valued, appreciated, and connected to students who have overcome risk-factors.

4.   Advocacy

An Advocacy Club Structure is focused on promoting change in the school and community. This is a more advanced club structure and would be ideal for students ready to be vocal change agents in their school or community. This type of club focuses on educating students, school staff, and the community on the needs and rights of LGBTQ+ students. This type of club structure allows student members to promote change to school, district, or state policies and laws.

V.   Sustainability

A.   Fundraising

1.   HCPS Board Policy 5830 – Student Fundraising

Student fund-raising shall include student solicitation and collection of money for any purpose including collection of money in exchange for tickets, papers, or any other goods or services. The Board will permit student fund-raising in school, on school property, or at any school-sponsored event only when all monies obtained through fund-raising less any necessary expenses incurred for the purchase of products or goods sold is used for school purposes or for an activity connected with the schools.

Student fund-raising by approved school organizations may be permitted in school by the principal. Student fund-raising by approved school organizations off school grounds may be permitted under the administrative procedures of the Superintendent. Fund raising by students on behalf of school-related organizations whose funds are not managed by the Chief Financial Officer may be permitted on school grounds in accordance with the Superintendent's administrative procedures.

2.   Club T-Shirts and Community Vendor Support

The Division of Equity and Diversity has an Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) that supports our county's Small Business, Minority-Owned, Woman-Owned, or Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses.   OSD has an online vendor and business portal of diverse representation of Hillsborough County. Vendors listed are inclusive of all HCPS students, staff, and schools. For more information regarding supportive local businesses that support our youth and school communities, search the Office of Supplier Diversity's programs and vendor links below.
OSD: https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/Domain/2489
OSD Vendor Link: https://www.myvendorlink.com/sdhc/vendordirectory.aspx

B.   Transitioning Leadership

As the advisor for a GSA Club, one of the most important roles is to ensure sustainability not only for the current school year but also for future years. To increase sustainability in a GSA Club it is important to fundraise to create a cushion for the next school year. It is also just as important to address transitioning leadership and creating a plan so the club will be ready to begin the following year. This can be a challenge for secondary schools in such a large school district due to student movement and transitions. Regardless of the leadership structure chosen by your GSA Club, it is necessary to create a strategy for passing on leadership, especially if the current leaders are graduating. One of the main goals of the current leadership team/structure should be to find a reliable and passionate group of students to lead the club in the following year. They may choose to mentor future leaders, nominate students to run for an office/board position, or recruit students they feel would make a positive impact on the club's goals.

During the second semester of the school year, you may choose to encourage the current leadership team to share their skills with younger members to help build their leadership capacity. Current leaders may also choose to hold trainings to discuss the important aspects of the club such as by-laws, club facilitation, event planning, school support, and students' legal rights. As the advisor, you may also choose to work with your current leadership team to establish a resource binder for upcoming leaders. This could include the club's mission and vision statements, goals, past meeting agendas, meeting norms, past event plans/flyers, school policy, and local/national resources. Having a clear system in place will help upcoming students have a smooth transition into leadership roles.

VI.   Resources

SUGGESTION: Visit the websites of these organizations and get on their email lists to stay updated on their events and opportunities!

A.   Local and Statewide Community Resources

ACLU Florida, Greater Tampa Chapter
Mission: The Chapter is extensively involved in local issues related to the school-to-prison pipeline and juvenile justice, privacy, surveillance technology, freedom of expression, and separation of church and state issues.
Phone: (786) 363-2737
Email: assistance@aclufl.org
Website: https://www.aclufl.org/en/chapters/greater-tampa-chapter

Equality Florida
Mission: Equality Florida is the largest civil rights organization dedicated to securing full equality for Florida's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) community.
Key events: Annual Tampa Gala, Safe & Healthy Schools Initiative, Equality Connections, and Lobby Days
Phone: 813-870-3735
Website: https://www.eqfl.org/
Safe & Health Schools Website:
https://eqfl.org/Safe_Schools?_ga=2.132204104.778020594.1611692945-341561905.1611589862

GLSEN Tampa Bay Chapter
Mission: Ensure that every member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
Key Events: Pride Parade, Annual Fundraiser, Monthly Meetings, Trainings
Phone: (813) 586-0215
Email: tampa@chapters.glsen.org
Website: https://www.glsen.org/chapter/tampa-bay

Hillsborough County Public Schools Division of Equity and Diversity
Mission: The role of the Division of Equity and Diversity is to increase awareness about HCPS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives in all sectors of the organization.
Key events: Equity and Diversity Task Force, LGBTQ+ Student and GSA Club Advisor Supports, LGBTQ+ Critical Resource and Support Guide for Staff
Phone: (813) 273-7125
Email: Monica.Verra-Tirado@hcps.net
Website: https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/Domain/3904

LGBTQ Welcome Center (St. Pete)
Mission: The LGBTQ Welcome Center opened in June 2014 in St. Petersburg's Grand Central District. Only the third in the nation. As a function of Metro Inclusive Health, serves the area as an LGBTQ+ visitors' resource, coffee house, youth center (safe space), and provides a wide range of business resources, education activities and entertainment events.
Key events: The welcome center often hosts various Metro sponsored events
Phone: 727-201-4925
Email: LGBTQWelcomeCenter@metrotampabay.org
Website: https://www.lgbtqwelcomecenter.org/

Metro Inclusive Health Centers (Tampa & St. Pete)
Mission: With active community center locations throughout the Tampa Bay area, the centers provide premier comprehensive HIV services and medical care, social activities, classes, support groups, counseling, health and fitness programs, youth programs, substance abuse programs, older adult programs, behavioral health services and free HIV testing.
Key Events: Annual LGBTQ+ Youth Summit, Youth & Parent Support Groups, Youth Nights
Phone: (727) 321-3854
Email: info@metrotampabay.org
Website: https://www.metrotampabay.org/

Orlando Ribbon Project
The Orlando Ribbon Project was started after the Orlando Pulse Tragedy on June 12, 2016. We ask that everyone wear a rainbow ribbon worldwide on June 12th each year to remember our 49 taken souls and the tragedy that struck the LGBT community of Orlando, and honor the love that spread out from this tragedy to unite the world.
Website: https://www.facebook.com/theribbonmaker/

PFLAG Tampa
Mission: Our mission is to build on a foundation of loving families united with LGBTQ+ people and allies who support one another, and to educate ourselves and our communities to speak up as advocates until all hearts and minds respect, value and affirm LGBTQ+ people.
Key events: Pride parade (open invite), Monthly support group meetings for parents & families
Phone: (863) 535-5239
Email: pflag.tampa@gmail.com
Website: www.pflagtampa.org

Project No Labels
Mission: Uniting all LGBTQ+ Supporters in Tampa Bay through positive activities and events. We promote volunteerism & activism for a fulfilling LGBTQ+ lifestyle.
Key Events: LGBTQ+ Youth Prom, Community Service Days
Phone: 813-438-3537
Email: Projectnolabels@gmail.com
Website: https://www.projectnolabels.org/

Rose Dynasty Foundation

Mission: Rose Dynasty mentors, fundraises, and brings awareness utilizing Drag, Dinner, and Variety shows. We strive to provide a safe and family-friendly atmosphere for LGBTQ+ youth no matter their Gender, Race, Sexual orientation, and/or Religion. Rose Dynasty's desire is to promote inclusion and community with a message stating that you are "Loved, Accepted, and Wanted."

Key events: -Pride Events
-Youth Dances
-Dinner Shows
-Fundraisers
-Outreach Programs
-Drag queen Pageant
-Family Friendly Events
-Momma Ashley Rose Hosting and Emcee Events
Website: https://www.rosedynastyfoundationinc.org/

Tampa Bay LGBT Chamber of Commerce

Mission: To advance common business interests, economic growth, and equality in the workplace and society for its LGBTQ+ and allied businesses, corporations and professional members by providing educational, networking, and community engagement.

Key events: Tampa Bay Rays & Rowdies Pride Nights, St. Pete & Tampa Pride parades/festivals
Phone: (727) 755-8390
Email: admin@diversitytampabay.org
Website: https://tampabaylgbtchamber.org/

USF Office of Multicultural Affairs – LGBTQ Organizations List/Contacts

https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/multicultural-affairs/organizations/lgbtq.aspx

Ybor Youth Clinic

Mission: At the Ybor Youth Clinic (YYC) our mission is to provide high quality, innovative, compassionate and nonjudgmental health care services to ALL youth (ages 13 to 24) in an environment tailored to meet their specific and unique needs.

Key services: YYC services include: sexual/reproductive health care, including birth control; HIV and STD testing, treatment, prevention counseling, and referrals; referrals to specialized care for physical and emotional trauma including sexual assault, abuse, domestic violence and drug abuse; and linkage to other youth programs within the community.
Phone: (813) 259-8700
Website: https://health.usf.edu/care/pediatrics/services-specialties/ad-med/ybor-youth-clinic

B.   National Resources

Crisis and Support:

The Trevor Project: www.thetrevorproject.org
Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386   Text Line: Text 'START' to 678678

Trans Lifeline: www.translifeline.org
Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860

Education/Curriculum:

American Library Association's Rainbow Roundtable: http://www.ala.org/rt/glbtrt

Campus Pride (colleges): http://www.campusprideindex.org/

Trans Student Educational Resources (TSER): www.transstudent.org

Intersex Resources: https://interactadvocates.org/resources/

Asexual Resources: https://www.asexuality.org/

History UnErased: https://unerased.org/

Healthcare:

World Professional Organization for Transgender Health (WPATH): www.wpath.org

National LGBT Health Education Center: www.lgbthealtheducation.org

Legal:

Lambda Legal: www.lambdalegal.org

ACLU: www.aclu.org

Transgender Law Center: www.transgenderlawcenter.org

Political/Advocacy:

Human Rights Campaign (HRC): www.hrc.org

GLAAD: www.glaad.org

National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE): www.transequality.org

Youth Specific:

GSA Network: www.gsanetwork.org

GLSEN National: www.glsen.org

It Gets Better Project: www.itgetsbetter.org

The Dru Project: http://thedruproject.org/about

C.   Scholarship Opportunities

Note: A search on traditional scholarship databases as well as consulting with your high school campus' College and Career Counselor are also suggested. GLSEN Tampa Bay is also preparing to offer scholarship opportunities to GSA members who plan to enter fields of education/advocacy, so check with them for updated information about possible scholarships each year (https://www.glsen.org/chapter/tampa-bay).

Human Rights Campaign database listings: *https://www.hrc.org/resources/scholarship-database*

Unigo data base listings: *https://www.unigo.com/scholarships/by-type/lgbt-scholarships*

D.   LGBTQ+ Reading List

Hillsborough County Public Schools Virtual Library and Library Media Catalog:
https://sdhillsb.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default/search/results?qu=LGBTQ&te=ILS&lm=BOOKS

Stonewall Book Awards: http://www.ala.org/rt/glbtrt/award/stonewall/honored

Welcoming Schools: https://welcomingschools.org/resources/books

E.   Calendar of Events

SUGGESTION: Share this calendar with club leaders to plan events and meetings.

1.   Community Events
February:
    Equality Florida Tampa Gala (Date varies) Free student/sponsor admission has been offered in the past, but not guaranteed each year.
    Website: https://www.eqfl.org/tampagala
March:
    Tampa Pride Street Festival & Diversity Parade (Last Saturday of March)

    Tampa Pride Music & Arts Festival Location: HCC Ybor City Performing Arts Building, 1411 E 11th Ave, Tampa, FL 33605

    Metro LGBTQ+ Youth Summit (Date varies)
June:
    LGBTQ+ Youth Proms (Date varies)
    Lakeland: www.lakelandyouthalliance.org
    St. Pete: www.projectnolabels.org
    St. Pete Pride Weekend, Parade & Street Fest: www.stpetepride.com

(Community Events Continued)

October:

Tampa International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival (Begins 1st Thursday in Oct) Tampa Theatre Website: https://tiglff.com/

Come Out St. Pete, honoring Coming Out Day Website: www.comeoutstpete.org

USF events: https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/multicultural-affairs/events/lgbt-history-month.aspx

November:

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) Candlelight Vigils, Various Locations (November 20)
https://www.facebook.com/St.PeteTDOR/
For annually updated information on locations visit: www.tdor.info

December:

Gay Men's Chorus Annual Holiday Show (Date varies) Student admission 50% off
Website: https://www.gmctb.org/

2. National Days of Recognition

January:

GLSEN No Name-Calling Week

February:

Aromantic Awareness Week

National School Counseling Week

March:

International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) (March 31) - is a day to show your support for the transgender community. It brings attention to the accomplishments of transgender people around the globe while fighting cissexism and transphobia by spreading knowledge of the transgender community.

Website: http://www.transstudent.org/tdov

LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Month

Women's History Month & International Women's Day

(National Days of Recognition Continued)

April:

Day of Silence - (day varies from year to year) is a student-led national event that brings attention to anti-LGBTQ+ name-calling, bullying and harassment in schools. Students from middle school to college take a vow of silence to encourage schools and classmates to address the problem of ant-LGBTQ+ behavior by illustrating silencing effect of bullying and harassment on LGBTQ+ students and those perceived to be LGBTQ+. Website: http://www.glsen.org/day-silence

Lesbian Visibility Day (April 26)

National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

May:

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (May 17) - represents an annual landmark to draw the attention of decision-makers, the media, the public, opinion leaders, and local authorities to the situation faced by lesbian, gay, bisexuals, and transgender, and intersex people and those who do not conform to sexual and gender norms. Website: http://dayagainsthomophobia.org/

Pansexual and Panromantic Awareness and Visibility Day (May 24) - is a day to celebrate the pansexual and panromantic community and educate others on the community. Website: http://thepancommunity.tumblr.com/faq

National Teacher Appreciation Week

Mental Health Awareness Month

Harvey Milk Day

Transgender Athlete Awareness Week

June:

LGBTQ+ Pride Month (U.S.) - is celebrated in June in honor of the Stonewall Riots, though pride events occur throughout the year. It also marks the month that same-sex marriage was made legal in the United States in 2015. Website: http://www.loc.gov/lgbt-pride-month/about/

Stonewall Riots Anniversary (June 28) Website: http://www.dailydot.com/upstream/stonewall-films-to-watch/

Pulse Remembrance Day

QTPoC Pride Week

(National Days of Recognition Continued)

September:

Celebrate Bisexuality Day, September 23 and Bisexual Awareness Week - is a day and week to celebrate the bisexuality community.
Website: https://www.glaad.org/biweek2020

National Suicide Prevention Week

GLSEN Ally Week

October:

LGBTQ+ History Month (U.S.) - was first celebrated in 1994 was declared a national history month by President Barack Obama in 2009 to encourage openness and education about LGBTQ+ history and rights. Hillsborough County Schools officially recognizes LGBTQ+ History month as of 2019.
Website: http://www.lgbthistorymonth.com/

National Coming Out Day (October 11) - celebrates lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people's coming out experiences and journeys.
Website: https://www.hrc.org/resources/national-coming-out-day

Spirit Day - is a day millions wear purple in a stand against bullying and to show their support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ+) youth. Purple symbolizes 'spirit' on the rainbow flag.
Website: http://www.glaad.org/spiritday

Intersex Awareness Day (October 26) - is celebrated to commemorate the first public demonstration by intersex people in North America.
Website: http://intersexday.org/en/intersex-awareness-day/

Asexual Awareness Week - is an international campaign that seeks to educate about asexual, aromantic, demisexual, and grey-asexual experiences and to create materials that are accessible to the asexual community and allies around the world.
Website: http://www.asexualawarenessweek.com/index.html

National Bullying Prevention Month - Website: www.stopbullying.gov

International Pronouns Day (3rd Wednesday in October)
Website: www.pronounsday.org

(National Days of Recognition Continued)

November:

Intersex Solidarity Day (November 8) - is also known as Intersex Day of Remembrance and marks the birthday of Herculine Barbin, a now-famous French intersex person.

International Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20) - memorializes those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice and honors Rita Hester, who was murdered on November 28,1998.
Visit GLAAD: https://www.glaad.org/tdor
 Website: http://tdor.info/about-2/

National Homeless Youth Awareness Month

Transgender Awareness Week

AIDS Awareness Week

December:

World AIDS Day (December 1) - is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate those who have died. World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day, held for the first time in 1988. Website: http://www.worldaidsday.org/about

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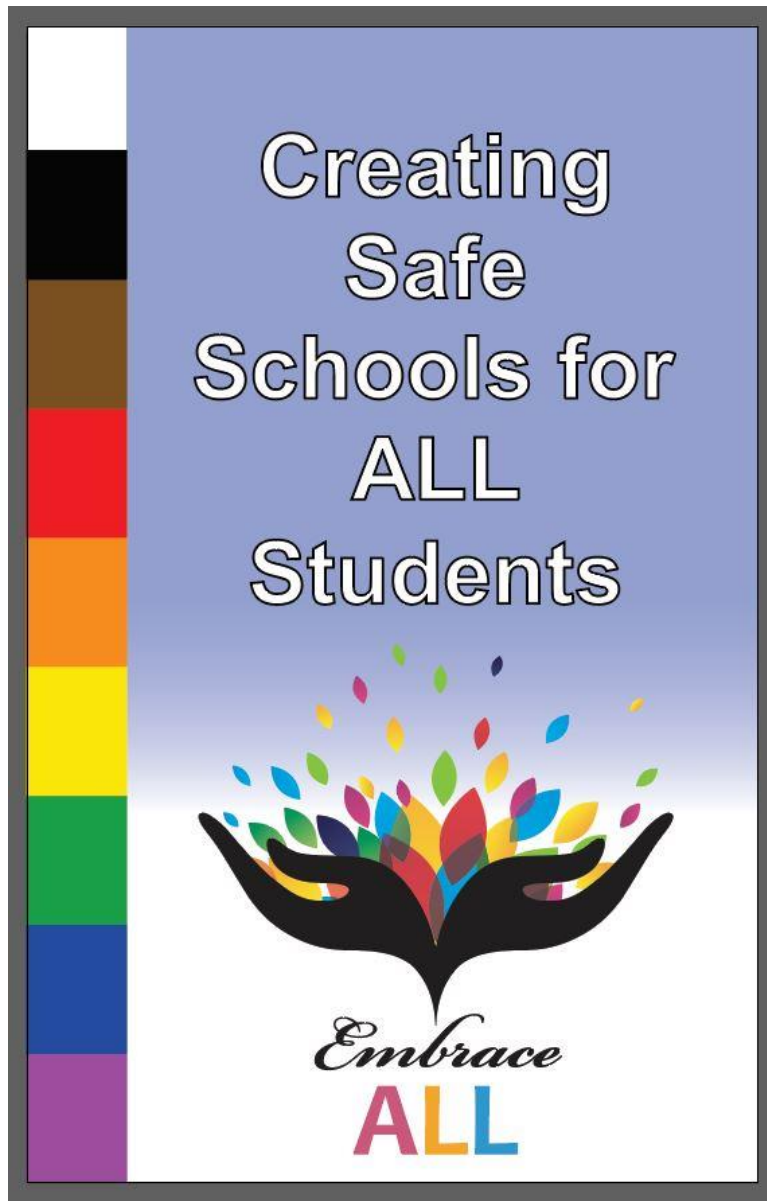
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