

What does SOGI-inclusive education look like in an elementary classroom?

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) is not a separate curriculum. SOGI-inclusive education encompasses a broad range of topics including identity and inclusion. Its purpose is to reduce bullying and discrimination, and it is **not** centred in sexuality.

SOGI-inclusive education in an elementary classroom is an approach that fosters a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It promotes diversity, empathy, and respect, fostering a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for every child. Teachers take care to ensure that all subjects are taught in an age-appropriate manner.

Creating an Inclusive Environment:

- **Respect for Diversity:** Teachers promote understanding and respect for diverse family structures, gender identities, ensuring all students feel valued and included.
- **Inclusive Language:** Classroom discussions and materials use inclusive language that respect students' identities.
- **Visible Support:** The classroom environment may feature 2SLGBTQ+ inclusive materials, posters, and imagery to affirm the school's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Student Learning:

- **Inclusive Practices:** Lessons may include stories, history, contributions and challenges faced by 2SLGBTQ+ individuals and families to promote awareness and challenge stereotypes.
- **Diverse Literature:** Teachers may incorporate books and reading materials featuring 2SLGBTQ+ characters and themes to reflect the diversity of experiences. It's important for every student to see themselves reflected in school resources, and it is equally important that the diversity of our community is reflected as well.
- **Open Discussions:** The teacher may have open, age-appropriate and respectful discussions about different sexual orientations and gender identities, creating a safe space for students to understand these topics and have engaging conversations.

Respectful Policies and Practices:

- **Anti-Bullying Measures:** The school and district actively address bullying and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity through clear policies and interventions.
- **Inclusive Assignments:** Assignments and activities avoid gender stereotypes and provide students with opportunities to express themselves authentically.

Teacher Training and Support:

- **Professional Development:** Teachers receive training on 2SLGBTQ+ issues and inclusive teaching strategies to better support all students.
- **Creating Safe Spaces:** Teachers approach topics related to SOGI with empathy and compassion, ensuring a safe and respectful space for students to ask questions and share their experiences.

Support Services:

- **Counselling and Resources:** Schools may offer counselling services and access to resources for students and families who may need assistance with SOGI-related issues or questions.

Student-Led Initiatives:

- **Diversity Clubs:** Many elementary schools have student-led clubs that provide a supportive and inclusive space for 2SLGBTQ+ and allied students.

Parent and Guardian Involvement:

- **Open Communication:** Teachers and schools maintain open communication with parents and caregivers, respecting privacy while addressing concerns and providing information on inclusive practices. If there are safety concerns, schools will contact parents and caregivers.