

## 412 Homophobia

Adopted: May 24, 2006

Revised: May 16, 2007

### **Guiding Principle: Mission Statement**

The purpose of North Vancouver public schools is to promote academic, social, and personal development for all learners, to honour diversity, encourage equity, and practise democratic governance (Policy 106).

### **Policy**

The purpose of this policy on homophobia is to ensure that the North Vancouver School District provides a safe, and positive, learning and working environment for all students and employees. In accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the North Vancouver School District values all of its students and employees “without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.”

Under British Columbia Human Rights, the Ministry of Attorney General defines homophobia as “an irrational fear or hatred for anyone who is, or appears to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered.” Moreover, the Attorney General also defines sexual orientation discrimination as “someone bothering, threatening or treating a person differently or unfairly because of that person’s sexual orientation.”

In accordance with North Vancouver School District *Policy 505: Employee Welfare*, school Codes of Conduct, the North Vancouver Teachers’ Association’s *Collective Agreement* (Article E.2), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 389’s *Collective Agreement* (Article 9.8), the Board is committed to providing a learning and working environment free of discrimination and harassment for all students and employees.

Through on-going educational initiatives and opportunities for all students and employees, the North Vancouver School District is committed to raising awareness and improving the understanding of the lives of people who are identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, or who are questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

### **Administrative Procedures**

As per Board *Policy 301: Student Safety*, schools are expected to provide learning environments where students can attend without fear or threat of unsafe conditions, violence, or harassment. Accordingly, homophobic behaviour is deemed unacceptable and will be addressed in a rational, educational, and progressive disciplinary manner by each school’s administration. Schools are encouraged to communicate, through their Codes of Conduct, the appropriate expectations regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Schools will be required to review the relevant data from the School District’s *Safe School*

*and Social Responsibility Survey* and other sources of information, pertinent to their school, and address specific areas of concern.

### **Education and Curriculum**

The Board encourages and supports ongoing education for staff and students in the areas of anti-homophobia, anti-harassment, and anti-discrimination education. School staffs are encouraged to incorporate school in-service, individual professional development, and group staff development activities as opportunities to enhance the school and work place as a tolerant and diverse learning environment.

Students are educated in the areas of tolerance, diversity, harassment, discrimination, and anti-homophobia education through the BC Provincial Curriculum in subject areas such as: Social Studies, Health and Career Education, Planning, and through the Provincial Performance Standards. Specifically, anti-homophobic Education attempts to identify and correct attitudes and behaviours that reinforce homophobic conduct.

### **Annual Review of Policy**

The Superintendent will review this Policy on an annual basis.