

POLICY

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Related Entries: AC, JCCA, JCCA-RA, JCL, JO, JO-RA, JP, JQ-RA

Responsible Office: DIVISION OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES,
OFFICE OF EQUITY AND ACCELERATED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR LGBTQ+ STUDENTS

A. PURPOSE

To establish a policy on the prohibition of discrimination and harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression at Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), and to create a school environment that is safe, welcoming, and affirming for all AACPS students, including LGBTQ+ students, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

B. ISSUE

Students who experience discrimination or harassment based on their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression are at a significant risk of a range of health, safety, and educational problems. The prevention of such discrimination and harassment requires a concerted effort to support a whole-school-based bias prevention and intervention program that involves all stakeholders in the school community.

This policy is consistent with the goal of fostering learning environments that honor, respect, and support the diversity of the AACPS student body. The intent is to help ensure that all AACPS students, including LGBTQ+ students, feel safe, included, and respected in school regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. In accordance with Policy AF – Educational Equity, AACPS provides LGBTQ+ students equitable access to the educational rigor, inclusive curriculum, resources, and supports that are designed to maximize the student’s academic success and social and emotional well-being.

C. POSITION

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County (Board) prohibits discrimination in all AACPS programs on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, or disability.

1. AACPS complies with federal, State, and local laws that prohibit discrimination based on membership of a protected class.
2. Discrimination and harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression is prohibited.
3. The Board supports the right of any student to be addressed by a name and pronoun that correspond to the student's gender identity.
4. The Board supports the use of gender-inclusive terminology when practicable.
5. The Board supports the right of any student to use school facilities that correspond with the gender identity the student consistently demonstrates and with which the student identifies as well as the right of any student to use safe and non-stigmatizing school facilities with which a student is most comfortable.
6. The Board recognizes that information about any student's gender identity, legal name, or sex assigned at birth may constitute confidential medical information within the student's educational record.
7. The Board supports the AACPS dress code being enforced equitably regardless of the sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of any student.
8. The Board is committed to providing AACPS students a safe and supportive environment free of discrimination and harassment, and supports student-based organizations that foster such support. As such, student-based LGBTQ+ organizations may be formed in accordance with Policy JCL – Student Organizations.
9. The Board realizes that this is a multifaceted and ever-evolving subject and supports the continued mandatory and meaningful education, training, and professional development that will foster learning environments that honor, respect, and support the diversity of the AACPS student body.
10. AACPS students are expected to treat each other with mutual respect.
11. It is a violation of this policy for an AACPS student to engage in discrimination or harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression on AACPS property, on a school bus, at school-sponsored activities, or in any manner that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school regardless of where the incident occurs.
12. It is a violation of this policy for an AACPS student to engage in retaliation against individuals – victims, witnesses, or bystanders – who report acts of discrimination or harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

13. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression shall be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth in Regulation JCCA-RA – Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Intimidation or Regulation JO-RA – Bias Behavior and Language.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent is authorized to develop regulations to implement this policy.

Policy History: Adopted on 06/16/21

Note Previous Policy History: None

Legal Reference: Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232; Section 7-424 of the Education Article; COMAR 13A.01.04.03 School Safety; COMAR 13A.08.02 Student Records