MDE LGBTQ+ Students Project
2021-2022 Virtual Offerings

In 2020, the Michigan Department of Education's LGBTQ+ Students' Project created a suite of 8 virtual trainings to adapt to the needs of staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interactive trainings covered a range of topics, including understanding identities and student experiences, law and policy, student voice, navigating biases, classroom strategies, best practices, student information systems, and GSA clubs. These trainings were a resounding success, and the project has chosen to continue to offer these virtual trainings.

These trainings have been recorded and are available to view in a prerecorded format (links below). We are working to include closed-captions to maximize accessibility. As live synchronous workshops are added to the training calendar, a link to the registration flyer will be added. Currently, we are only offering State Continuing Education Clock Hours—SCECHs (1.25 hours) and Social Work CEs (1.5 hours) for participation in live, synchronous sessions. **Please note:** the content of these trainings cannot be utilized or shared without the expressed authorized permission of the Michigan Department of Education.

■ **Laying the Foundation: Understanding the Identities and Experiences of LGBTQ+ Students in Michigan**
Did you know that one in eight students in Michigan Public High Schools identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender (LGBT)? Having a foundational understanding of who LGBTQ+ students are and what they are experiencing in Michigan schools is critical to supporting their health, well being, and academic achievement. In this interactive webinar, participants will discuss key identities related to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and accompanying terms. We will also seek to understand their daily lived experiences by examining Michigan-specific and national data. This workshop will help provide a foundational understanding for school personnel who want to support LGBTQ+ students and their families.

Laying the Foundation Recording (89 min)
Laying the Foundation Resource List
Definitions Matching Game - View Only Version

■ **When Bias Gets in the Way: How to Recognize and Address Barriers to Supporting LGBTQ+ Students and Families**
Our unique experiences, identities, privileges and biases shape our perceptions of the world and how we act. In this interactive webinar, participants will explore the ways in which biases are formed and influence how we interact--consciously and unconsciously--with those around us. We will identify strategies for navigating our own biases, as well as collaborating with families and colleagues who may take actions that have the unintentional consequence of creating unsupportive or even harmful educational environments for their LGBTQ+ students. A foundational understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression is recommended, but not required.

When Bias Gets in the Way Recording (84 min)
When Bias Gets in the Way Resource List
When Bias Gets in the Way Mentimeter Results

■ **Listening to Understand: LGBTQ+ Students Discuss Their Experiences in Michigan Schools**
There is nothing more powerful than hearing directly from young people as they speak about their school experiences. In this interactive workshop, participants will learn from the experts: the students themselves. Participants will hear about what challenges our LGBTQ+ students are facing, what supports

are enhancing their learning opportunities, and what strategies school personnel can enact to help ensure LGBTQ+ students thrive in school. An extensive Q&A session with the student panel will be included in this workshop, so come prepared with questions and be ready to listen and learn. A foundational understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression is recommended, but not required.

Listening to Understand Recording (88 min) [link temporarily suspended to protect safety of students]
Listening to Understand Resource List

■ **The Power of GSAs: Getting your School's Club Up and Running!**
If you are thinking about getting a GSA started, this workshop is for you! Research has consistently shown that the mere presence of a GSA (Gender and Sexuality Alliance or Gay Straight Alliance) can improve the culture and climate for its members, as well as the entire student body. A growing number of Michigan school districts have GSAs, and many more have reached out to MDE and MOASH for guidance on getting a club started. When it comes to the law, it's clear that districts that have non-curricular clubs must allow GSAs as well. In this interactive workshop, we'll explore best practice strategies for how to get started, getting decision makers' buy-in, determining a focus, doing outreach, holding a first meeting, and navigating situations that might arise. Priority for approving registrations will be given to schools that are in the early phases of starting a GSA.

The Power of GSAs Recording (55 min)
Power of GSAs Resource List
Participant GSA Best Practice Brainstorm

■ **Stay Current: Legal and Policy Issues Pertaining to LGBTQ+ Students and School Staff**
School administrators, school board members and other educators need to stay abreast of the latest federal and state laws and policies pertaining to supporting LGBTQ+ students in schools, to support students and families and avoid lawsuits. This can be a challenging task, especially given the changing legal landscape which includes new court rulings like the June 2020 Supreme Court *Bostock* decision on employment discrimination against LGBTQ people. In this interactive webinar, we will review legal requirements, the State Board of Education's statement and guidance on supporting LGBTQ+ students, as well as inclusive policies and practices. Participants will leave with strategies for advancing policies and procedures in their local district. A foundational understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression is recommended, but not required.

Law and Policy Recording (84 min)
Law and Policy Resource List

■ **Safe, Supportive and Inclusive Classrooms: Practical Strategies for Affirming LGBTQ+ Students**
In this interactive workshop, we explored day-to-day dealings educators have with their LGBTQ+ students and their non-LGBTQ+ peers in the classroom. We also explored a variety of topics around LGBTQ+ student safety and inclusion in the classroom. Participants will leave with concrete strategies they can immediately implement in the classroom. This workshop was geared towards teachers, but all are welcome.

Safe, Supportive and Inclusive Classrooms Recording (81 min)
Safe, Supportive and Inclusive Classrooms Resource List

■ **From the School Bus to the School Board: School-Wide Policies and Best Practices to Support LGBTQ+ Students**
In this interactive workshop, we explored the macro-level systems and structures that can unintentionally create unsafe learning environments for LGBTQ+ students. Participants took a deeper dive into the Michigan State Board of Education's *Statement and Guidance on Creating Safe and Supportive Learning*

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Environments for LGBTQ Students to explore policies and best practices impacting the wellbeing and educational opportunities of LGBTQ+ students. Participants will discuss the importance of getting school staff on the same page when it comes to implementing bullying and harassment policies, curriculum inclusion, media centers, names and pronouns, bathrooms and locker rooms, and working with families of LGBTQ+ students. P

School-Wide Policies and Best Practices Recording (73 min)
School-Wide Policies and Best Practices Resource List
Best Practices Participant Brainstorm

- ■ **Making Your Student Information System Work for You: Accurately Reflecting Student Gender Identities in Your SIS**

In this interactive workshop, we brought in the experts! Participants learned from school personnel who are thinking creatively and using all the tools at their disposal to ensure all students, regardless of their gender identity, are being treated respectfully when it comes to Student Information Systems (SIS). We also investigated legal and state requirements, as well as the capabilities of various SISs. Participants identifed gatekeepers and learned why adapting our approach to SISs might be life-saving for some of our most vulnerable transgender, non-binary, and gender expansive students. Teams of school and data management staff were encouraged to attend.

Accurately Reflecting Gender Identities in Student Information Systems Recording (92 min)
Accurately Reflecting Gender Identities in Student Information Systems Resource Guide
Accurately Reflecting Gender Identities in Student Information Systems Q&A document

About the Project. The MDE LGBTQ+ Students Project is led by the Michigan Department of Education, in partnership with the Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH). It is supported by a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, with additional funding from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and Eaton RESA and GISD through grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health. The contents are solely the responsibility of MDE, and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the funders.

For more information about the MDE LGBTQ+ Students Project, the experiences of LGBTQ+ students, and best practice strategies for creating inclusive schools, check out this infographic!

For questions about the workshops or technical assistance requests, please contact Kim Phillips-Knope, Project Lead, MDE LGBTQ Students Project, at Kim@rootsofchange.org. For questions about the overall project, please contact Laurie Bechhofer at BechhoferL@michigan.gov.