

Short List of Statements/Questions to Authorities

You can make your point(s) either as an emphatic statement/personal opinion or by asking the authority to answer the question. The following are lines of argument and questioning that may be modified as desired:

- School Act, Section 50.1, requires school boards to provide notice to a parent of a student where subject-matter deals primarily and explicitly with human sexuality. The parent has the right to request the student be excluded from the instruction, course of study or educational program. Please confirm for the purpose of parental notice and student opt-out provision, that the term “human sexuality” includes sexual orientation indoctrination and discussion of variant genders and sexual expressions.
- Alberta Family Law Act, Section 21(4) states: *Except where otherwise limited by a parenting order, each guardian is entitled: (a) to be informed or and consulted about and to make all significant decisions affecting the child in the exercise of the powers and responsibilities of guardianship described in subsection (5).* Section 21 (5) states: *Except where otherwise limited by a parenting order, each guardian has the following responsibilities in respect to the child: (a) to nurture the child’s physical, psychological and emotional development and to guide the child towards independent adulthood; and (b) to ensure the child has the necessities of life, including medical care, food, clothing and shelter.* The Ministry of Education guidance for handling “diverse” gender identities and expressions in Alberta Schools declares:
 - Self-identification is the sole measure of gender identity (K to Grade 12);
 - Students will be addressed by their self-selected names;
 - Students will not be counselled on how to ‘fix,’ ‘change’ or ‘repair’ gender dysphoria;
 - Personal self-identification information will not be disclosed to parents or guardians without the student’s explicit permission.
 - Students may join GSAs/QSAs without parental approval and these clubs may be connected to a province-wide GSA-network linked to [iSMSS](#), [NoHomophobes.com](#) and as exposed by informed Albertans – [explicit pornographic materials](#).

“Indifference” to a child’s gender expression is not a parenting “Best Practice.” Please respond to the following questions:

Q1. Does XXXX believe parents should be indifferent to gender dysphoria, sexual orientation, sexual identity or sexual expression during adolescent growth of their children?

Q2. Does XXXX hold the same opinion as the LGBTQ Movement that adolescents, who are questioning their identity, wavering in gender confidence, or feel same-sex inclinations, should be encouraged to explore (sexually experiment), embrace and openly celebrate their discovered self-identity, even if this identity is fluid, changes over time, or corrects after puberty?

Q3. Does XXX believe some students, regardless of their age, should be empowered to live a double life – dress, act and be called by one gender identity at home and secretly (without parental awareness) live at school in the opposite gender identity and under an assumed name?

Q4. Does XXX believe that the due legal process (need of a parenting order), established in Family Law, should be ignored by the State, allowing school staffs to insert themselves between

parent and student in responsibility for the child's medical, psychological and emotional development?

Q5. If the answer to a question above is yes, could XXX give an explanation of his/her view of the role, responsibilities and rights of parents in raising their children?

- To what length is the School Board prepared to take on unilaterally and for sustained periods secret counsel to students, in medical, physiological and psychological matters related to human sexuality, without parental awareness or approval?
- Will the School Board clarify whether there are any age restrictions on a student's autonomy to self-identify; on a student's ability to live a lifestyle at school in secret from his/her parents; and on a student's ability to join a GSA/QSA without parental approval?
- Will the School Board clarify whether you believe in the existence of "Wavers," kids who are currently confused about or currently questioning their sexuality; kids who could choose either a heterosexual path or a sexual minority path; kids who will or will not sexually experiment depending on received counsel? What assurance can the School Board provide to assuage concern about institutional promotion of experimentation toward sexual minority identities and lifestyles within district schools?
- School Act Section 16.1 empowers one or more students to start organizations including but not limited to gay-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs and anti-bullying clubs. If the school board cannot appoint a staff liaison to assist students in organizing the establishment, activity and ongoing operation of the organization, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult. Current Ministry guidance offers no limitations to the activities of the clubs, no limitation on age of the members or age-spread within a club, no need for parental approval, no need for a club constitution approved by the school board or principal, and no Ministry guidance and oversight for the iSMSS-inspired Alberta GSA/QSA Network. On the other hand, the legislation and Ministry policy make clear that school boards cannot block creation of GSAs/QSAs and the Government has setup studentsupport@gov.ab.ca so students can reach directly to Ministry staff that will ensure "LGBTQ rights" are being respected. There is no absolute standard against which to measure "safe," "caring," "respectful," "inclusive" and "welcoming" qualities to a school's learning and teaching environment. The Law, left unchallenged, empowers a single student of any age (K-12), acting without their parent's awareness or approval, to decide the level of respect and inclusiveness desired. He or she can appeal over all stakeholders (teachers, principal, superintendent, and school board) directly to the Minister for help. The Law, left unclarified, can empower a few or many activist GSA/QSA club members, possibly coached through allied LGBTQ groups or the Alberta GSA Network, to determine the level of activism to be affected in a school. The following is ATA guidance to teachers for assisting GSAs:

Work with your GSA to develop an action plan that will help make your group an active and sustainable presence in your school. Your action plan might include long- and short-range goals and priorities. Possible activities include:

- *showing LGBTQ-themed movies from National Film Board of Canada,*
- *inviting guest speakers,*
- *holding joint meetings with other school groups,*
- *writing articles for the school newspaper or website,*
- *networking with local LGBTQ community groups,*

- *undertaking a web search on LGBTQ youth issues,*
- *visiting your school library, suggesting potential LGBTQ student resources,*
- *creating a bulletin board display about LGBTQ history,*
- *starting an LGBTQ book club or reading group,*
- *inviting LGBTQ school alumni to speak to your group,*
- *planning activities to celebrate special days, such as*
 - *National Coming Out Day (Oct 11),*
 - *The Day of Silence (in April),*
 - *The National Day Against Homophobia (in May),*
 - *Transgender Day of Remembrance (in Nov),*
 - *Your local community LGBTQ Pride Week.*
- *Focus on school climate and organizational change through outreach activities (e.g., diversity days, staff training, inclusive curriculum)*
- *Have an anti-oppression educational mandate across intersections of difference (race, gender, class, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity)*
- *Strive to move beyond tolerance*

(Gay-Straight Student Alliances in Alberta Schools – A Guide for Teachers, 2006, p. 19; GSAs and QSAs in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers, 2015, p.31.)

Who in the student–parent–teacher–principal–superintendent–school board–Minister chain will set boundaries on the level and nature of activism within these clubs?

- Some adolescents may feel transient confusion about their sexual identity when young, especially if they have had a sexual experience with someone of the same gender. Whether as a phase of rebellion and experimentation, plain curiosity, or the result of sexual abuse in childhood, children may have one or more same-sex encounters, which may raise questions about his or her ultimate sexual destination. It is important for children and teens who have had such experiences to receive appropriate counselling that (among other things) will clarify the fact that these events have not destined them to a lifelong homosexual orientation.

Q1. In the apparent Education Ministry campaign to encourage, empower, include, and celebrate so-called “sexual minority students,” what evidence is there that wavering/questioning students who come forward will receive unbiased, medically factual, ideologically neutral counselling at school?

Q2. What are the legal liability, accountability and oversight relationships between the Ministry of Education and [Alberta GSA Network](#), and [Camp fyrefly](#)? [We know the Ministry funds the GSA Network.]

Q3. Will membership in or approach to a GSA become the encouraged or sole means by which a student can receive counselling related to sexual orientation, identity or expression?

Q4. How is personal confidentiality maintained in a GSA “club”?

- Internally focused GSA/QSA/Diversity clubs, according to ATA (GSAs and QSAs in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers, 2015, p.30.) are tailored for intimate and private counselling and support and may be characterized as follows:
 - Have school-based confidential support

- Are counsellor/facilitator led
- Focus on the individual student
- Offer psychological support services
- Are often invisible within the school or have limited public presence
- Perceive the school culture and/or climate as neutral or unreceptive
- Are a drop-in safe space
- Focus on normalization and fitting in
- May include straight allies

Q5. Will a club with this mandate/constitutional framework gain Ministry approval?