



## **SOGI-Inclusive Education Myth Busting**

To support district and school leaders to respond to misinformation about SOGI-Inclusive Education in schools, here are some common myths and supporting responses:

### **MYTH - SOGI resources are mandated**

- All schools are required to have codes of conduct/anti-bullying policies that address the protected grounds of discrimination under the B.C. Human Rights Code. This includes sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
- All schools must be in compliance with the Human Rights Code and demonstrate that they are creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments.
- Learning about SOGI in schools is not mandated, however, there are different ways inclusivity can be supported and ensured to be age appropriate. Examples could include diverse content in library books, pictures on walls reflecting the diversity of the community, and educators using inclusive language like ‘good morning everyone’ instead of ‘good morning boys and girls’.

### **MYTH - SOGI is curriculum**

- SOGI is not a dedicated curriculum; rather, it offers a set of resources to explore curricular themes and competencies, which can be found within the Physical and Health Education (PHE) curriculum. For example, a PHE learning standard includes “Explore and describe factors that shape personal identities, including social and cultural factors,” which could include sexuality and sexual identity as a factor that shapes personal identity.
- Topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity are included as part of the K-10 PHE curriculum. For example, learning about bullying and discrimination provides opportunities to discuss discrimination against LGBTQ2S+ individuals.
- Classroom activities are designed to provide age-appropriate learning opportunities to help students understand the impacts of discrimination and improve awareness and understanding of the diverse people around them.



**MYTH - SOGI is only for 1% of the population**

- Studies show that having SOGI-specific anti-bullying policies improve the school climate for LGBTQ2S+ AND heterosexual students, reducing discrimination, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts for ALL students.
- Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression is experienced by students who identify as LGBTQ2S+ and those who don't.
- Because homophobia and transphobia can be directed at anyone (e.g., such as a boy wearing a pink shirt being called homophobic slurs), it often has a negative effect on school culture, emotional well-being, and academic success.

**MYTH - SOGI erases biological sex**

- The intention of SOGI is to foster inclusive learning environments for everyone of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. Experiences of heterosexual and cis-gender identities continue to be included in the everyday experience at school, and are supplemented with the 'other' experiences to signal acceptance.
- When we see ourselves reflected in the world around us like our school environments (e.g., stories representing different family structures, math problems with they/them pronouns), there are strong messages of acceptance and value. These are important messages for students to see, hear, and feel as they grow and learn.

**MYTH - SOGI encourages students to transition**

- The role of districts and schools with student gender transitions and gender affirming care does not include decision making of a student's gender exploration and/or transition, whether it is social and/or medical.
- The role is to create supportive and inclusive learning environments for all students to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance so they can grow and thrive.

**More Information**

To find out more about SOGI, please visit the following links:

[Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity \(SOGI\) - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/sexual-orientation-gender-identity)  
[SOGI 1 2 3 \(sogieducation.org\)](https://www.sogieducation.org/)