

# Public Policy Postcard

**JUNE 2022**

Welcome to the **GLSEN Policy Postcard**, a monthly newsletter for GLSEN staff and GLSEN Policy Coordinators to keep abreast of the happenings in the LGBTQ+ and education spheres. The goals of this project are to facilitate communication, community, and collaboration, so please feel free to ask questions, provide comments, or share ideas at [policy@glsen.org](mailto:policy@glsen.org).

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## Toplines and Fast Facts

### ACTION ALERT

#### **Tell Congress to Pass the LGBTQ Data Inclusion Act**

This legislation would ensure that federal agencies collecting demographic data through surveys allow those who take their survey to self-report their sexual orientation and gender identity. Surveys are often the only means that educators and policymakers have to gain insight into the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth and identify evidence-based programs and activities that foster safe, inclusive schools. This is also true for surveys of educators. Participate in [this action alert](#) to send a note to your legislators urging them to pass the LGBTQ Data Inclusion Act.

### ACTION ALERT

#### **Tell Congress to Support the Safe Schools Improvement Act**

Please take the opportunity to [send a message to your legislators in support of the SSIA](#) if you have not done so already. This critical legislation will improve school climates for LGBTQ+ students and all students. So, we must continue to garner support from Congress. You can [take part in this action here](#). To learn more about GLSEN's public policy advocacy, please take a look at our [2022 Public Policy Agenda](#).

#### **Next GLSEN Policy Coordinator Meeting**

The next Policy Coordinator zoom call will take place on **June 15 at 8:00pm ET**. Note that the agenda for this call will be shared soon, so please contact Tessa Juste, State and Local Policy Manager, at [tessa.juste@glsen.org](mailto:tessa.juste@glsen.org), to propose agenda items.

## Administrative Updates

On June 15, 2022, GLSEN's Deputy Executive Director for Public Policy and Research was present for President Biden's historic signing of the [Executive Order on Advancing Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Individuals](#). Among other important actions, the Executive Order directs the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (USED) to:

- "... use the Department of Education's authorities to support LGBTQI+ students, their families, educators, and other school personnel targeted by harmful State and local laws and practices."

- “... establish a Working Group on LGBTQI+ Students and Families, which shall lead an initiative to address discrimination against LGBTQI+ students and strengthen supports for LGBTQI+ students and families,” including by developing and promoting “guidance, technical assistance, training, promising practices, and sample policies for States, school districts, and other educational institutions to promote safe and inclusive learning environments in which all LGBTQI+ students thrive and to address bullying of LGBTQI+ students.”

June 23rd marks the 50th anniversary of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex—including sexual orientation and gender identity—in federally funded education programs. As a member of the [National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education](#), GLSEN contributed extensively to a new report, [Title IX At 50](#), mapping out how far we’ve come and the work that remains to be done to deliver on the promise of Title IX. GLSEN is proud to have authored the issue brief on [LGBTQI+ Students](#), in partnership with Athlete Ally, the Inclusion Playbook, and the National Women’s Law Center, and to have contributed to several others, including the issue briefs on [Athletics](#) and [Discriminatory Discipline Based on Sex and Race](#).

As we write, we are awaiting promulgation of a revised rule that further strengthens [Title IX protections for LGBTQ+ students](#), expressly affirmed by USED in June 2021. GLSEN and over 200 education and civil rights organizations joined a [letter](#) led by the National Women’s Law Center urging USED to release a robust proposed Title IX rule by the 50th anniversary.

Finally, GLSEN was a contributing author to a National LGBTQ+ Task Force comment letter urging USED to include LGBTQ+ demographic measures in its National Household Education Survey, bringing visibility to LGBTQ+ parents of students in K-12 schools.

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## State Public Policy Updates

Throughout the state legislative cycle GLSEN tracks bills that have been introduced in all 50 state legislatures, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. Currently GLSEN is tracking 22 bills that are affirming of LGBTQ+ students and inclusive K-12 learning communities, and 195 bills that are attacks targeting LGBTQ+ youth. Last week, despite having been applauded for vetoing an anti-trans athlete bill during the 2021 legislative session, Louisiana’s Governor, John Bel Edwards, allowed this year’s anti-trans athlete ban (SB 44) to become law without his signature. During this year’s cycle, 8 other such bans have passed in other states, while 29 bans have been defeated. GLSEN is currently tracking another such bill in Ohio (HB 151) which would not only ban trans athletes from playing on teams that correspond with their gender identity, but would require anatomical inspections of youth. To learn more about the specific content and legislative progress of the state bills that GLSEN is tracking, you can visit our [2022 Affirmative Bill Tracker](#) and our [2022 Negative Bill Tracker](#).



## Updates from the Hill

Last month, GLSEN signed on to several letters to Congress. The first was a letter supporting the removal of “charitable choice” language in the Community Block Service Grant Modernization Act authorization. This letter, led by the Coalition Against Religious Discrimination, emphasizes that charitable choice language enables LGBTQ+ exclusion under the guise of religious choice, by permitting tax-payer funded faith-based organizations to discriminate in hiring.

GLSEN also recently signed on to two letters supporting the LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion Act. The first letter, led by the National Center for Transgender Equality, applauds the House Committee on Oversight and Reform’s markup of the bill, and urges the committee to ensure that the bill is intersex inclusive throughout. Likewise, the second letter, led by the Center for American Progress, interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth, the Whitman-Walker Institute, and the Human Rights Campaign, underscores that passing the LGBTQI+ Data Inclusion Act is essential to better understand the experiences and address the needs of LGBTQI+ communities.

Finally, GLSEN signed on to a letter requesting \$468 million in appropriations for the Full-Service Community Schools Program. Community schools provide not only education, but access to wrap-around services for students and their families. They have been especially critical during the ongoing pandemic, providing health and social services, extra-curricular and experiential learning opportunities for youth, and broader community engagement.



## Public Policy Moves to Watch



It is Pride Month and GLSEN is undertaking a wealth of programming in recognition of the spirit of celebration and protest embodied in the history of Pride. Throughout the month the Public Policy Office is supporting four actions that people can take to advocate for the liberated K-12 learning communities that we know are needed for LGBTQ+ students to thrive and reach their full potential. The first action calls on people to raise our voices at the ballot box. On our **Break the Silence: Your Vote, Your Voice** webpage, people can register to vote, check their voter registration, and if they are under 18 commit to registering and voting when they become eligible. The second action is urging Congress to Pass the Safe Schools Improvement Act. To participate in this action, folks can send letters to their members of Congress via **this Action Alert**. Our third action revolves around the LGBTQ Data Inclusion Act, and again, asks people to use our **Action Alert** to let their legislators know that passing this bill is critical to collecting quality, LGBTQ+ inclusive data across the Federal Government. Finally, the fourth action of pride asks folks to use **this link** to look up their local school board, learn how to attend upcoming meetings, and to keep up to date on their school board elections. You can learn more about all of GLSEN’s Pride programming **here**.

Coming up on June 28th at 5:00pm Eastern Time, will be the National Safe Learning Partnership webinar. GLSEN is re-launching the National Safe Learning Partnership to bring together advocates from K-12 education, civil rights, and LGBTQ+ organizations to collaborate on effective public policy advocacy, rapid issue response communications, and community mobilization strategies to defeat this destructive wave of legislation and advance an affirmative vision of positive school transformation where all students, including LGBTQ+ youth who are BIPOC, people with disabilities, and from all communities that experience marginalization, can thrive and reach their full potential. You can register for the webinar **here**.

Finally, GLSEN’s Executive Director, Melanie Willingham-Jaggers, recently released a statement in response to the horrific school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. The statement reads in part, “We’re heartbroken and angry about the tragedy in Uvalde. There is no place for violence in schools. We must ensure real safety for our children. All of them, everywhere. Enough is enough. The hurt and pain of this moment has deep roots in systemic inequities and we need bold change to both heal and end this violence.” You can read the full statement **here**, and we have resources for Students and Educators who want to learn how they can take action to demand safety in schools.

# What We're Watching in the News

## **Pride Month at School: LGBTQ Educators Need Our Support.**

**Elizabeth J. Meyer. Psychology Today, June 3, 2022.**

*This article goes through some practical steps to support LGBTQ+ educators, which is especially needed in this moment where the legislative assault on inclusive curriculum and school communities not only chills discussions of sexual orientation and gender identity in classrooms, but has accelerated many educators' fear for their jobs based on the rejection their identity alone.*

## **'I'm Afraid to Return to the Classroom': A Gay Teacher of the Year Speaks Out.**

**Madeline Will. EducationWeek, May 12, 2022.**

*This article interviews Kentucky Teacher of the Year, Will Carver, who due to the education policy climate questions his future as an educator.*

## **GLSEN Launches 80+ "It's Okay to Say Gay!" Billboards Across Florida.**

**John Riley. Metro Weekly, May 20, 2022.**

*This article discusses the It's Okay to Say Gay educational campaign that GLSEN and several coalition partners have launched across the state of Florida.*

## **The Sex Ed Crisis: LGBTQ Youth Aren't Getting the Sexual Education They Deserve.**

**Annabel Iwegbue. Cosmopolitan, May 23, 2022.**

*This article discusses the dearth of quality, inclusive sex education available to LGBTQ+ students, and discusses the pressing need to change this reality.*

**For assistance with media inquiries, please contact [info@glsen.org](mailto:info@glsen.org).**

## **QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, ADDITIONS?**

Have a note to add for next month's postcard? See a mistake that needs correcting? Want more resources or information? Let us know what more you would like, and even what you would like less of. Please contact [policy@glsen.org](mailto:policy@glsen.org).