

# Public Policy Postcard

**JANUARY 2023**

Welcome to the **GLSEN Policy Postcard**, a monthly newsletter for GLSEN staff and other state and local advocates to keep abreast of the happenings in the LGBTQ+ and education spheres. The purpose of this newsletter is to facilitate information sharing, collaboration, and community, 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

### National Safe Learning Partnership Meeting

GLSEN will be hosting a National Safe Learning Partnership (NSLP) members meeting on Thursday, January 26 at 4:00pm ET. To learn more about the NSLP or become a member organization, follow [this link](#).

### GLSEN Policy Network Meeting

On **Wednesday, February 22 at 8:00pm ET**, GLSEN will have its next Policy Network meeting open to GLSEN State Policy Fellows and Chapter Policy Coordinators. The agenda for this call will be shared soon. Contact Victoria Rodríguez-Roldán, Director of Public policy, at [Victoria.Rodriguez-Roldan@glsen.org](mailto:Victoria.Rodriguez-Roldan@glsen.org), if you have any questions before the meeting.

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## Administrative Updates

This month GLSEN signed on to a letter urging the White House to move forward with nominating Nicole Berner to a seat on the US Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit. The letter, led by the National Center for Lesbian Rights, applauds the Biden-Harris administration's current record of appointing candidates with diverse backgrounds and credentials to federal courts, and argues that the appointment of Nicole Berner follows this same principle. The letter argues that Berner, an out lesbian whose legal career has been devoted to public service, including representing the interests of workers, the LGBTQ+ community, and people seeking reproductive healthcare, would be a worthy appointment to the bench.

# State Public Policy Updates

As the state legislative cycle commences in earnest, GLSEN is focusing much of its efforts on passing inclusive curricular standards legislation in several states. Already, bills have been introduced in New York, Massachusetts, and Washington state. GLSEN is authoring sample legislation that lawmakers can introduce in their own state legislatures to advance access to inclusive curriculum for LGBTQ+ youth, BIPOC youth, and youth with disabilities. According to GLSEN's 2021 National school climate survey, more than two-thirds (71.6%) of students reported that their classes did not include representations of LGBTQ+ people, history, or events.

Compared to their peers without access to inclusive curriculum, students in schools with positive LGBTQ+ inclusion in curriculum were less likely to feel unsafe at school based on their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender; were less likely to report having missed at least one day of school due to feeling unsafe or uncomfortable; heard biased language less frequently; reported less severe in-person and online victimization based on their sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender; were more likely to report a higher than average GPA; were more than twice as likely to report that peers intervened most or all of the time when hearing biased remarks about sexual orientation or gender expression; and reported higher levels of self-esteem, lower levels of depression, and were less likely to have seriously considered suicide in the past year.

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. To date, in the 2023 state legislative cycle GLSEN is tracking 23 bills that are affirming of LGBTQ+ students and inclusive K-12 learning communities, and 103 discriminatory bills that target LGBTQ+ youth. In particular, GLSEN is monitoring inclusive curricular standards bills in Massachusetts (HD 746), New York (S 351), and Washington (SB 5462), and bans on corporal punishment and the repeal of the "no-promo homo" statute in Texas (SB 133/HB 458 and SB 82/HB 970 respectively). On the negative side, GLSEN is currently closely watching four North Dakota Bills (HB 1248 a trans athlete ban; HB 1473 a combination athlete ban and bathroom ban; HB 1522 and SB 2231 which are both bills that would out students to their parents and ban the use of chosen names and affirming pronouns) and Missouri's SB 42 (curriculum censorship of race). To learn more about the specific content and legislative progress of all of the state bills that GLSEN is tracking, you can visit our [2023 Affirmative Bill Tracker](#) and our [2023 Negative Bill Tracker](#).



## Updates from the Hill

Earlier this month, GLSEN signed on to a letter urging federal, state, and local policymakers to prohibit corporal punishment of youth in K-12 schools. The letter, led by the Education Trust and the National Women's Law Center, specifically urges Congress to pass the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act (POSSA) which would outlaw the practice in any school that receives federal funding. It also calls on policymakers at the state and local levels to ban the practice in private schools.



## Public Policy Moves to Watch

★ This month GLSEN Published its 2023 Public Policy Agenda. The Agenda lays out GLSEN's federal, state, and local policy priorities. Federally, GLSEN will continue supporting passage of the **Safe Schools Improvement Act**, the **LGBTQI+ and Women's History Education Act**, and the **Equality Act**, along with a suite of additional bills grounded in civil rights principles to advance safe, healthy and inclusive school climates. GLSEN will also advance administrative priorities, including strong enforcement by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of a comprehensive Title IX rule that expressly prohibits discrimination and harassment or bullying based on sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, and variations in sex characteristics (including intersex traits); Improved federal guidance on how federal funds can advance intersectional inclusive equity; and Data collection on the experiences of LGBTQ+ students, parents and guardians of students, school personnel. At the state level GLSEN is focused on passing inclusive curricular standards legislation that will help strengthen the educational attainment, mental health outcomes, and feelings of connectedness to school communities for LGBTQ+ students; passing comprehensive student non-discrimination legislation that is trans and nonbinary inclusive; and opposition to all discriminatory legislation, especially that which targets transgender and nonbinary youth, BIPOC youth, and youth with disabilities. At the local level GLSEN's agenda focuses on adoption and implementation of protections against LGBTQ+ victimization in K-12 learning communities and adequate funding to support LGBTQ+ youth and all youth with intersecting marginalized identities' ability to thrive in learning communities that are at a minimum safe, and which ultimately are places of liberation. You can read GLSEN's 2023 Public Policy Agenda in full, **here**.

Finally, GLSEN is hosting the next National Safe Learning Partnership (NSLP) members meeting, on Thursday, January 26 at 4:00pm ET. NSLP members will be invited to join the meeting through the NSLP listserv. To become an NSLP member organization please reach out to **[policy@glsen.org](mailto:policy@glsen.org)**.

# What We're Watching in the News

## **School Bans "Safe Space" Signs After Parents Complained About Favoritism for LGBTQ+ Kids.**

**Greg Owen. LGBTQ Nation, January 20, 2023.**

*This article is about a school ban on safe space signs and stickers and quotes GLSEN Executive Director, Melanie Willingham-Jaggers, on the necessity for LGBTQ+ youth to feel safe in schools.*

## **Anger & Fear: New Poll Shows School-Level Impact of Anti-LGBTQ Political Debate.**

**Beth Hawkins. The 74 Million, January 19, 2023.**

*This article discusses the fact that the recent political debates over policies seeking to discriminate against LGBTQ+ youth is having negative impacts on these young people's mental health, their ability to seek health care, and the amount of victimization they experience in schools.*

## **Book Challenges May Have 'Chilling Effects' on New LGBTQ Books in School Libraries, Study Finds.**

**Julien Shen-Berro. Chalkbeat, January 11, 2023.**

*This article discusses the negative repercussions of the record-setting number of book bans recently attempted on LGBTQ+ books available for youth in libraries.*

## **Most LGBTQ Youth Can't Access Mental Health Care. How Schools Can Help.**

**Lauraine Langreo. Education Week, January 3, 2023.**

*This article is about a recent survey that found that almost half of LGBTQ+ youth wanted to get mental health care but ultimately were unable to and the role that schools can play in achieving better mental health outcomes for these youth.*

**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).