



Staff Updates

February 3, 2023

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Superintendent Search - February 8, 2023 Deadline - Parents Needed

Reminder: Please help us get the word out that the Board of Education is looking for four parent representatives and four parent representative alternates who are interested in serving on an interviewing panel for final superintendent candidates. Any current HUSD parent who is not an employee of the district may submit a Parent Application/Entry form. <https://www.husd.us/ssip>

Upcoming Secondary PD: Into Literature

There will be professional development offered for the ELA Adoption, Into Literature's, writing component.

You can sign up for the upcoming **"Writeable Training"** [HERE!](#) Sessions are via zoom from 4-6 and there are days in February and March to choose from. Teachers only need to attend 1. Please view the sign up form that is linked above for more information. Please email [Michelle Root](#), PD AOSA with any questions.

Elementary Literacy and Learning Voluntary Workshops

Have you wondered, "I've Administered the Screener, Now What?" Please join us for 1-hour workshops on **February 14 and 15**, addressing strategies to improve students' reading development. Attend one session or both! Please see the flier for more information is linked

here: [Practical Strategies for Literacy Development](#). Great for grade-level teams and individual educators.

Guide for Winter Universal Screening Data Analysis

This video professional learning session consists of two parts which can be delivered in one session or on two different days. During part 1, teachers access and review their Winter Fastbridge data from the Group Screening Report using the graphic organizer to guide analysis. In part 2, teachers will use the *Here's What, So What, Now What* protocol to create an *action plan* for instruction. [Guide for Winter Universal Screening Data Analysis](#)

February Newsela Newsletter

Please review the February Newsletter for tutorials on the platform, seasonal themes and connected articles, elementary specific resources connected to Benchmark, and secondary resources connected to SEL and Into Literature. There is also Black History Month content and resources. [Click here to view the February Newsela newsletter!](#)
For any questions, please email [Michelle Root](#), Professional Development AOSA.

Summer Professional Development Preference Survey

Teachers, please take some time to fill out the Summer PD Preference Survey. If you have any questions, please email Michelle Root, PD AOSA, mcanada@husd.us

Traditional Calendar Teachers: [Summer PD Survey](#)

Year Round Calendar Teachers: [Summer PD Survey](#)

Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom

Come hear Dr. Bettina Love, author of "We Want to Do More Than Survive," talk about abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom. She'll discuss the struggles and possibilities of committing ourselves to an abolitionist goal of education freedom, as opposed to reform. At Cherryland Elementary, February 22 at 5:30 p.m. See [this flyer](#) for more.

Kindness Week: February 13-17

Sometimes we get bogged down by concentrating our attention on what feels negative or unpleasant. Setting an intention to focus on gratitude and kindness can possibly counterbalance that struggle. Kindness Week is coming soon and you're invited to choose some intentional activities to do with your class, grade level, department, team or site to get the positive energy flowing! Please see the [Kindness Resources](#) for ideas.

Responding to Parent/Family Requests to Opt Out of Inclusive Lessons

At some sites, parents/families have requested to opt their child out of anti-bias lessons that include diverse identities and topics (race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc). Our

HUSD anti-bias, anti-racist and equity policies, as well as California laws, guide us to provide inclusive lessons that promote safety and acceptance for all identities and to not allow the exclusion of students from these lessons. As the conversation may be awkward with a family, here is some positive sample language and legal references to support you when [Responding to Parent Requests to Opt Out of Inclusive, Anti-Bias Lessons](#).

This Month's AASAI Events

February is Black to School Month. Join AASAI for a series of districtwide events this month. [Learn more here](#).

Can parents and families request that their students be opted out of inclusive, anti-bias lessons about diverse identities (race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation)?

The basic answer to this question is **NO**. If we allow students to opt out of lessons that include a particular identity that is protected by our HUSD Non-Discrimination & Harassment and Equity & Anti-Racism policies, then we are enabling active discrimination within our organization.

The way we respond to parents and families matters!

Here are a few tips for responding to parent or guardian requests for their child to be opted out of lessons:

- 1) Ask questions to learn about their concern and listen to understand
- 2) In the way that you respond, choose content / language that matches with their concern
- 3) Say just enough - don't overload them with information
- 4) If you feel uncomfortable, practice your response with a colleague

Language for how to respond. You could say it all, or please adapt relevant language from these samples or from the laws and policies listed below:

Here are some [talking points \(adapted from Welcoming Schools\)](#) (PDF available):

- **We are talking about families.** All students need educators to validate and respect their families, regardless of family members' identities that may be from diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ, cisgender, adoptive, straight, divorced or married.
- **We are talking about respect.** Anti-LGBTQ, gender-related put-downs and racial slurs are among the most common slurs in school environments, and addressing these slurs is essential for the physical, emotional, and academic well-being of all students.
- **Diverse people come together at school to learn.** Schools are places where people of different races, families, ethnicities, faiths and gender identities come together. Understanding, discussing, and valuing differences at school is essential for healthy learning environments.

- **LGBTQ parents and guardians come from diverse racial, ethnic and geographic backgrounds.** LGBTQ people are family members to youth across the country and schools need to reflect that reality.
 - Households headed by same-sex couples are reported in virtually every U.S. county according to the U.S. Census.
 - In heavily rural states such as Mississippi, South Dakota and Alaska, same-sex households are more likely to have children than same-sex households in other states.
 - In a look at U.S. Census data, approximately two thirds of same-sex Latino couples are raising children.
 - California Census data show that more than half of African-American same-sex couples are raising children.
- **Youth must understand the world and the people in it.** Your students will meet people in their lives both in and outside of school with many kinds of families and identities, and **hear about LGBTQ people in their places of worship, at the dinner table and on TV.** It is normal for students to be curious about LGBTQ people. Adults must be prepared to participate in conversations with students to help them to learn facts instead of myths and stereotypes.
- **Family respect includes respect for religious beliefs.** Schools include people with many different religious beliefs, and schools can help foster climates that respect the diversity of beliefs and families within a community. Schools build respect by acknowledging community diversity, promoting opportunities for dialogue and teaching kindness and empathy.
- **Schools are a place for informed and open discussions.** Learning about LGBTQ people will not “turn” students LGBTQ. What learning about LGBTQ people will do is:
 - Give students the opportunity to understand LGBTQ people instead of learning about them through negative myths and stereotypes.
 - Allow students to respect all types of families and people.
 - Help students to better understand the world around them.
 - Minimize shame or unhappiness in students who do and will identify as LGBTQ.
- In California, families may opt out of comprehensive sexuality education. However, when educators discuss family diversity, they are not talking about sexuality -- they are talking about understanding the importance of family, love and acceptance for everyone. Families may not opt out of anti-bias lessons about people who are LGBTQ.

Additional language:

- **We are being proactive to create safe school environments.** We know from research that one of the top reasons why kids are bullied or harassed is because they are called gay, etc. And that leads to a risk for increase in depression, suicide and dropping out of school. And sometimes kids who are on the receiving end of homophobic bullying and harassment ARE GAY. And sometimes kids who are on the receiving end of homophobic bullying and harassment ARE NOT GAY. And so when we make our schools more respectful, inclusive and safe for LGBTQIA+ students, families and staff, we are actually making our schools safer for everyone. We don't want any student, whether they are gay or not gay to be the target of homophobic, transphobic, racist or any kind of bullying or harassment.

We know that there has been an increase in situations where a student uses the n-word as a racial slur toward another student. Sometimes the n-word is said by students with lighter skin or darker skin toward another student with lighter skin or darker skin. Sometimes the n-word is used with the intent to cause harm to another, so lessons that help us learn about the history of the n-word or racial slurs or the history of racism can help us understand how harmful the n-word slur can be. We want to have conversations that can help repair the harm and help us build a safe and respectful community.

- **We are talking about identities. We are not talking about physical intimacy or human reproductive organs.** We are talking about respect and different kinds of families and caring for one another and getting to know people for who they really are, for all their hopes and wishes, for all of their interests and talents and making space for all identities, whether it is gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, different abilities, etc. And actually in our Nondiscrimination and Harassment board policy, it lists all of these identities as protected groups. So by doing these read alouds/lessons, we are being proactive to stop discrimination in our schools.
- **We provide a free, public education that is inclusive of all identities.** If the curriculum at public schools is not what parents want, they can choose to send their children to a private school. In public schools, parents are only allowed to opt out of comprehensive sexuality education, HIV/AIDS prevention education, and certain surveys, tests, research and evaluation. Families may not selectively opt out of lessons about different identities. That would be discriminatory.

Many of these ideas can also be shared with families ahead of time to proactively explain the reason why we are teaching lessons and reading books with people and characters who have many different identities.

HUSD policies and CA laws protect diverse identities to be included in K-12 curriculum

Our [HUSD Race and Equity Policy 0415](#) states that “Equity is one of the district’s core values. HUSD is determined to develop systems, policies, and practices that promote opportunity and success regardless of race, language, sexual orientation, zip code, or any other factor. Educational equity benefits all students and our entire community. The diversity of our student body, our staff, and our community is a strength of this district and should be validated and affirmed.” Furthermore, the policy states that “our district unequivocally supports LGBTQ+ community and accepts the gender identity that each student persistently and consistently asserts. In section 4, Educational Materials, the policy states that the district should “adopt curriculum and instructional materials that are culturally and linguistically responsive.” The [HUSD school board resolution declaring June as LGBTQ+ Pride Month](#) also affirms our commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment all year long. Our [HUSD Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy](#) lists all the protected identities that we are legally not allowed to discriminate against.

The [FAIR Education Act of 2011](#) added LGBT people and people with disabilities to existing CA ed code which prescribes the inclusion of the contributions of various groups (including people from diverse racial and ethnic identities) in the history of California and the United States in our K-12 curriculum.

The [California Healthy Youth Act \(CA EC 51930-51939\)](#) outlines Comprehensive Sexual Health Education as required for all California students. While the California Healthy Youth Act includes a provision that details how a parent/guardian may opt their child out of participation in Comprehensive Sexual Health Education, CA Ed Code 51932 explicitly states that instruction, materials, presentations or programming that discuss gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation, relationships, or family and do not discuss human reproductive organs and their functions, are not part of the California Healthy Youth Act or the opt out provision described.

Background information about the laws for public education	Description
<p>Q&A Guide on California’s Parental Opt Out Statuses: Parents’ and Schools’ Legal Rights and Responsibilities Regarding Public School Curricula (CA Safe Schools Coalition)</p>	<p>Summarizes parental rights and the limits to parental opt out for curriculum in public education. Limited opt out includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive sex education • HIV/AIDS prevention education • Surveys, tests, research and evaluation
<p>“About the Law” for Educators (California Safe Schools Coalition)</p>	<p>School districts legal responsibilities under state and federal anti-discrimination laws</p>
<p>LGBTQ-Inclusivity Requirements and How They Interact with Parental Opt Out (ACLU)</p>	<p>Explains more about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA schools must provide LGBTQ-inclusive comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education • School districts have an affirmative obligation to protect LGBTQ students from discrimination and harassment and to promote inclusivity • Schools may not facilitate selective opt-out of the LGBTQ related content in sexual health education • General instruction or programming relating to LGBTQ people and issues is not subject to parental opt out
<p>California’s Health Education Initiatives (California Department of Education)</p>	<p>The opt-out rule associated with comprehensive sexual health education would not apply to an inclusive read aloud or a social studies lesson; for example, a lesson on the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2015 ruling in favor of same-sex marriage. See the FAIR Education Act of 2011.</p>

