SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS FOR LGBTQ YOUTH: ARE NEBRASKA SCHOOLS PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT?

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Abstract. **Background.** Schools can play a significant role in preventing the negative effects of harassment and bias while enhancing resiliency of LGBTQ youth. Through establishing strong, supportive, and safe school environments for sexual minority youth, schools can help increase achievement for all students. **Purpose.** This study is designed to investigate the extent to which schools in Nebraska perceive LGBTQ youth issues as important and to what extent they are addressing the needs of these students. **Methods and Results.** A survey was sent to 100 Nebraska schools grades 6-12. Participants rated the importance of LGBTQ issues within their school and the extent to which their school is implementing the best practice strategies using a 5-point Likert scale. Results indicate that school personnel rated the importance of each of the nine best practice items significantly higher ($p<.05$) than the school's performance on implementing those practices including: specific language, policy enforcement, educating staff, inclusive curriculum, resources available, neutral language, safe person, gay-straight alliance, and community resources. **Conclusions.** School personnel in Nebraska feel that including LGBTQ practices within the school environment is important but schools should be increasing their implementation of these practices. Through establishing a safe, strong, and supporting environment for sexual minority youth, schools can help increase achievement for all students.

Keywords: Lesbian Bisexual Gay Transgendered Questioning (LGBT), Safe Schools, Gay Straight Alliance (GSA).

School systems have always reflected the larger society as they complied with and continued ideological and political goals of the group in control. Systems strive to maintain the standards of society. Only in recent years have American schools begun to address the issues of diversity and multiculturalism, including sexual diversity (Jeltova &
Fish, 2005). It is understandable that school systems are resistant to recognizing and accepting diversity because they are facing an extremely complex task and they need support and empowerment to overcome the pressures to maintain the standards of society (Jeltova & Fish, 2005).

Schools have a legal, ethical, and moral obligation to provide safe campuses that are conducive to learning for all students in order to promote equal access to all school services (National Association of School Psychologists or NASP, 2006; Weiler, 2001). Schools are letting some students down, specifically lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning (LGBTQ) students, by not providing a safe environment. Failure to address harassment and intimidation in the school setting creates an environment that is unsafe and unsupportive of academic and social achievement (NASP, 2006). There is evidence that LGBTQ youth have poorer school adjustment than their heterosexual peers, which is seen in lower levels of school achievement and school belonging (Rostosky, Owens, Zimmerman, & Riggle, 2003). Victimization by peers is one of the strongest predictors of school disengagement, and sadly sexual minority youth experience high levels of victimization in school settings (Murdock & Bolch, 2005). When schools do not provide a safe environment for LGBTQ youth to develop social relationships, academics, and self-identity these youth are denied basic rights such as free and appropriate public education and they are more likely to engage in risky behaviors (NASP 2006; Weiler, 2001).

The most prominent risks for LGBTQ youth include physical and verbal harassment, physical violence, low self-esteem, suicide and self-injurious behaviors, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, risky sexual behavior, and substance abuse (NASP, 2006; Henning-Stout, James & Macintosh, 2000). These youth also have an increased risk for emotional and physical rejection by their families and may become homeless as a result of disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity (NASP, 2006). Academic underachievement, disruption of schooling, or dropping out to avoid an unsafe environment are all a result of LGBTQ youth being harassed and intimidated at school. LGBTQ youth, unlike other minority groups, are more likely to keep their identity secret from their family and community, therefore making them unable to learn effective coping strategies to counteract prejudice and discrimination (NASP, 2006).
There are many barriers to serving LGBTQ youth and families. The obstacles usually start on the societal level and filter down to individual schools. These obstacles include homophobia, prejudice, and societal taboos about discussing sexuality (Jeltova & Fish, 2005). Commonly, schools come across expressions of these obstacles through stereotypical views of LGBTQ families, myths about LGBTQ individuals, poor communication between the schools and families on issues pertinent to the child, and avoidance or exclusion of discussions of sexuality and diversity in sexual expression within and outside of the school curriculum (Jeltova & Fish, 2005). Creating a climate within a given school that is different from the climate of the community requires systematic change.

Given there is no excuse for allowing harassment of LGBTQ youth in schools, school psychologists have the responsibility to act as leaders in the establishment and support of programs to reduce and eliminate this form of harassment and intimidation (NASP, 2006; Henning-Stout et al., 2000). Harassment of any kind toward any individual or group in a school interferes with the learning environment and compromises the safety for all children and youth (Henning-Stout et al., 2000). Schools can begin this systematic change using the following best practices strategies outlined by NASP (2006). Establish and enforce the school’s non-discrimination policies that apply to all students. Explicitly including LGBTQ students in policy statements will give legitimacy to the school’s commitment to educating all students. Staff and students need to be aware of the policy and enforcement and consequences must be consistently applied across incidents of harassment and intimidation. School policies should order fair treatment of all students and equal access to educational and mental health services within the schools. Educating all staff and students about LGBTQ youth and their needs through training about human diversity, including sexual orientation and gender identity is also important (NASP, 2006). A national study indicated that teachers play an important role in the development of students’ attitudes toward school and having a school that is accepting of sexual minority youth appears to facilitate a sense of psychological belonging (Russell, Seif & Truong, 2001; Murdock & Bolch, 2005).

Educational training should address relevant research, the risks these youth experience, effective strategies for addressing harassment
and discrimination toward any student, and improving the overall school climate. NASP (2006) recommends an educational context that includes issues pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity into the curriculum, such as presenting about the development of sexual orientation or gender identity in a science class; reading works of famous LGBTQ authors; discussing the LGBTQ rights movement in historical context with other civil rights movements; or including LGBTQ demographic statistics in math exercises. It is also important to include specific LGBTQ issues in health education to increase decision making skills for all youth, through preparing them to make positive choices and reducing unsafe behavior (NASP, 2006). This inclusion within the curriculum can help decrease the isolation LGBTQ youth often feel as a result of their perceived invisibility or misunderstanding (NASP, 2006).

Distributing and/or posting educational resources for teachers and students in order to promote acceptance of student diversity and where to go for resources or support is another important element for facilitating a safe school environment. This also includes using gender neutral language when speaking of significant others and parents, taking ownership of your own sexual orientation and realizing that differing sexual orientations are legitimate and are not a “phase” (Little, 2001). Teaching this tolerance prepares students to interact more successfully in the world and helps create a more enlightened society when diversity is embraced (Little, 2001).

Teachers, school psychologists, or counselors can be the designated “safe person” within the school system that serves as a representative of the school to the LGBTQ community. This person’s role is imperative to mediate and problem-solve effectively to maintain open communication between different groups within the school (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays or PFLAG, 2003). Their room or office is an inclusive place where all are welcome to discuss issues of concern. This “safe person” can help establish alliances between LGBTQ youth and families and straight students and families forming a Gay-Straight Alliance (PFLAG, 2003). Such alliances have been successful in stopping and preventing harassment and in establishing welcoming environments in the school (Jeltova & Fish, 2005). Another role involves linking youth and families to community resources and advocating with them and for them. Collecting information about services within the community and
establishing involvement with other organizations committed to equal opportunity for education and mental health services for all youth can be critical (PFLAG, 2003).

“Schools can only be truly safe when every student, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity, is assured of access to an education without fear of harassment, discrimination, or violence” (NASP, 2006). Therefore this study is designed to investigate the extent to which schools in Nebraska perceive LGBTQ youth issues as important and to what extent they are addressing the needs of these students. The fact that current research has ignored these two areas has prompted this investigator to explore the following research questions:

1. To what extent do school personnel perceive LGBTQ issues as important?
   1.1 To what extent do administrators perceive LGBTQ issues as important?
   1.2 To what extent do teachers perceive LGBTQ issues as important?
   1.3 To what extent do school counselors perceive LGBTQ issues as important?

2. To what extent is the school addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth?
   2.1 To what extent is the school addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth from the administrator’s perspective?
   2.2 To what extent is the school addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth from the teacher’s perspective?
   2.3 To what extent is the school addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth from the school counselor’s perspective?

3. To what extent are the schools levels of importance of LGBTQ issues and addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth similar?

**METHOD**

**Participants**

Using the Nebraska Department of Education directory, 100 schools grades 6-12 were randomly selected. Survey packets were sent to the administrator at each school. The administrator was directed to select
2 teachers, a school counselor, and a school psychologist, if available, to fill out a survey. Thirty-four survey packets were returned, which included 34 administrators, 67 teachers, 23 school counselors, and six school psychologists. The return rate for administrators polled was 34%, 67% for teachers, 23% for school counselors, and 6% for school psychologists. Due to the low return rate by school psychologists, their data were not analyzed.

**Instrument**

A survey was created, by this researcher, based on the strategies to improve the school environment found in the literature. The survey consisted of two parts: demographics and ratings using the 5-point Likert scale. The items for each participant to rate were based on the best practices for creating a safe school environment for LGBTQ youth. Each participant was asked to rate the importance of these issues to their school from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). They were also asked to rate the extent of implementation of the best practices strategy within their school from no implementation (1) to fully implemented (5). Each survey was coded to indicate the school and each cohort group.

A data recording form was created using Excel to analyze the results. The first column identified the survey number and the school letter code that was coded before sending the surveys. The next three columns were for recording the demographic information. The next 9 columns correspond to items 5-13 on the survey about the importance of each best practices strategy. These columns were coded using the 5-point Likert scale described on the survey as follows, 1=SD, 2=D, 3=N, 4=A, and 5=SA. The last 9 columns correspond to items 14-22 on the survey regarding implementation of the related best practices strategies. These columns were coded using the 5-point Likert scale described on the survey as follows, 1=NI, 2=SI, 3=U, 4=I, and 5=FI.

**Procedure**

Once approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a cover letter was attached to the survey and mailed to all 100 school administrators. The researcher’s contact information was
also provided. The participants were asked to return the surveys within two weeks. Each participant was given a cover letter with instructions for filling out the survey and to ensure confidentiality, they each received an envelope to seal and sign, then return to the administrator. Once the administrator received all of the completed surveys, they were placed in the large self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. A second mailing was sent at the end of the two week period to those subjects who had not returned the survey. Only group data were analyzed and reported.

**RESULTS**

Participants reported on how important it is to include these LGBTQ practices within the school environment and how well their school is “performing” on implementing these practices. With the analysis of the responses completed, the proposed research questions were answered.

Results of the first research question, to what extent do school personnel perceive LGBTQ issues as important, are shown in Table 1. Nebraska school personnel rated the importance of the nine best practice strategies using the 5-point Likert scale.

**Table 1.** Mean “Importance” and “Performance” Rating (1-5) of All Items on School Environment Survey by School Personnel; Standard Deviations and Number of Raters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison Category</th>
<th>Importance M (SD) n</th>
<th>Performance M (SD) n</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spec Lang</td>
<td>3.96 (0.93) 129</td>
<td>2.94 (1.27) 129</td>
<td>9.52*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce</td>
<td>4.73 (0.48) 130</td>
<td>4.12 (0.93) 130</td>
<td>7.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate Staff</td>
<td>4.10 (0.81) 130</td>
<td>2.85 (1.08) 130</td>
<td>10.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>3.11 (1.09) 129</td>
<td>2.09 (1.02) 129</td>
<td>9.84*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>3.41 (1.21) 130</td>
<td>2.06 (1.20) 130</td>
<td>11.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Lang</td>
<td>3.49 (1.06) 129</td>
<td>2.83 (1.14) 129</td>
<td>7.51*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Person</td>
<td>4.62 (0.53) 130</td>
<td>3.80 (1.09) 130</td>
<td>8.68*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>2.75 (1.10) 130</td>
<td>2.39 (1.32) 130</td>
<td>3.55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>3.96 (0.85) 130</td>
<td>2.81 (1.12) 130</td>
<td>11.71*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.
Research questions 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, to what extent do administrators, teachers, and school counselors perceive LGBTQ issues as important, are addressed within Table 2. School administrators, teachers, and school counselors rated the importance of the nine best practice strategies using the 5-point Likert scale (see Table 2).

Table 2. Mean “Importance” Rating (1-5) of All Items on School Environment Survey by Administrators, Teachers, and Counselors; Standard Deviations and Number of Raters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Admin M (SD) n</th>
<th>Teacher M (SD) n</th>
<th>Counselor M (SD) n</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spec Lang</td>
<td>3.35 (1.09) 23</td>
<td>4.00 (0.69) 23</td>
<td>4.48 (0.88) 23</td>
<td>8.84*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce</td>
<td>4.78 (0.41) 23</td>
<td>4.61 (0.55) 23</td>
<td>4.87 (0.34) 23</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate Staff</td>
<td>4.00 (0.72) 23</td>
<td>3.98 (0.63) 23</td>
<td>4.35 (0.91) 23</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>3.05 (0.93) 22</td>
<td>2.96 (0.87) 22</td>
<td>3.23 (1.20) 22</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>3.09 (1.21) 23</td>
<td>3.37 (0.85) 23</td>
<td>3.52 (1.25) 23</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Lang</td>
<td>3.30 (1.16) 23</td>
<td>3.33 (0.94) 23</td>
<td>3.96 (0.99) 23</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Person</td>
<td>4.57 (0.50) 23</td>
<td>4.46 (0.59) 23</td>
<td>4.96 (0.20) 23</td>
<td>6.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>2.35 (0.81) 23</td>
<td>2.76 (0.93) 23</td>
<td>2.91 (1.06) 23</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>3.65 (0.91) 23</td>
<td>3.89 (0.63) 23</td>
<td>4.22 (0.98) 23</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.

Within the importance items, only two items [(a) using specific language in the non-discrimination policy ($F(2,44)=8.842, p<.05$), and (b) having a “safe person” who students can go to with concerns ($F(2,44)=6.782, p<.05$)], were rated significantly different by administrators, teachers, and counselors (see Table 2).

Table 1 also indicates the results of the second research question within this study, to what extent is the school addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth? Nebraska school personnel rated the schools performance on implementing the nine best practice strategies using the 5-point Likert scale.

Responses which address research questions 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 are summarized in Table 3. School administrators, teachers and school counselors rated the schools’ performance on implementing the nine best practice strategies using the 5-point Likert scale.
Table 3. Mean “Performance” Rating (1-5) of All Items on School Environment Survey by Administrators, Teachers, and Counselors; Standard Deviations and Number of Raters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Admin M (SD) n</th>
<th>Teacher M (SD) n</th>
<th>Counselor M (SD) n</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spec Lang</td>
<td>2.78 (1.53) 23</td>
<td>2.91 (0.93) 23</td>
<td>3.04 (1.37) 23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce</td>
<td>4.48 (1.02) 23</td>
<td>3.78 (0.93) 23</td>
<td>4.35 (0.56) 23</td>
<td>3.80*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate Staff</td>
<td>2.96 (1.04) 23</td>
<td>2.91 (0.93) 23</td>
<td>2.87 (0.90) 23</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>2.26 (1.15) 23</td>
<td>2.02 (0.71) 23</td>
<td>2.04 (0.96) 23</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>1.87 (1.19) 23</td>
<td>2.15 (0.98) 23</td>
<td>2.09 (1.32) 23</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Lang</td>
<td>2.44 (1.25) 23</td>
<td>2.91 (1.04) 23</td>
<td>2.83 (1.09) 23</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Person</td>
<td>3.91 (1.21) 23</td>
<td>3.63 (0.70) 23</td>
<td>4.39 (0.82) 23</td>
<td>3.80*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>2.00 (1.25) 23</td>
<td>2.41 (1.04) 23</td>
<td>2.52 (1.35) 23</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>2.22 (0.98) 23</td>
<td>2.65 (0.74) 23</td>
<td>3.35 (1.34) 23</td>
<td>9.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.

Within the performance items, only two items [(a) enforcing the non-discrimination policy consistently \((F(2,44)=3.804, p<.05)\), and (b) having a “safe person” for students to go to with concerns \((F(2,44)=3.803, p<.05)\)], were rated significantly different by the three groups (see Table 3).

The participants rated the importance of each best practice significantly higher than the school’s performance on implementing those practices \((p<.05; \text{Table 1})\). This indicates that school personnel in Nebraska feel that including LGBTQ practices within the school environment is important but schools should be implementing these practices more.

Table 4 summarizes the results of research question three, to what extent are the schools levels of importance of LGBTQ issues and addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth similar? Across all raters, the mean ratings of importance and performance for each best practice item were correlated. Pearson correlation analysis revealed that most items were significantly positively correlated \((p<.05; \text{Table 4})\). These items include using specific language, having an inclusive curriculum, posting resources, using gender-neutral language, having a safe person, gay-straight alliance, and linking students to community resources \((p<.05; \text{Table 4})\).
Table 4. Correlation Between “Importance” Rating (1-5) and “Performance” Rating (1-5) of All Items on School Environment Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Correlation Between Importance Rating and Performance Rating</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spec Lang</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>5.29*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate Staff</td>
<td>-0.0</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>4.75*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>3.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Lang</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>8.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Person</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>3.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>7.56*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communit</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>4.64*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

DISCUSSION

The results of the survey provided evidence that school personnel in Nebraska feel that including LGBTQ practices within the school environment is important but schools are not effectively implementing these practices. The results also indicated that administrators, teachers, and counselors disagree on the importance of using specific language in the school’s non-discrimination policy and having a “safe person” for students to go to with concerns (e.g. specific language: admin. M=3.35 vs. teacher M= 4.00 vs. counselor M=4.48; safe person: admin. M=4.57 vs. teacher M=4.46 vs. counselor M=4.96). School counselors rated the importance of both items, using specific language and having a safe person, higher than the other groups. It could be hypothesized that due to the counselor’s educational background, they have a better understanding of why including specific language in the non-discrimination policy and having a “safe person” for the students to go to with concerns is an important part of creating an inclusive environment for LGBTQ youth. Also, the three groups disagreed on how well their schools have implemented the enforcement of the non-discrimination policy consistently across all incidences and having a designated “safe
person” for students to go to with concerns (e.g., enforce: admin. $M=4.48$ vs. teacher $M=3.78$ vs. counselor $M=4.35$; safe person: admin. $M=3.91$ vs. teacher $M=3.63$ vs. counselor $M=4.39$). The administrators rated the performance of enforcing the non-discrimination policy consistently across all incidences higher than the other two groups, while the school counselor rated the school’s implementation of having a designated “safe person” higher than the other groups. School counselors have the professional background to serve as the designated “safe person” in their schools and also may be a part of enforcing the non-discrimination policy consistently; therefore they might have a better understanding of what their schools are doing on a day-to-day basis to foster an inclusive environment. The results did not imply that the school personnel were unwilling or resistant to address sexual minority youth issues in their schools. Rather, Nebraska school personnel recognized that their schools are not addressing LGBTQ youth issues adequately.

The results show that Nebraska school personnel rated having a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) as the least important of the best practice strategies ($M=2.75$). There was also a significant difference between the rating of importance of having a GSA and the school’s implementation of a GSA ($M=2.75$ vs. $2.39$). This is consistent with other research, in that school climate surveys have shown that less than half of sexual minority students (44.6%) reported having a GSA at their school (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network or GLSEN, 2010). GLSEN (2010) also indicated that having a GSA in school was related to more positive experiences for LGBTQ youth, including: hearing fewer homophobic remarks, less victimization because of sexual orientation and gender expression, less absenteeism because of safety concerns, and a greater sense of belonging to the school community.

The presence of supportive staff (safe person) contributed to fewer reports of missing school, fewer reports of feeling unsafe, greater academic achievement, higher educational aspirations, and a greater sense of school belonging (GLSEN, 2010). Nebraska school staff rated the importance of having a “safe person” for the students to go to with concerns as very important ($M=4.62$); however, the school’s rating of performance ($M=3.80$) continued to be significantly different than the importance rating, again consistent with other research. According to GLSEN (2010), slightly more than half (53.4%) of LGBTQ students could
identify six or more supportive educators and less than a fifth (18.2%)
attended a school that had a non-discrimination policy that included
specific language for LGBTQ youth. Again, this aligns with the difference
in ratings from the Nebraska school personnel on the importance
\( M=3.96 \) and performance \( M=2.94 \) of including specific language for
sexual minority youth in the school’s non-discrimination policy.

Future research is needed to examine how schools can best go about
developing safe school environments for all youth. For instance, providing
schools with a framework of steps to take to build a safe environment.
School-based interventions can help adjust the subject norm to be more
LGBTQ affirmative and address the barriers that these youth face. The
framework would help schools address the best practice strategies and
how to implement them in their environment. These strategies could
include the best practice strategies identified within the survey of this
study, i.e. having a non-discrimination policy with specific language to
protect sexual minority youth, enforcement of the non-discrimination
policy consistently across all incidences of harassment or intimidation,
education for school staff about issues of human diversity, including
issues of sexual orientation and gender identity within the classroom
curriculum, posting/distributing educational resources to promote
acceptance of student diversity, using gender neutral language when
speaking of significant others and parents, designating a “safe person” for
students to go to with concerns or issues involving sexual orientation or
gender identity, starting a Gay-Straight Alliance to promote a welcoming
environment within the school, and linking students with resources
within the community to help advocate and support them.

Schools can play a significant role in preventing the negative effects
of harassment and bias while enhancing resiliency of LGBTQ youth. Through establishing strong, supportive, and safe school environments
for sexual minority youth, schools can help increase achievement for all
students. School administrators play a vital role in establishing the climate
of acceptance among the school staff. Efforts to improve school climates
for LGBTQ youth will require administrative endorsement and support
from all school personnel (McCabe & Rubinson, 2008). Schools need to
do their part to educate their staff about issues that sexual minority youth
face and take steps to stop harassment. One could argue that not only
is this a moral imperative, but similar to the positions offered by Weiler
(2001) and NASP (2006), school’s have a legal and ethical obligation to provide safe campuses that are conducive to learning for all students in order to promote equal access to all school services.

References


SAUGI MOKYKLOS APLINKA HOMOSEKSUALIAM, BISEKSUALIAM, TRANSEKSUALIAM IR DĖL SAVO LYTINĖS ORIENTACIJOS ABEJOJANČIAM JAUNIMUI: AR NEBRASKOS MOKYKLOS UŽTIKRINA SAUGIĄ APLINKĄ?

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Rezultatai. Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad mokyklos personalas kiekvienos iš devyntių gerios praktikos strategijų vertina reikšmingai aukščiau (p<0,05), nei realius mokyklos veiksmus įgyvendinant strategijas praktikoje, įskaitant: specifinę kalbą, vykdymo strategiją, personalo pasirengimą, įtraukiantį mokymosi turinį, turimus išteklius, neutralią kalbą, asmens saugumą, homoseksualų ir heteroseksualų aljansą ir bendruomeninius išteklius. Išvados. Mokyklų personalas Nebraskoje supranta, kad svarbu plėtoti seksualinių mažumų integraciją didinančias praktikas mokyklos aplinkoje, tačiau mokyklos turi dėti daugiau pastangų šias praktikas realiai įgyvendinti. Kurdamos saugią, stiprią ir palaikančią aplinką seksualinių mažumų jaunimui mokyklos gali padėti padidinti visų mokinių mokymosi pasiekimus.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: lesbiečių, biseksualų, homoseksualų, transseksualų klausimynas (LGBT), saugios mokyklos, homoseksualų aljansas (GSA).

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