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## STATEMENT

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Ministry of Education and Child Care

### **Minister's statement for Pride 2023 in K-12 education**

VICTORIA – Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care, has issued the following statement to mark Pride 2023 and celebrate the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in B.C.'s education system:

“The month of June is a time for all in K-12 education throughout B.C. to hear more about Pride month, recognize and celebrate the contributions of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and learn more about the significance and origins of events that started out of protest, like the Pride parade.

“We know that each child expresses themselves in their own unique way and that 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and families still face discrimination in our education system. Our hard work continues so we can ensure every school is a place where all students, staff and families feel safe and like they belong.

“In 2016, the B.C. Human Rights Code was amended to ensure that gender identity and expression are protected under the code. All schools must comply with the Human Rights Code and demonstrate they are creating safe, welcoming and inclusive environments for our students and staff.

“In B.C., all 60 school districts have sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) codes of conduct in place, and all districts and many independent and First Nations schools participate in the BC SOGI Educator Network. SOGI-inclusive education helps students understand and respect each other's differences, value human rights and recognize how we can respond to discrimination when it happens.

“When students can see themselves reflected in the world around them through stories of same-gender parents or math problems that use ‘they/them’ pronouns in a school environment, it sends a strong message of acceptance. These are important messages for students to see, hear and feel as they grow and learn.

“As we strive to make B.C. a more welcoming place for everyone, we solidify our government's continued support for more equitable and inclusive schools. This means a continued focus on valuing diversity in B.C. classrooms as we honour Pride celebrations and support our 2SLGBTQIA+ staff, students and their families with love and pride.”

#### **Learn More:**

If you or a friend are experiencing discrimination or harassment related to sexual orientation or gender identity, get help here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase/help>

**Contact:**

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