

Greg Pavelich Memorial Public Forum on Education

Queer Ontario
October 1, 2013



QueerOntario

Queering the Education System: An Introduction to the Issues

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Outline:

- ◉ About Queer Ontario
- ◉ Progress in Education Field
- ◉ Foci and Positions on Education
- ◉ Position Arguments
- ◉ Queers and Religion Statement
- ◉ Become a Member, Get Involved
- ◉ Contact

About Queer Ontario

- ◉ “A provincial queer social justice group liberating and celebrating gender and sexual diversity”
- ◉ Mission Statement: Queer Ontario is a provincial network of gender and sexually diverse individuals — and their allies — who are committed to questioning, challenging, and reforming the laws, institutional practices, and social norms that regulate queer people. Operating under liberationist and sex-positive principles, we fight for accessibility, recognition, and pluralism, using social media and other tactics to engage in political action, public education, and coalition-building.

Progress in Education Field

- ◉ Supported youth in their pursuit of GSAs
- ◉ Hosted a Public Forum on Education – April 13, 2011
- ◉ Maintained Media Profile on Queers in Education System
- ◉ Draft Revisions to Bill 13 Adopted
- ◉ Bill 13: Accepting Schools Act, 2012 Passes
- ◉ Bill 33: Toby's Act (Right to be Free from Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity or Gender Expression), 2012

Foci and Positions on Education

The following applies to all publicly funded schools in Ontario, secular or Catholic, English or French, elementary or secondary:

- Effective and meaningful implementation of Bills 13 and 33
- Updating the Sex Education Curriculum
- Post-secondary education of professionals (teachers) on equity (queer) issues
- Having one publicly funded school system

Implementation of Bills 13 & 33

- Position: Creation of safer schools premised on Inclusive, diverse, accessible, equitable environments
- Fosters positive relations among students and teachers
- Currently no standards or procedures in place for teachers or staff to implement these bills

Updating Sex Education Curriculum

- Position: Implement the updates to the 'Health & Physical Education Curriculum'
- 16 year old curriculum has become antiquated
- Accurate & comprehensive information about safe sex & healthy relationships
- Address modern day technology that most students are accessing

Post-Secondary Education of Professionals (Teachers)

- ◉ Position: All professionals need to receive equity (LGBTQ) training
- ◉ Build LGBTQ topics into the teacher-education curriculum
- ◉ Include LGBTQ topics in ongoing professional development
- ◉ Learn to support students coming out
- ◉ Learn to confront hate & violence
- ◉ Identify heterosexist assumptions
- ◉ Identify gender-based assumptions

One School System

- ◉ Position: Public funding be extended to one school system only
- ◉ Merge public and separate schools
- ◉ No state funding for one religion
- ◉ No state support of discrimination justified by religion
- ◉ Save money

QO: Queers and Religion Statement

- ◉ Newly launched Queer Ontario position statement featuring 16 points.
- ◉ Example:
- ◉ 10. Queer Ontario holds that the opportunity to seek out religious, spiritual and faith-based knowledge be based on individual freedom of choice, is responsive to an inter-faith dialogue or an ecumenical spirit, which does not dictate any singular truth upon civil society from a position of authority.

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Membership & Participation

- ◉ Become a QO Member – it's free!
- ◉ Get involved as a QO Participating Member
 - - Share your skills
 - - Learn new skills
 - - Have a say
 - - Take action
- ◉ Support our work, but have no time?
 - - We're happy to accept your \$ donations

Contact:

- ◉ Website: queerontario.org
- ◉ Facebook Page: Queer Ontario
- ◉ Twitter: @queerontario
- ◉ E-Mail: info@queerontario.org
- ◉ Ideas: thinktank.queerontario.org