

# EQUALITY



## *Our Values*

- CTA has long advocated for equality and inclusion in California's public schools and colleges. Across all races, backgrounds, and genders, we all want the same: to provide students with the equitably resourced public education they need and deserve.
- As educators, we care deeply about the health and social-emotional well-being of our students and are committed to making public schools places where children feel seen, and where students of all races and genders have the freedom to learn without fear or intimidation.
- Educators, parents, students, and communities are uniting across race, genders, and place to demand safe and affirming schools where all our students can learn, grow, and thrive.

## *Our Work* >> **TEACHING EQUITY**

**“No pride for some of us without liberation for all of us.” - Marsha P. Johnson**

Over the last several months, LGBTQ+ members, and more specifically members of the transgender community, have been under attack. Many states across the country have seen laws introduced that directly attack the rights and safety of LGBTQ+ students and educators. California is not immune to these right-wing extremist attacks. From laws proposed to force educators to out students to their parents, to school boards attempting to remove protections for LGBTQ+ students put in place by state law, and to our own members being targeted for attempting to create safe, affirming, and inclusive classrooms for their LGBTQ+ students.

The California Teachers Association has a long legacy of defending queer educators and students dating back to 1978 when CTA opposed the Briggs Initiative, which would have banned lesbians, and gays from working in California public schools.

Most recently, CTA has co-sponsored AB 5 (Zbur) which will require schools serving pupils in grades 7-12 to use the California Department of Education's online training delivery platform and curriculum, or an in-service alternative, to support LGBTQ+ cultural competency training at least once every 3 years to all certificated employees on paid time by the 2025-2026 school year. The goal is to create a safe and supportive environment for every child in California, irrespective of their background, zip code, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

# SUPPORTING EDUCATORS & STUDENTS >>

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## *Our Responsibility*

For the full timeline on CTA's support of LGBTQ+ students and educators visit the CTA Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues Advisory Committee (SOGIIAC) [page](#).

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The committee has also revised and updated the Legal Rights for LGBTQ+ Employees and Students which can be downloaded [here](#). This resource provides current California law and Ed Code protections for LGBTQ+ students and educators, as well as provides additional resources and links to agencies serving the LGBTQ+ community. The NEA has also created [this resource](#) on message guidance to further support our queer students.

To our LGBTQ+ members and students, we hear you, we see you, and we support you. We will continue to defend you against these attacks on your personal freedoms and safety.

California Ed Code 51500 prohibits a school district from sponsoring any activity that promotes a discriminatory bias on the basis of gender or sexual orientation. Additionally, the California Student Safety and Violence Protection Act requires a school district to protect its employees from discrimination by parents or students.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against by your employer, a parent or student, please do not hesitate to contact your chapter leadership and CTA staff person if you are experiencing discrimination or harassment.

To our LGBTQ+ allies, we encourage you to continue to educate yourself and others, and support your LGBTQ+ colleagues and students. We urge you to stay up to date with all upcoming [Pride events](#), [Pride Calendar](#), and [Social Justice Resources](#). It takes all of us to create the conditions our students and educators need to thrive.

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# SPEAKING TRUTH *Our Truth*

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LGBTQ+ students are bullied and discriminated against more so than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. These disparities can deny students the opportunity to learn and succeed and result in higher rates of school dropout, homelessness, depression, suicidal ideation, and poverty.

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Schools have a duty to ensure that the content that is presented to students is fair, accurate, inclusive, respectful, and comprehensive.

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Research has found that school-based programs that address sexual/gender identity development, connect youth to their cultural community, and dispel prejudice and discrimination are likely to reduce bullying and prejudice against LGBTQ+ students.

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Discrimination against students based on their sexual orientation or gender identity is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by federal law. It is also important that LGBTQ+ students feel safe and know what to do if they experience discrimination.

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Nearly 1 in 3 lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) young people have attempted suicide, a proportion that is significantly higher than that for non-LGB young people, while 40% of transgender people attempt suicide at some point during their lives. These rates are many times higher than that of the non-LGBTQ+ population.

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We know firsthand that school-based discrimination against transgender students harms them profoundly by stigmatizing and denying equitable educational opportunities.

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When LGBTQ+ youth are overlooked or actively stigmatized in those discussions, it contributes to hostile school environments and places LGBTQ+ youth at risk for negative physical and mental health outcomes.

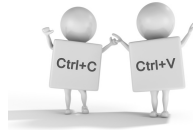
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California law recognizes the importance of inclusive education, and under the FAIR Act, requires that the contributions of LGBTQ+ figures be included in textbooks and curriculum.

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# Digital Allies **SUPPORTING LGBTQ+ STUDENTS & THE EDUCATORS STANDING WITH THEM**

## Sample Content



To our lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and queer students and educators:

We see you.

We support you.

And we are proud of you!

#WeAreCTA

My classroom is a safe space because I believe that every child has the right to feel welcomed and valued at school. Hate has no place here.

#WeAreCTA #PrideMonth

Every student has the right to learn in a safe and accepting school environment. Supporting transgender students gives them the equal opportunity that all students need to succeed. @WeAreCTA #PrideMonth

I'm an educator and proud to support ALL my students. Students deserve to be free to be themselves and to pursue their dreams. @WeAreCTA

#PrideMonth

## Apoyo en Español

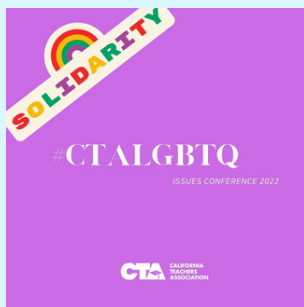
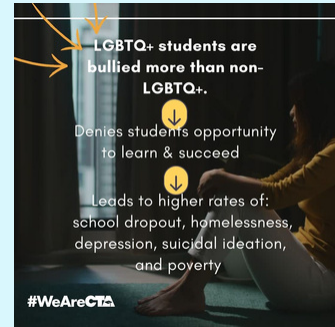
Mi clase es un espacio seguro para todxs mis estudiantes! Soy un/a aliado/a orgulloso/a. @WeAreCTA me da la oportunidad para aprender los derechos de estos Jovenes que merecen igualdad educacional. #CTALGBTQ

Todxs temenos el derecho de ser felices y de crear un futuro exitoso. Por eso apoyo a TODOS mis estudiantes. Diga NO a la discriminación de género. #WeAreCTA #PrideMonth

Maestrxs con voz clara y fuerte por la igualdad transgénero! @WeAreCTA #PrideMonth

Hablemos acerca de la orientación sexual y la identidad de género para crear una sociedad que sea saludable y respetuosa de la diversidad humana. #WeAreCTA #PrideMonth

# SHOW YOUR SUPPORT ON DIGITAL: USE THESE SHAREABLE GRAPHICS IN ENGLISH & ESPAÑOL.



[Download graphics here.](#)

#WeAreCTA



# SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE

## CREATING SAFE & INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

### **Start by stating our values.**

- CTA has long been an advocate for equality and inclusion in the classroom. Across all races, backgrounds, and genders, we all want the same: to provide students with the equitably resourced public education they need and deserve.
- As educators, we care deeply about the health and social-emotional well-being of our students and are committed to making public schools places where children thrive, and where students of all races and genders have the freedom to learn without fear or intimidation.
- Educators, parents, students, and communities are uniting across race, genders, and place to demand safe and affirming schools where all our students can learn, grow, and thrive.
- Students of all races, backgrounds, and genders deserve to feel safe, supported, and affirmed at school—and transgender students are no different. Trans youth and their families deserve to decide on their own terms when and how to have these conversations, both at home and at school.
- Under state law, educators teaching in public schools are required to protect students from different kinds of bias and discrimination, including sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. But some politicians are pushing laws that restrict some students' freedom to learn, excluding them from healthcare, school and sports.

### **Shine a light on the tactics: a distraction from what really matters.**

- Politicians fuel divisions among parents by pushing laws that erase our history, from Selma to Stonewall. We are not fooled by their cruel and politically motivated tactics and will continue to join parents, students, and educators to make public schools places where we are all free to thrive and support each other for who we are.
- Parents and voters agree that our elected officials should be focused on getting students the individualized support they need, and address the real issues facing public schools, like addressing the teacher shortage, fixing teacher pay, and keeping guns out of our schools.
- Students, parents, and educators deserve better. America deserves better than politicians who want play political games with the critical partnership between parents and educators.
- CTA has a long legacy of defending queer educators and students dating back to 1978 when CTA opposed the Briggs Initiative, which would have banned lesbians and gays from working in California public schools.
- To our LGBTQ+ members and students, we hear you, we see you, and we support you. Together, we will continue to defend you against these attacks on your personal freedoms and safety.

# SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE

*Cont.*

- Educators strive to provide every student with an accurate and quality education while some politicians want to exclude certain kids, denying their schools funding, and writing people who look like them out of our history books.
- Instead of attempting to divide communities, politicians should focus on making sure all students receive the education they deserve, making schools places where children thrive, and where students of all races and genders have the freedom to learn without fear or intimidation.
- These politicians and their networks are fueling divisions among parents through fearmongering and by pushing laws that erase our history, from Selma to Stonewall, and are targeting and punishing educators for doing their jobs. They want to limit what books students can read and, in some cases, exclude transgender kids from healthcare, school, and sports.
- These politicians are exploiting lack of familiarity with transgender students to distract us from their failures to deliver for our families and communities. We are not fooled by their cruel and politically motivated tactics and will continue to join parents, students, and educators to make public schools places where we are all free to thrive and support each other for who we are.
- We need to work together with educators, parents, and elected officials to address the teacher shortage, fix teacher pay, and provide all students with the support and opportunities they need to succeed.

## **Attacks on educators**

- Students are at the center of everything we do and why we we're committed to making public schools places where children thrive, and where students of all races and genders have the freedom to learn without fear or intimidation.
- Under state law, educators teaching in public schools are required to protect students from different kinds of bias and discrimination, including sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
- In today's extremist political climate, we're concerned for our students and concerned for our own safety. Right now, extreme political forces are fueling chaos and disinformation to divide parents, educators, and school communities for their own political gain.

## **Speaking Truth**

- LGBTQ+ students are bullied and discriminated against more so than their counterparts.
- Nearly 1 in 3 lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) young people have attempted suicide, a proportion that is significantly higher than that for non-LGB young people.
- 40% of transgender people attempt suicide at some point during their lives. These rates are many times higher than that of the non-LGBTQ+ population.
- Schools have a duty to ensure that the content that is presented to students is fair, accurate, inclusive, respectful and comprehensive.