



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Statement from the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs Urging Adoption of Inclusive Schools Policies Across Maryland

Adopted on January 12, 2026

The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs strongly urges every county Board of Education in Maryland to adopt a comprehensive Inclusive Schools Policy that affirms the dignity, safety, and well-being of LGBTQIA+ students and staff.

Maryland’s public schools serve diverse communities, and every student deserves a learning environment where they are respected, protected, and supported. The Maryland State Department of Education’s guidance, [“*Safe and Supportive Schools for All Students: Creating Inclusive Spaces for LGBTQIA+ Youth*,”](#) provides a clear, practical framework for how school systems can meet this responsibility. MSDE’s guidance outlines best practices that promote student safety, reduce bullying and harassment, support mental health, and ensure compliance with state and federal nondiscrimination protections.

The Commission commends public school systems in Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Frederick County, Howard County, Montgomery County, and Prince George’s County for taking proactive steps to adopt inclusive policies that explicitly address the needs of LGBTQIA+ students and staff. These districts demonstrate that inclusive policies are both achievable and beneficial—strengthening school climate, improving student outcomes, and affirming that all members of the school community belong.

We also express our support for the inclusive schools campaigns led by allied community groups, which advance many of the same principles outlined in MSDE’s guidance and align closely with the Commission’s own [“*Recommendations for Supporting LGBTQIA+ Students*.”](#) This community-led effort across Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s Counties encourages school systems to meet their obligations to all students.

The Commission maintains a list of [resources](#) and local LGBTQIA+ community partners on its website and strongly recommends that school systems work collaboratively with these organizations when developing policy. Engaging directly with community-based partners helps ensure policies are informed, effective, and responsive to the lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ students and staff. We further call on each county Board of Education to place these policies on their agendas and to vote in favor of their adoption.

Inclusive schools are not optional—they are essential. By adopting clear, affirming policies, Maryland’s Boards of Education can help ensure that every student, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in a safe and supportive environment.