

Victoria A. Jakelsky
Public Open Testimony-State School Board Meeting
Department of Education
January 8, 2020

Good afternoon. My name is Victoria. I am the State Coordinator for NJ Parental Rights, and I have served in this capacity for a decade now. I am here today to cry out and plead for your help. I am here with many who have come from all over the state. We have taken vacation days from work to not only ask you to listen to our pleas, but to ask you to take action with us to protect the children.

We are Team PYC. WE are parents, teachers, school board members, concerned taxpayers, mothers, fathers, church leaders, Christians, people of faith, Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and Coptic Christians. We are many and we represent thousands from all over the state and the nation. We are very diverse, yet we have one thing in common, our desire to protect the children.

Our faith and our deep religious views are in peril. We are very concerned about the pending implementation of the new LGBT curriculum, scheduled to be added into all NJ middle and high schools in September 2020. We want to be clear. We care about each and every child, and we support and defend equality. We believe that all children should be cared for, respected, protected, and have equal rights to learn, to excel, and to reach their fullest potential, including black/white/rich/poor/gay/straight; however treating all equally cannot mean that those with deep religious views are discriminated against. We are highly concerned that the LGBT history will teach lifestyles, and life choices that stand one hundred percent against our family values, our deeply held religious views, and the way we practice our faith.

We believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. We believe that sexual intercourse should be saved for marriage. WE are here to say that to force the normalcy of the LGBT lifestyle on our children and into the schools every day lesson plans, is a stripping of our religious liberty and the parental rights of every parent who feels these subject matters are too mature to be taught to any child. The children need to learn how to read, write, and do arithmetic. They are not being sent to school to learn about the sexual orientations or the sexual practices of others, but to be educated. The current Department of Education, under the direction of Dr. Repollet has done wonders to make certain all the children have an even playing field, we are here to say congratulations on your success, BUT PLEASE CONTINUE TO STRIVE TO EDUCATE, NOT INDOCTRINATE!

The NJ Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee Statement to Senate, No. 1569 Dated: June 18, 2018 reads: "This bill (the LGBT Curriculum bill) is modeled on a law adopted in California, the "Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful Education (FAIR) Act," which took effect on January 1, 2012.

The "I" in FAIR stands for "Inclusive". If you do not know, California schools are not only teaching the "Q" but they have also added the "P" under the guise of inclusion! Many schools are teaching that adults who are attracted to children is one of the many "sexual orientations people choose", in their lesson plans.

When NJ S1569 was signed into law (C.18A:35-4.35) by Governor Murphy, in January 2019, the law's initial goal was to include the history of disabled and LGBT persons in all NJ public middle and high schools' curriculums. However, since that point, after our many months of research, we have not found any mention of the history of people with disabilities in these "lesson plans"; however, the "Q" has appeared in the pending lesson plans as outlined by Garden State Equality.

How did the “Q” magically appear?

Will the “P” be next?

Where will this stop?

This new curriculum has been developed by employees hired by Garden State Equality. This organization boasts of being, “New Jersey’s Largest LGBTQ Advocacy & Education Organization”. They have reported, “We’re bringing LGBTQ curriculum to New Jersey schools”. Our concerns are that they are not only writing the curriculum but hiring “coaches” to help schools manage the objections of students, parents, and people of faith who’s values stand in opposition to this life style, AND that they will use our tax dollars to do this!

The Holy Word of God states:

“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.
It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.” Ephesians 5:11-12

Yet, this curriculum’s goal is to normalize these “deeds of darkness” and teach them as a required part of NJ learning standards.

This is a true assault to our deeply held faith and our religious liberty.

We do not want any child to feel unwanted, left out, or discriminated against, and we are here to say that this pending curriculum, if forced and “implanted” into the hearts and minds of our children, will do exactly that, **discriminate against every person of faith.**

Please work with us. Please listen to our plea. Please take action with us to protect the children.
PLEASE CONTINUE TO STRIVE TO EDUCATE, NOT INDOCTRINATE!

Please do not let this curriculum be implemented.

Thank you for your time.

Victoria A. Jakelsky
NJParentalRights@outlook.com

Team PYC

Good Afternoon.

My name is Jasmine. I come here on behalf of many who are deeply concerned about the LGBT curriculum that is going to be forced down their childrens minds.

The 1st Amendment says: "Congress shall make NO LAW respecting an establishment of religion, or PROHIBITING the FREE EXERCISE thereof.

The Holy word of GOD teaches that GOD created us in his own image, male and female he created them and that the bible teaches us that Marriage is a union between a man and a woman. This is our Holy God teaches us.

And this new curriculum is going to strip our rights of exercising our freedom of religion by teaching about the LGBT History and in a way normalising their lifestyle to our children, without giving the right for us to opt out of it.

We plead our rights of the constitution. We plead as parents to parents please do not strip our rights by forcing our children to follow something which is against our religion which is against the HOLINESS OF OUR GOD!

And I believe as I stand here today and testify that my words are not going in thin air, because I want to believe that you will respect our values and our concern without discrimination, and I thank you for that.

Garden State Equality who introduced this LGBT curriculum in our schools state that the reason they are introducing this it is to protect the students who identify themselves as LGBT from bullying, violence and intimidation.

But I ask you by introducing the history of the contribution of the people who identify themselves as LGBT will it reduce the bullying rate? I don't think so.

We should infact focus more strongly on character education classes for our kids, which teach them to **respect and love each and every person, as every person is created in the Image of God!** This is what will stop the bullying rate. We have to instill them the morals in school. When educating the minds of our children, we must not forget to educate their hearts. The statistic of Moral Education in the USA schools is very deficient I feel, we should focus more on that than teaching them about the lgbt lifestyle. Infact, the bible tells us Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

So it is **not only enough to teach them but the school needs to TRAIN them everyday in school** to respect and love one another till it is written on the tablets of their heart, and the best example to give them about loving someone sleflessly is the example of Jesus Christ,

Philipians 4 states

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

⁶ Though he was God,^[a]

he did not think of equality with God
as something to cling to.

⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges^[b];
he took the humble position of a slave^[c]
and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,^[d]

⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God
and died a criminal's death on a cross

⁹ Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor
and gave him the name above all other names,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

And so in the end I want to conclude by saying that we can give many wise arguments but in the end what stands is we will all be accountable and answerable to God.

Psalm 29 says The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever.

Over all the authorities and all the principalities Jesus sits enthroned.

It is He we have to fear and not men.

Thank you.

Good Afternoon Members of the State Board of Education,

My name is Roseangela Mendoza. I'm a Middle School Social Studies teacher at The Ethical Community Charter School (TECCS), a K-8 school in Jersey City.

This past year, I've become very active in advocating for my students both inside and outside the classroom. This past October, I had the honor of receiving the first inaugural Charter Advocate of the Year award from the New Jersey Charter Schools Association (NJCSA) at their annual conference. It was an exciting and rewarding experience to be recognized for the elevation of my teacher voice on behalf of charters, and one which will continue to inspire my advocacy work on behalf of my fellow coworkers and students.

I'd like to share with the Board a part of my acceptance speech from that day at the NJCSA conference because I feel it relays an important message for all of us involved in education to hear.

This past September while I was providing information about TECCS during a "Meet the Charters" event I started a few years ago in order to promote our Jersey City and Hoboken charter schools I was approached by a gentleman at my table. He began reviewing the information displayed on my table with a look of annoyance and disgust. I heard him say, "All these charter schools are corporations taking away our money." Of course, this is one of the most widely quoted myths about charter schools. Later, as he was expressing his opinions about charter schools with others at the event waving his hands in the air and raising his voice, he started walking towards me.

This "Gentleman" proceeded with verbal attacks aimed at me: "YOU ARE A PRIVATE ENTITY TAKING MY TAX DOLLARS, YOUR TAX DOLLARS, STOP TAKING OUR MONEY!"

I, as a representative of TECCS, using some of the skills we teach our students about civil discourse; RESPECT, SELF CONTROL and ACTING

ASSERTIVELY, tried to explain the facts about charter schools and dispel myths that charter schools take money. The facts are that charter schools are public schools here in New Jersey who rely upon education funding from the state, but our students only receive 73 cents on the dollar as compared to our district peers. Public charter schools are tuition free, and are not private schools. As an advocacy fellow with the Association of American Educators (AAE), I began utilizing all of the tools I learned when dealing with people who don't understand the facts, and who refuse to participate in a civil dialogue.

After realizing that no matter what I tried respectfully offering this "conversation" wasn't going to progress I said, "thank you, sir, for your information and opinions." No matter what I said, he continued on and on. I never thought I would ever say the following: "Thank you, Sir, this is my safe space and I feel uncomfortable with you here. Please leave, thank you."

I shared this portion of my acceptance speech with you because there is a lot of misinformation circulating about charter schools in our communities, on social media and in public forums such as today. Schools like TECCS are here to provide students with a unique learning opportunity, a safe environment that is conducive for learning, and the opportunity to learn about Ethics in our daily curriculum and how it both informs and transforms student's lives.

This Board can ensure our focus is on what is best for kids and how to best invest in public education by dispelling persistent misinformation about our public charter schools and public charter school educators. It isn't fair that our students hear these misconceptions about the charter schools they attend; especially the charter schools that are truly making a difference in the lives of their students, academically, socially and emotionally. I don't need to be convinced about the role our public charters play in providing successful student outcomes here in New Jersey. As a charter school teacher, I get to witness the incredible transformation in my classroom every day.

January 8, 2020

Re: Public Testimony, Trenton NJ

My name is Margaret Girgis and I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am a mother of 3 children whom are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I hold 2 part-time jobs, an active member in the [REDACTED] School, Neighborhood Watch team, and a Sunday School Servant in the Coptic Orthodox Church. I graduated Rutgers University with a double major with Honors. I work hard.

I am here to state that I am against the implementation of the LGBTQ+ (now may add a possible "P" for pedophilia) curriculum which has been state mandated by Governor Murphy.

It is every parents God given right and duty to care for their children and make the decisions about what they learn and how they learn it as it pertains to sexuality. Each parent has a right to teach and speak to their child about sexuality and orientation their own way on their own terms. Forcing children to learn homosexuality and transgenderism is an assault to our freedoms, values and faith which clearly stated in the U.S Constitution.

Secondly, the 1st Amendment says: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." The LGBT curriculum is disrespecting both my religion and my faith. We are here today to peacefully assemble and petition you all for a redress of this curriculum.

Thirdly, we believe that God is sovereign over the affairs of man, and that He alone gives us freedom. God provides us all freedom, and we must ensure that our children can live according to our religious faith and teaching. The schools cannot teach doctrine or "history" that prohibits or thwarts this freedom. The school should never teach what they might call "history" when it contradicts what we know to be true. We cannot and will not let our children be taught lifestyles that denies what our faith knows to be true. Also, some of historical figures which it is claiming to be LGBTQ have not been confirmed as such. Thus it is not completely accurate. I.e. teaching that there are 50plus genders is simply insanity.

Fourthly, my tax dollars should not be used to teach any child about different ways people choose to have sex. They should be taught how to read, write, and do arithmetic. Your job as a State School Board Member is to make sure they learn. How can you support teaching alternate lifestyles when many of our children cannot read?

I am also here to represent my mother, who passed away February 2019. She was a teacher in the public school system for 22 years. My mother and her family immigrated to the United States to escape persecution and prejudice in Amman, Jordan with the sudden death of her brother and cousin who were killed in front of their home. Similarly, my father emigrated from Cairo, Egypt at the age of 18 for Political Asylum. Because of him, his 7 brothers and sisters were able to come here to experience a life of liberty and justice. Fast forward 40 plus years I am standing here to get KEEP the religious freedoms my parents fought so hard for.

I would like to share with you a personal story which occurred October 2019 (before I become aware of this new curriculum). My children's elementary school was having "Rainbow Day" for students to wear different colors during "Week of Respect". I emailed to my son's teacher asking what it was celebrating, she stated that it was a "fun" day for kids to wear different colors. Then I emailed the principal the same question, he immediately called me with the same explanation. Two days later, I find out it was on "National Coming Out Day", which is October 12. I reached out to the principal again to inquire why parents were not informed about this day but were on every other day in respect week, he denied there was any connection and stated it was a mere coincidence. The indoctrination of this ideology is unfair.

Slipping these teachings in a manner is morally and ethically incorrect. I stood up to my principal and today I stand up too. I stand here in the name of love. Love for my God, my children and for all of the children that will be forced into these ideologies. I will NOT stand here and allow this to happen.

The passing of bill 1569 is indoctrination of our children. It is a way to remove parental rights and religious freedoms away from us. It is a way to force other ideologies/theories/manifestations to children. I am here to say this needs to stop. I will raise my kids and teach my children about sexuality / orientation on my terms; as every parent should. It is my God given right and parent of the first Amendment.

I beg you to hear this and hear what the constitution says and to stop this insanity. Sexual orientation does not make someone's accomplishments better or worse. Teaching it will only create confusion and distraction to our children. Let kids be kids and let us go back to the "basics of learning". Please help protect our children.

Thank you for your time.

Mayor P. Ed McKelvey

Alloway, NJ

Alloway Township, Salem County

RE: Curriculum Bill C.18A:35-4.35-.36

I can teach, write a book, a textbook or curriculum that "Brown Cows Give Chocolate Milk". The fact that many people embrace or believe it to be so does not change the fact that Brown Cows do not produce Chocolate Milk.

As a child, I loved horses, cowboys and anything related to ranching. I crawled around on my hands and knees, eating grass and drinking from mud puddles. Looking back, there was no "intervention", no "transition to a horse", just a kid with a healthy imagination and emotions growing toward adulthood. No one at home or at school complicated my life by introducing damaging thoughts or patterns that have no place in a young mind. I was very fortunate to grow up in a whole family, where my Father trained up his children in the way that they should go, I then trained up my children and now my children are training their children. We were taught the "Golden Rule", to always treat others the way you want to be treated, to tell the truth and to stand against evil.

The School's job is to help and support the parents with academia and not to undermine or take the place of the Parents or their moral beliefs.

Teaching children to embrace behavior that leads to sickness and disease is wrong.

The Declaration on which our Constitution stands, states that we were created by a Creator. No specie on Earth has the power to "create" (the ability to make something from nothing) and no one has the power to create male and female with all the complexities which make up the individual. This confusing notion, that with the use of Pharmacia and a good sharp knife, we can change the gender of a human, leads to disillusion and finality.

This LGBTQ subject matter has no real scientific/factual basis. It is rooted in emotion and feelings, leading to behavior that goes against Nature and Nature's God. It is more of a Religion than a fact or Science-based subject, and therefore has no "appropriate" place in the public school.

This Bill was sold, promoted and passed under the Disabilities Act, and has nothing to do with disability. The inability or refusal to see and accept consequences of one's emotions and feelings, somehow in the minds of some, takes precedence over reality or Laws of Nature. Could it be a "disability" or an "inability" to accept proven scientific facts (The Truth)?

Again, there is no "appropriate" place in the public school for C.18A:35-4.35-.36.

Respectfully Submitted,

P. Edward McKelvey, Jr.

Date & Day: 01/08/2020, Wednesday

Subject: LGBTQ- Curriculum in NJ schools (2020-2021)

Venue: Department of Education, 100 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

objective: Increase the students awareness with LGBTQ

Major issues:

1. The decision is mandatory, no choice for the student to opt out
2. It did not consider the community diversity, in terms of values and beliefs
3. Contradiction with values and confusion to many students
4. May have severe negative behavioral and psychological effects
5. The prevalence increase of Sexually transmitted diseases

Consequences:

1. Increase of absenteeism in NJ schools
2. Bad reputation of our state for not considering the community diversity
3. Overburden on the parents in their children guidance
4. Miscommunication and frequent conflicts as a result of misinterpretation
5. The economic burden of treatment of different sexually transmitted diseases

Suggestions:

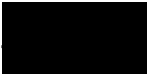
1. Please, revise this decision before the implementation
2. The opting out as a right for the parents and students from attending
3. To train and assign the school psychologist instead of inclusion in the curriculum
4. To continue working mainly on student skills development in learning ability
5. Kindly, consider the community diversity before proceeding in similar decisions

Conclusion:

I disagree with this decision and look for the decision revising

Appreciating your kind understanding,

Name: HAZEM ADHAM

Confirmation no 

11, 12, 13
Testifying
together

Sophia Patel
NJ FCCLA President

Samhitha Mupharaphu
NJ FCCLA First Vice President

Melanie Mendonca
NJ FCCLA Vice President of Community Service

January 8, 2020
Testimony

Skills such as balancing a checkbook, cooking a nutritious meal, making your own clothes, and learning how to care for a child are skills we learn in our daily Family and Consumer Sciences Classes. In the 43 minutes a day we have these classes, we are encouraged to solve problems, think critically and develop strategies to find alternative and effective solutions for the challenges our community faces in their daily lives. These courses not only teach us to succeed in our high school experience but also give us an opportunity to take what we learn into our future lives and our careers. Good Afternoon. My name is Sophia Patel and I am currently serving as the State President for New Jersey Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. I would like to thank the State Board of Education for the opportunity to speak today and for your continuing efforts to improve the education system for all students in New Jersey.

We are here today to emphasize the need for post-secondary Family and Consumer Sciences Education in New Jersey. Family and Consumer Sciences Education not only prepares students for their further studies, but also their future careers by teaching them employability skills and 21st century life skills such as how to be a smart consumer, public speaker and leader. These are the types of skills and classes that are necessary to stand out and succeed in a competitive workforce and are not typically taught in a math or English classroom. From personal experience, our organization, FCCLA, allows me to take what I learn in my Family and Consumer Science Class outside of the traditional classroom. It has allowed me to create change in my community by working with others to tackle the many issues our community faces such as youth e-cigarette and tobacco usage, food insecurity and hunger, and the lack of Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in New Jersey. Through FCCLA, I have realized I truly love advocacy and it is something I plan to incorporate in my future occupation.

Good afternoon. My name is Samhitha Mupharaphu and I am currently serving as the First Vice President of NJ FCCLA. Family and Consumer Sciences Education has also had a dramatic impact on my life. For example, one skill that I acquired through FCCLA is public speaking. Walking into JP Stevens High School as a freshman, I was terrified to introduce myself to a class of 25 students. Two years later, I have grown into a confident individual who was able to speak to a group of 500 people at our recent Fall Leadership Conference. Although public speaking is one of the biggest changes I underwent in FCCLA, I have also gained skills such as

communication, networking, time-management, real world problem solving and adaptability. These 21st century life skills are what employers are looking for in the people that they want to hire. Essentially, Family and Consumer Sciences courses teach us these skills and through FCCLA, we have had the opportunity to put them into good use and make a difference.

I am currently taking a Child Growth and Development course at my school. This is offered as a course for students, and three days a week, we have children ages 3-5 come as part of a preschool program in the school. High School Students have the opportunity work with these children throughout the year, learning about how to teach them different tasks, how to help them grow intellectually, socially and emotionally, and how to recognize the challenges that exit at every developmental milestone. In this course, we also come across various problems that we work together to solve. For example, we had a child this year who started pre-school for the first time and had a hard time leaving her parents. On the first day, we realized that she didn't understand English very well. Due to this situation, it was hard to work with her and she was very reluctant to get involved in the activities that the other children were doing because of the language barrier. However, we worked with her one-on-one and did different activities with her to get her comfortable in this new environment. Soon, she was confident enough, to sit in front of the class, say her name and recite the days of the week! This is just one of the many success stories from our Family and Consumer Sciences classes. Unfortunately, New Jersey is lacking teachers to teach this subject area and many students are being deprived of this amazing learning experience.

Good afternoon! My name is Melanie Mendonca and I am the Vice President of Community Service and Parliamentary Law. As Samhitha said, there is a lack of certified Family and Consumer Sciences educators in schools across New Jersey. Currently, the average age of FCS teachers in New Jersey is 65 years old, meaning that many teachers are approaching retirement. However, because there are no post-secondary schools in New Jersey that offer a Family and Consumer Sciences degree, New Jersey is not graduating new teachers to fill "their shoes." It is extremely inconvenient and discouraging for students who would like to pursue a Family and Consumer Sciences degree and follow their passion because of the added expense to pay out of state tuition fees. Without qualified teachers, students will be deprived of the amazing experience Family and Consumer Sciences classes provide. Currently, two of the Family and Consumer Sciences teachers in my school who teach Fashion and Apparel, Personal Finance, Child Growth and Development, and Food Science and Nutrition are set to retire. My fashion teacher and our FCCLA adviser, who has surpassed the average age for retirement, still works today because she worries about who will fill her shoes after she retires. She would like to retire, but she fears that there will not be anyone qualified to give students the opportunity to learn and develop these 21st century life skills. We have seen the effects of this growing issues with Family and Consumer Sciences Program being closed in districts all over the state. In some cases, alternate route teachers are replacing traditionally certified teachers and are finding it difficult to meet the diverse demands of Family and Consumer Sciences departments. Colleges such as Douglass College, Rowan University, and Montclair University have many of the required classes and equipment to graduate students with Family and Consumer Sciences degrees. Over the years, these colleges discontinued their programs and

disassembled the degree's courses into different departments. It would not take an extensive amount of money or work in order to combine these classes under one Family and Consumer Sciences degree. In 2020, a little forward thinking and technology could solve this problem that has existed for more than 20 years.

In the case that these college classes cease to exist, high school students will no longer receive the education that teaches them soft skills that employers are looking for in today's workforce. On a daily basis, Family and Consumer Sciences courses make students college and career ready. Failure to provide certified Family and Consumer Sciences teachers for New Jersey will deny students the opportunity to participate in FCCLA, which allows students to take what they learn and implement it through their project-based learning, community service initiatives, and leadership activities. Therefore, it is imperative that the state of New Jersey take action to restore post-secondary opportunities to receive Family and Consumer Sciences education degrees.

Thank you.

Are we here for the benefit & well-being of ALL children or just one minority regardless of impact on others?

First, I'd like to speak as a Muslim mum. Muslims are a minority just as LGBTQ & other groups are. Minorities face discrimination & bullying in schools. Our goal as parents and educators is to teach our kids to avoid prejudice, be respectful to all mankind & accept differences (whatever they are) and to teach them to be resilient, strong kids. This is one of our religion's teachings & of many others too. Schools respect that parents belong to diverse religions, & so give a brief introduction to religions in middle school leaving the role of religious teaching & beliefs entirely to the parents. On a similar note, teaching sexuality & gender is also a parental right, role & responsibility that school shouldn't be involved in.

The introduction of an LGBTQ curriculum in this way not only strips our right but it also enforces a certain ideology to kids. At present, we have an introduction that is age-appropriate and sufficient in the health curriculum to inform the students about gender issues including the LGBTQ community.

Now speaking as a physician & a researcher: science & scientific facts change all the time. What is healthy today might not be so in a few years & so on, BUT the fact is we are created with only male or female genitalia. This will never change. Indoctrinating to our kids the idea of more than 2 genders is unacceptable by many parents.

I and also all of you, know how hard & challenging teenage years are. Middle school has its very specific social and emotional challenges. Many experience an identity crisis especially for minorities, it is totally unfair to have this suffering doubled by adding to it a "gender crisis" through an LGBTQ curriculum. This is a critical time for children who are already confused about themselves, yet you'll confuse them even more by adding ideas they're incapable of handling at this growth stage.

Another point to add, is why should a child know the sexuality of a person in his job/career if it has nothing to do with how they perform their duties?

A CDC Youth risk behavior survey in 2017 that studied risks that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and young adults has shown that LGBTQ students were at significantly higher risk than heterosexual students in every variable explored whether it be risky sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental

health or suicide. Many would just want to attribute it to bullying BUT this isn't the only reason.

As a society, we should aim to protect our youth & help them lead a healthy life. The introduction of LGBTQ in many subjects won't be helping but will make us lose our future leaders to death & disability.

By the way, the same report showed that bullying hasn't significantly changed from 2009-2017, although so much money & efforts were spent on anti-bullying programs & campaigns in public schools. So why should I believe that such a curriculum will be doing any better?!

Being a relatively new resident of NJ, board policy 5756 was new & disappointing. All health & psychological issues related to a child are the responsibility of their parents or guardians. Such a policy is just against all parental rights. At the end of the day, parents are the ones financially & physically responsible for that kid all the time even when they're out of school.

As a mum of many kids & a girl scout leader who works hard to help raise conscientious & successful future leaders, I believe that others' freedom & rights end when they infringe upon that of others. For example, how am I supposed to feel safe about my kids going to restrooms in school especially girls when I as an adult avoid public restrooms after this gender mix up. A university in NJ changed the women's restroom to an all-gender restroom while leaving the men's as is. This isn't only unfair & deprived women of their rights for their own restroom but also means that we will be avoiding the use of restrooms as much as we can, which will implicate our health and our kid's health and well-being. I am so worried to find this reaching public schools too.

Thereby I seriously ask for reconsidering the LGBTQ curriculum that parents weren't given the right to vote for but was imposed upon them. A signed parental permission should be sought before kids attend these lessons.

Public schools pose a challenge, for many minority families, with this curriculum adding to the challenges many are considering moving out of state, going to private schools or even homeschooling.

Finally, I would like to close by translating a verse from the Quran which says:

"O humankind! Surely We have created you into males and females and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know one another (and so build

mutuality and co-operative relationships, not so that you may take pride in your differences of race or social rank, and breed enmities). Surely the noblest, most honorable of you in God's sight is the one best in piety, righteousness, and reverence for God. Surely God is All-Knowing, All-Aware." Alhujurat: Aya 13

Thank you

Good Afternoon Board Members:

My name is Shirley Irizarry, a mother and advocate for parents who have students with special needs and English Language Learners, from the City of Camden, NJ.

I come to you today to remind you of our School Districts \$40,000 million budget deficit and to ask about the emergency aid that was promised for our children's education. Our Superintendent, Katrina McCombs attempted to close the gap by closing Veterans Memorial School but was told she had to keep it open and would receive emergency funding to do so. As of today, we have not received this funding and we still haven't heard if we will receive any funding toward this deficit.

This worries me particularly because the parents that I represent already have many barriers they must manage in order to ensure their students their students need are met. I worry that additional cuts will be made to these programs and our most vulnerable students will go without the resources required for them to receive a quality education. Resources such as additional paraprofessionals for students requiring one-on-one instruction, or door-to-door transportation for students who need it. I also worry about ELL students who may have to go without additional instruction in their native language in order to help them grasp English.

So I stand before this Board to simply ask: Where's the money? And to remind you that our children are also in your care. Please do the right thing.

Shirley Irizarry


shirley@greatcamdenschools.org

HELLO , Happy New Year , My name is Aretha [REDACTED] i am a parent advocate specialist for parents for great camden schools. I have a daughter that attend [REDACTED] School in the [REDACTED] grade who is a teen mother. I'm here because my daughter is being affected by the funds not being available for her childcare program that was in her school, we now have to pay for childcare out of our pocket which is costing us \$200 every 2 weeks. My granddaughter is 1ys old and has gotten use to her childcare provider and now was taking from there, and not only is it affecting her but her mother is missing days from school and grades dropping. My daughter had the top 10 GPA in her school last year and now its dropping because of the lack of funds not being available to our kids for the childcare program other students that also depend on this program had to drop out. Please can you tell me when will our children receive the funds they need to help with these issues in their schools?

Thank You,

Aretha Turlington

aretha@greatcamdenschools.org

[REDACTED]

My Name is Mariam Ghobriel

I am here to voice my concerns regarding the upcoming incorporation of LGBTQ into the NJ schools curriculum

I stand firmly against the proposed changes for many reasons, for the sake of time here are my major concerns

1- LGBTQ lifestyle is a very personal Matter.

I have done a lot of reading into the multitude of terms out there and concluded that there is no scientific consensus regarding most of the terms being thrown out there today. Majority of them have been introduced by self proclaimed writers, artists and activists to express their personal experiences for the most part,

Less than a handful have scientific basis and most are ambiguous , repetitive and at best mere amateur work.

Incorporating personal opinion and unproven theory into an educational curriculum would be a slap in the face to children and their parents when science hasn't even come to agreement on the majority of these terms.

2- a very large sector of society including people

Of faith such as Jews, muslims and Christians alike believe that teaching the LGBTQ lifestyle is a direct violation of their religious beliefs and that schools would be crossing the line between education and playing God.

The basis of our constitution is built on freedom of religious belief and practice and this is a direct assault on that right.

3- we have seen and heard of classroom encounters around the country between students and members of LGBTQ community during which those members discussed their sexuality, life styles and medical as well as surgical interventions they have undergone to modify their bodies such as double mastectomy and others to accommodate their new lifestyles.

Does that mean that it is now also acceptable for heterosexual men and women to engage in discussions in the classrooms with students regarding their sexuality and perhaps mention sexual procedures such as vaginoplasty and penile enlargement which they might have undergone similarly to suit their life styles . Btw if me uttering these words is considered unacceptable or offensive to anyone present, just imagine how an underage child would feel. are we making inexcusable exceptions for a particular group of people? For what reason did they receive this special Privilege. This is a direct assault on whatever is left of the innocence of our children in a day and age where media has made nothing sacred or off limits anymore. And now they will be assaulted in their own classroom where they are supposed to be sheltered

Is that what a reasonable enlightened elite group of educators would do to their underage students.

What is the goal Of schools :

Is it education for life skills or indoctrination for sexual life styles. We must draw the line here.

I'm sure you have all watched sci-fi movies over the years portraying plots where families are only meant for breeding children while schools and totalitarian governments take over the task

#19

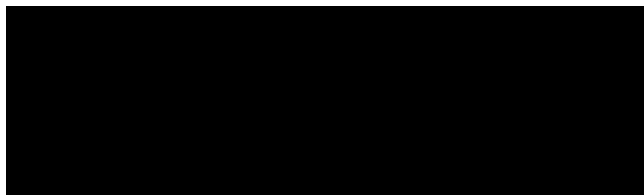
Dear State board member's and Staff,

Desmond Benson

Camden City School district resident and advocate.

There's lots of talk around our city that the state hasn't delivered on its promise of emergency funding. A parents community leader , and my own family this brings up many concerns. What changes are going to have to go through as a district in the up coming school year? More cuts, layoffs, moving kids around again? `The district was ask not to close a school and help was coming. Was the ask not to close the school A Band- aid? So will Vets still have to close in the next upcoming school year. Will other school in our district have to close there doors? Our students safety will be put on the back burner, because as soon as there cuts transportation, dropping of elective class and many other important jobs are the first to go. This is really concerning to many parents and I. And the question I Know you have heard many time this afternoon, is there a time frame the Camden City school District will receive the aid they have previously ask? We are all ready in a new year and the ask is from the last year.

Desmond Benson Parent Advocate



applaud every here for speak the truth even if
Speaks the truth, because ^{it is better} your voice shakes.

My name is Ashley Chiappano and I am the Safe Schools Coordinator and Community Education Manager at Garden State Equality. Yesterday, my team of curriculum writers, coached and 120 educators meet to learn about how to implement LGBTQ Inclusive Curriculum into NJ public schools. We had robust discussions about inclusive language, and the social, political and economic contribution of LGBTQ people. We did not discuss sex, or sexual relationships, But we did share lessons about..

or gender identity

1. 10th grade Creative Writing: Considering How We Treat Characters in a Story

2. Teaching Inclusive Grammar: Pronouns- middle school

3. Character development lessons in reading and analyzing the Memoir: *Boy Erased*

4. _____ like me: STEM Biography and how we learn about gender diversity

5. The Pink Triangle: Grade Level: 10th-12th *for use in a Holocaust elective, or in compliance with the Holocaust education mandate

6. A Picture Tells A Thousand Words... at 10th grade

Brief Summary of Cultural Competencies Related to the Unit/Lesson:

What makes this lesson culturally relevant? In this lesson, students will focus upon women during the Civil War who have often been "othered" or "silenced" as a result of their gender. Students will take a deeper look into analyzing the history of women during the Civil War, and the ways in which they contributed to the war effort. In particular, students will be studying how some women chose to blur the gender lines by dressing as males and "passing" within society, during the Civil War and sometimes even after; thus allowing for a deeper understanding of LGBTQ history/rights.

7. 11th grade lesson

Civil Rights Activism and the Growth of Identity-Based Politics and Social Movements

Unit/Lesson New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS):

SOC.6.1.12.A.13.b - Analyze the effectiveness of national legislation, policies and Supreme Court decisions in promoting civil liberties and equal opportunities.

SOC.6.1.12.D.13.c - Analyze the successes and failures of women's rights organizations, the

TECH.8.1.12.C.CS2 - Communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats

~~As~~ AS a LGMTA person & a parent. I believe
in Respect, empathy, and understanding. LGMTA
richman curriculum is ~~not~~ many things. Is it
an opportunity for students to learn ^{about} Compassion, respect
differences. ~~I understand~~ ~~that we have~~ ~~to teach~~ ~~them~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~able~~ ~~to~~ ~~do~~ ~~this~~ ~~work~~ ~~on~~ ~~these~~ ~~things~~ ~~we~~ ~~have~~ ..

NJ Board of Education
Department of Education
PO Box 500 Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

January 7, 2020

Testimony given by Chris Cannella
Honorable members of the NJ Board of Education:

My name is Kate Okeson, I am an art and art history educator at Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School in Monmouth County. I have been teaching for 22 years. I am also the advisor to students in my school's GSA - a Gender and Sexuality Alliance student activity club. In addition, in 2008, after a number of highly publicized LGBTQ youth suicides, I co-founded Make It Better for Youth, the Monmouth County Consortium for LGBTQ Youth. Our mission was very simple: all of our programming, educational and social, past and future, is centered on improving the outcomes for queer and trans+ youth. It is because of this work and the youth I have met that I am writing today in staunch support of the 2019 LGBTQ Inclusive Curriculum Legislation, which calls for curricular inclusion of persons with Disabilities and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender persons. This legislation has the potential to be historic and life changing for New Jersey youth. ***But only if it remains mandatory for all schools, and all students: opting-out defeats its purpose.***

Landmarks in both civil rights and education point toward the positive outcomes for *all* students who are in the classroom, not just LGBTQ students, when guided by professional educators. On the shoulders of Brown v BOE, to the NJ Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights to the NJ Law Against Discrimination, we have created a net that enforces LGBTQ students' legal protections. But there is a large missing component: through this lens a crucial part of our public trust *protects* students who identify as LGBTQ but ***does not explore the value, contribution and history*** of this expansive community. Thus we must reshape the educational experience to include the accurate histories of LGBTQ persons and their contributions. And where there are no histories to study we must ask the critical question of "why?". But the conversation is not truly rich without all students participating, so I wish to implore decision-makers to maintain this component as a required part of public education.

It is not hyperbole to say that when *you are without a history, you are also without a future*. In an age of popular media that reflects back to us a whole wide world we must remember that in the not too distant past our media culture reflected a world without any positive LGBTQ figures, they were archetypes of shame, sadness, and fear. In our schools we did not do much better. We have for so long reflected an historical world back to students that is devoid of the full story. We are not clones of our families, our histories are made individually by the life lived, and each individual student deserves to have an educated and appropriate conversation in their schooling about complete histories, wider viewpoints, and even diverging opinions.

We are on the precipice of majorly transforming young lives as we are faced with the fabric of history – intertwined histories really – where there are holes, invisible thread that we have not yet named or discussed. And the point is this: an inclusive curriculum does not serve solely the students who identify as LGBTQ or the students with disabilities, but to the entire community a rich and complete fabric of shared history. Just this morning, as a managing partner of the project, Make it Better for Youth with Garden State Equality launched an LGBTQ Inclusive Curriculum pilot. Model lessons across all content areas, written by NJ educators, replete with best practices, and many many districts whose administrations, BOEs, educators, and parents are on board. They understand that the outcomes are worth facing into the wind. We need you to stand by the thousands who are already undertaking this work. For over a year, we have exponentially increased our wide network of veteran educators, school personnel and organizations to shape resources, and all stand ready to aid with implementation guidance for schools throughout New Jersey. We are ready to serve.

Above all, I want the Board of Education to hear most deeply of the outcomes of the spirit: *there are exactly as many reasons to maintain this legislation as a requirement as there are students*. We owe our youth the benefit of our increasing knowledge and continuing understanding.

Kate Okeson
Make it Better for Youth
[REDACTED] Red Bank NJ 07701
kate@makeitbetter4youth.org

Dear Board of Education members,

I'm here to declare that I don't accept implementing the LGBTQ curriculum to my innocent sons or any other innocent children for two particular reasons:

1. What are the benefits that my kids will gain from this kind of education?

- I'm graduated from a school of medicine and until now all the medical students still study this as a mental health disorder. What is the benefit from teaching a mental disorder as a normal issue while it is not? How will confusing more children help them? What kind of confused tomorrow's leaders you are producing to this country?

2. We are Christians. We believe that that God is sovereign over the affairs of man, and that he alone gives us freedom. God provides us all freedom, and we must ensure that our children can live according to our religious faith and teaching and that's exactly what I'm trying to do with my children.

- The schools cannot teach doctrine or "history" that prohibits or thwarts this freedom. The school should never teach what they might call "history" when it contradicts what we know to be true. I can't let my children be taught lifestyles that denies what our faith knows to be true.
- My Bible says God created only Adam and Eve so it's only man and woman and I don't want to teach anything that goes against that.
- This is my constitutional right about freedom of religion. yet you are now saying my child must be forced to learn things that not only deny my faith but also deny the rights of others. This is not fair. This is not equal. This sounds like we as Christians asking for acceptance and non discrimination in the public schools.
- American citizens doesn't mean to teach that's beliefs. You should start teaching Bible, Quran, Hindu, Buddha and all other religions because being LGBTQ is a kind of belief.
- According to Bible, we respect, love and accept everyone but this doesn't mean to teach their beliefs.

❖ At the end, I pray for God's guidance to make the right decision for the new innocent generation.

Thank You

Margreet Saad

January 8, 2020

Testimony - Crystal [REDACTED]

1

Hi, my name is Crystal and my children, and my niece & nephews attend [REDACTED] in Newark. I'm here today as a parent leader and advocate to share my family's story with you so you can hear from the parents like me who have benefited from choosing public charter schools.

I went to public schools in Newark through middle school. But, because private school was a better choice for me, I switched in high school. I worked throughout high school to help my mom with the tuition. When it came time to raise my own children in Newark's public education system, I knew I had to advocate for each of them based on their own strengths, weaknesses, and needs and find the school that's the best fit for them.

People spread misinformation that public charter schools don't serve all kids, especially those with IEPs. But that couldn't be further from the truth.

[REDACTED] has proved to be the best choice for my family for years, and has especially helped my children with special needs. My own son, [REDACTED], has ADHD and has had some challenges throughout school. He's exactly the type of boy that critics say charter schools don't serve. Not only is [REDACTED] well served, but I KNOW he's going to college. He's in high school now, and it's bigger than middle school and a more intense environment. But for the past seven years, elementary, middle, and now high school, he's always

January 8, 2020

Testimony - Crystal [REDACTED]

been accepted, covered, and cared for at [REDACTED] I still get daily communications from his teachers letting me know how he's improving, and what his needs are that day. The teachers are my partners in working with [REDACTED] and they show their love every day. Where else could I get that for a boy like [REDACTED]?

What sets [REDACTED] apart for my family is that [REDACTED] promises your child will be safe, loved, and educated. And, they stick to their word. The teachers and staff make themselves available to work with you as a family. [REDACTED] has always worked together with me, and I am confident that that collaboration will continue and help Jayson transition to and through high school.

I am grateful that I had the ability to choose a charter school for my child. It was the right choice for my family and it has made a huge difference in our lives. I hope you'll come visit us at [REDACTED] - we would love to show you what makes us special. Thank you for your time!

Good afternoon, my name is Carol Dunnell and I'm a public charter school parent from Newark. I've been a parent advocate for over forty years. I've been working and volunteering with North Star for the last several years to support everything from enrollment, to family engagement, to voter registration. Last month, I spoke on a panel about special education services at North Star. There is nothing in the world that I wouldn't do for children, especially to make sure they have opportunities to make the best life possible, no matter the color of their skin or the neighborhood they're from. That's why I'm here today; to share my story with you and advocate for all our children.

My children have attended neighborhood and charter schools in Newark forever. My two older children and my nieces and nephews went to the neighborhood school -- [REDACTED] Our family was involved for years. I was on the advisory board and PTA. It took a village, but together we raised our children well and instilled a sense of strong community pride in them.

Then, when my daughter [REDACTED] was in the 5th grade, the school was closed by the state because of its low test scores. I fought hard for the school to stay open because it was an institution in the neighborhood and had served my family for years. It was devastating when the school was finally shut down in 2013. But, I knew I needed a better option for [REDACTED] and quickly.

Through a friend, I learned about public charter schools in Newark and chose to send my daughter there. She first attended [REDACTED] which was awesome. Today, my daughter [REDACTED] is in the [REDACTED] grade at [REDACTED] School in Newark. She has an IEP, which she was given in 2017 after my parent's intuition told me that something just wasn't working as well as it could've been for her.

From the evaluation to the classification and now her accommodations, [REDACTED] has been there to support her learning and her growth. They've given her the push and challenge she needed while also keeping her motivated and accountable. They've also been so kind, and even gave her her first uniform. [REDACTED], like many public charter schools in New Jersey, has accommodated us anyway that we needed to be accommodated. The teachers, principal, social workers all show a personal touch.

Things have come full circle for my family: [REDACTED] is how a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has become the community and village today that my daughter needed, and there's nothing I wouldn't do to advocate for the children at this school and all public schools. Thank you very much.

Parlett - Butcher
Testimony given by ↗

Q5

Open Public Testimony
Mrs. Amy Goldberg-Tseng
Special Education Math Teacher
Passaic Arts & Sciences Charter Middle School, iLearn Schools

This was my second year teaching in a New Jersey Public Charter School. I will be the first to admit that when I first interviewed and accepted a position with the iLearn Charter Schools Network, I didn't truly understand what a charter school was. I always believed that public schools were the best option for students to receive access to their Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), but once I set foot into Passaic Arts and Science Charter Middle School (PASCS) I immediately realized I had to change my thinking. Our Public Charter School provides many specialized resources and a safe environment for students that truly need it. We provide an educational community in which students can be heard and have their individual needs met.

Last school year I had the honor of teaching a student in eighth grade who had transferred to our school. While the transition was not easy, this student was beyond grateful for the opportunity. This student was lost in her previous school setting. She was repeatedly suspended due to fights with peers who bullied her because of her learning disabilities. She had honestly given up any hope of getting an education that would allow her to graduate from eighth grade. By attending PASCS, she suddenly had access to more customizable options that fit her learning style best. She had teachers who took the time to get to know her, find out what she needed, and who believed in her. She made a few friends and that made coming to school exciting. As each day passed she realized more and more that it was possible to graduate not only from the eighth grade but even high school with the idea of going to college now in her sights.

PASCS provided the resources and outlets to explore more parts of her personality and address her academic struggles which then motivated her to persevere and thrive. We not only met her individual academic needs, but we met her social and emotional needs as well. The use of a personal Chromebook opened up a world of speech-to-text and organization that she never had access to before. The after-school time for basketball and tutoring made her feel included and she was able to receive the assistance she needed during and after school. She felt safe enough to pay attention in class and absorb instruction instead of worrying about who would say something to her to instigate a fight. In short, she found her safe academic haven.

Yes, this is one student's story, but it's a story that many of the students in our schools share. If you were to walk the halls of our school, you'd feel that it truly is a community that looks out for and supports one another. You would see fourth graders asking eighth-graders for advice. You would witness students hugging and high-fiving each other. You would observe teachers who are passionate about giving our students a brighter future and that means the success of every single student. This measure of success also includes standardized testing. We recognize that many of our students struggle with understanding the content on the state test that they are

required to pass because it most likely does not pertain to their experiences in life. Our students at PASCS have come to learn how to strategically take a test through practice assessments and constant benchmarking that also promotes positive growth in their learning.

I became the theater director at my school last year. Through this opportunity, I learned how dedicated and passionate our students are when given the chance to showcase their talents. I also engaged regularly with parents and family members. Their level of gratitude for having our school as an option for their children was unbelievable. These parents supported our students on the stage and witnessed a side of their children they never believed possible. With their support and creative fundraising, we were able to have costumes and a set that blew everyone away and gave the students and their families something to feel excited and proud of for years to come.

As a teacher, I am in my fifth year in the classroom. I have taught abroad, in public schools and in private schools. I can say without a doubt that working in this charter school was the first time in my career that I have felt empowered at a school, and this school has also made me feel as though I had a larger purpose. My students and their families appreciate all of the passion I bring to the school. My district recognizes hard work. My administrative team makes me feel secure and supported. The security team at our school leaves no doubt in my mind that I am safe at all times. These are all things that I have felt when I came to Passaic Arts and Science Charter Middle School.

Charter schools are not only committed to giving hope and a higher level learning for our students, but for their teachers too. As a teacher, I am constantly inspired to be better each day and to learn alongside my students. They not only saved my students, they saved me as well.

Open Public Testimony
Mrs. Amy Goldberg-Tseng
Special Education Math Teacher
Passaic Arts & Sciences Charter Middle School, iLearn Schools

I have taught abroad, at private schools, at public schools, and at a public charter school. There is one thing that all of these educational facilities have in common - standardized testing. Testing is important. It shows growth and mastery of skills when used effectively. Testing allows for teachers and schools to be alerted to students who are at risk and need more support, or students who have mastered the skills being tested and are ready for more challenges. Without testing we cannot learn about our students needs and their ability levels. It also allows for different countries to compare curriculum and content, as well as provide a way for students to be able to study abroad.

What testing cannot do is tell you who your student is. A standardized test shows you a snapshot from that one day. There's no place to say what is going on with that student during the test - maybe the room is an uncomfortable temperature, a classmate could be acting out and being disruptive, the student could feel unwell, there could be stressful situations occurring outside of school, or endless other scenarios. We know from research and personal experiences that every student learns different, performs different, has different interests, and come from different backgrounds. There is no test that can be a standard for every single student that successfully show their ability levels.

Another challenge that standardized testing poses other than not relating to each student is the content tested. Many of the skills tested have not been learned by the students or were learned such a long time ago that it has been forgotten. The students are cramming endless skills and information which prevents them from retaining the information that is important and needed. The math sections for students starting in sixth grade barely tests the students ability to solve the skills being tests and tests their reading comprehension instead. Many of the students can solve the various math skills being asked, but struggle when comprehending the multi-paragraph worded question that is posing the question. The students feel defeated even before writing down a number. Over the years, the math sections have become more about open ended discussions and comprehension which is what the language arts sections also test about, so why keep them separated?

Additionally, standardized testing has now become a completely electronic exam. While this is fantastic for fast results and easy to access data trends, it has made taking the exam more difficult for students. Researchers have been studying the positive and negative effects of screen time for years. All of them have the same results - the longer screen time of a student, the more negative an effect on that students development. Technology use can be extremely beneficial for student learning and growth, but when they are asked to read from a screen for the length of time that these standardized tests are, they are actually harming the students ability to focus and think. Yes the sections were shortened this year, but that is still

approximately 90 minutes of staring at a screen to read questions and passages with possibly a five minute break in the middle. It is harmful for their eyes and processing. These are also students who are more than likely using some form of technology in the majority of their classes daily. Many of these students are looking at screens for over 12 hours a day between chromebooks or ipads, their phones, and their computers!

When students received paper copies of tests, they were able to circle and highlight key phrases and context clues to use their skills to help them come up with answers. While there are highlight tools available, it does not have the effect for the students' body to connect the material. The movement of physically circling, underlining, or highlighting connects what the student is reading to their body and brain and allows for a kinesthetic approach towards understanding how to solve the problem. Students that I have talked to have expressed that they prefer paper copies of tests to computer versions. They have exclaimed that they do not try as hard for computer versions because they can just click through the answers.

While I am not saying standardized testing should go completely away, I do believe that it needs to be relooked at and modified for what is actually best for the students. If we are using these tests to gauge student levels and abilities, shouldn't the test be actually testing their true abilities? Allowing students to take a paper version of the test again may show improvement in testing. Maybe standardized testing and curriculum would be more meaningful if they focused more on life skills. I am just a teacher who does not have the answers about standardized testing, but I am also a teacher who is exhausted from seeing students struggle every year and feel anxiety and stress for tests they feel are setting them up for failure. We need to do better. We need to focus on allowing students to feel they can be successful for the tests. We need to ask them what they need to feel comfortable and change for them.

To the State Department of Education,

My name is Nermeen Beshai from South Brunswick NJ.

I seek the value of the founding fathers and I pray that we can teach our kids our values. This is why we moved to the United States in the first place, so that no one would force their own religious or ethical agenda on our kids.

Teaching sexuality and family life are the responsibility of the parents not the schools. We are entitled to have our own life style and freedom of religion. To mandate the LGBTQ curriculum in schools and force them to learn details about LGBTQ at this young age is not freedom. To open the pure eyes, minds, and hearts in this little age is not freedom.

My daughters stand up and pray every day saying, "Thank you God for creating me a beautiful girl and having a good Mom, dad and sister". Now, the schools want to teach them that they don't have to be girls they can be boys and the family doesn't have to be a Mom, a Dad and kids. It can be different. This way, you are separating the strong families and the whole society. Please allow us to raise our children with our faith.

Testimony of Johanna L. Brown in Opposition to S1569

Thank you for hearing my testimony. My name is Johanna Brown. I am a wife, a mother, a homeschooler, a piano teacher, and the director of a local homeschool community. I am opposed to S1569, the Inclusion Curriculum legislation. In her essay, *The Lost Tools of Learning*, the writer Dorothy Sayers rightly critiques modern education when she implores, "Is it not the great defect of our education today that... we fail lamentably on the whole in teaching them (students) how to think? They learn everything, except the art of learning." Education has the ability to liberate students. S1569 raises concerns over the idea of government-dictated morality. I would also like to address why homeschooling families should concern themselves with this legislation, as well as the implications of the inevitable violations of First Amendment rights for parents, teachers, and students. This law, which currently allows for no parental opt-out, quite literally embodies a fight to shape the minds and values of a generation.

I propose that educational efforts are better focused elsewhere, namely, in the area of reading. According to Literacy New Jersey, between 40-60% of New Jersey's urban students drop out of school with reading levels below the ninth grade. The same source notes that half of all NJ adults have the lowest levels of literacy acknowledged by the state. It is also estimated that limited literacy costs businesses and taxpayers \$225 billion per year.

S1569 alarmingly reveals a government-dictated morality, which encroaches on religious liberty. According to Garden State Equality, the entity tasked with writing the new inclusive curriculum, their vision is "A culture that fosters LGBTQ- inclusivity, respect for people of various backgrounds, and improves moral character [that] will enable our students to function successfully as productive and contributing citizens in a pluralistic society." Their claim of improving "moral character" reinforces my next claim that any instruction is not neutral. A former educator and current public servant, Alfonso Cirulli asserted in opposition to the inclusive curriculum, "There is no hate or bigotry intended here... But no group has a right to force others to comply with their beliefs, deprive them of their First Amendment right, and strip the rights of parents as to how to morally raise their children." If it is not the government's aim to shape the morality of a generation, perhaps they should limit their curriculum choices to those that would best teach literacy so students can reason for themselves.

It is estimated that there are 2.5 million homeschoolers nationwide. According to the Pioneer Institute, homeschooling families save \$22 billion in education costs each year. They also claim that, "the universal tenet of homeschoolers is the importance of parental choice and the conviction that parents are best equipped to make the educational decisions that affect their children." The question that begs to be asked is, "To whom do the children belong?" Parents have the right to opt-out of complex and sensitive material.

The implications of S1569's inclusive curriculum standards with no rights for parental opt-out has First Amendment ramifications for families of faith, educators, and students. In a NJ Department of Education document labelled, "Transgender Student Guidance for School Districts," not only is parental consent not required for a district to "accept a student's asserted

gender identity,” but later in the same document districts are advised to consult resources concerning disputes with parents that include the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. Are we to understand that parents could be subject to investigation for speaking out against school boards, teachers, and administrators assuming parental roles or for teaching their children to have moral or political views contrary to the government-imposed curriculum? Educators will experience moral conflict when required to present material that is in opposition with their religious beliefs. Will they face harassment or even losing their job if they refuse to present material that they believe is in contrast with their worldview? Garden State Equality’s “Teach and Affirm Students in New Jersey” workshops are prepping teachers in scenarios to address resistance to participate in some assignments based on religious beliefs. In a document from one such workshop, a scenario wherein a student refuses to complete an assignment based on their religious beliefs is presented, and teachers are asked how they should respond. (An excerpt of the scenario is listed at the end of my testimony.)

I learned from an attendee that teachers were coached to address students who held to a traditional view of marriage and sexual identity as “bullies” and “bigots.” In his inaugural speech, Barack Obama said, “Being true to our founding documents does not require us to agree on every contour of life.” In a culture where intolerance is unacceptable, there is room for every view.

I am a mom practicing the art of learning, which I believe is the true purpose of education. Instead of instructing our children what to think, we should be teaching them how to think for themselves. Parents should shape the morality of their children, not the government. Allow for a parental opt-out.

Below is the scenario I cited from GSE's "Teach and Affirm Students in New Jersey" workshop:

You assigned your 11th grade class a project on the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and laws against discrimination. As a teacher in New Jersey, you include our state's Law against Discrimination (LAD) to show your students the difference in state and federal laws. You assign one of your students to focus their assignment on federal laws protecting citizens based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression. The student reports back that they refuse to complete the assignment based on their religious beliefs. How do you handle the situation?

All legislators and politicians are sworn into office holding on to the Holy Bible which clearly prohibits homosexuality and promotion of it,

Therefore going so outrightly against the Holy book that you held when you swore under oath, is going against your oath by all definitions.

A lesson taught to school children should be as it's pronounced 'less' 'sin' not 'more' 'sin'

Homosexuality is often developed from the so called School lessons which is preaching over and over that lgbtq is really great, Children should be taught 'less' 'sins' not 'more' 'sins'

There are many individuals throughout this world that have the desire of homosexuality but withhold themselves & that's what distinguishes a person from an animal,

An animal doesn't have brakes but a person has breaks, but when mankind sinks, they sink way lower than animals when they descend to animal levels.

I choose to respect those that are proud and show their ability to control their sexual desires

This is what should be taught to children:

"Take no pride in sin take pride in self control take pride in holiness"

This legislation is a lesson for life in schools to give in to your sexual desires & all desires

lgbt agenda leaders are extremely happy when swerving boys gets bullied,

Because bullying is the best tool for them to teach all boys and girls to be gay,

Just teaching is equivalently terrible &

Their thoughts are channeled to victimness,

If you think their agenda excludes teaching kids to be gay you are wrongly and unsophisticated.

The argument that the way to stop bullying is by promoting the Sin doesn't add up for a number of reasons:

All these Children that are mentally molested are being brainwashed to contribute any normal childhood bully action, To their fabricated sexual inclination.

Here's the rule of thumb: Whenever they're bullied it's considered bullied; however when they bully others it's just a reaction to they're victimness.

Any boy that's not doing so well, which they're are many & wants to feel cool^{cool} will become a gay boy.

When I was a young boy my teacher asked the class who is a righty and who is a lefty and I raised my hand that I'm a lefty even though I'm not, because I wanted the attention

Attention desires very often creates reality, FACT.

Comparing hate to Jews to the hate of sexual actions & intertwining anti-semitism together with anti sexual rivels, is precisely anti-Semitism at its peak.

As if there's a direct connection between Jews and homosexuals.

Being anti homosexuality is being anti animals on two feet that can't control their sexual desires, and being anti Jews is anti people who spend their whole life combating there evil desires/actions.

Jews are a nation while homosexuals come from All Nations and all Races,

Their sinful desires and actions doesn't succeed to categorize them as a different race, only for the need of considering their enemies racist.

An individual with a desire to do an action is not defined by the desire that he craves,

If so then just add the math, and rapist and chocolate cravers are a separate race & have the right to sue you for speaking against chocolate.

It's a crime and disgrace if it does happen that they get bullied for the evil inclination ALONE If they don't give into their Piggy desires,

But if they announce there arrogantly formulated opinions, if they are announcing their bedroom misbehavior in a public Arena and if they are proud of sinning against God,

God Forbid to bully, BUT

If the LIE is true that they are bullied more than others.

#1) They deserved it.

#2) Bear in mind that Bullying can contribute to setting these boys straight in a productive healthy life with children & rough experiences Hammers mankind into great places.

There's positive benefits when a parent or teacher hits a child,

It's similar to the natural childhood illnesses which children go through & always causes a big healthsprout after the child gets through it, when I look back at my youth I realize then I was an arrogant boy & that I deserved to be bullied for other reasons.

Their bullying term is a fabulous marketing tool to be seen in the eyes of the world that they're the victims, when they're the ranking oppressors.

#3) All children are being bullied by the pro-lgbt agenda with mental molestation mandated on others children.

The "BE YOU" bumper sticker slogan is an

inclination to do an action & obviously it isn't the individual, &

The LIE that they were made that way was invented intentionally to steer up the;

"BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE" campaign, the problem with that is that just because you have a desire that doesn't categorize & setup who you are as an individual.

The reason why they name us homophobic, it's a smart method of shutting us up.

The vast majority of these age children don't even know about sexual ideas when they're accused of bullying other sexual ideas

They changed the legislation from accurate gay history to positive gay history which proves the missionary agenda^

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID TO GIVE THE ACCURATE HISTORY???

It's not that they believe that it's not a sin,

It's that it interferes with their behavior conveniences and pleasures.

Lgbtq is in the family of pornography which p*** is way way way more active & in present by lgbtq.

Raging war against God and you're not going to win god, it's like one lice trying to defeat America.

They thoughtfully and smartfully added disabled to the list so it shouldn't sound like they're promoting lgbt in general to children,

Children's gender changing promotion,

Why take away from a child the ability to have real children for life, From a young attention seeker BOY full of potential of running a family with real children,

The lunatic so called trans surgery which takes away his ability to have children for life,

The reason why homosexuality etc growing is because if it was something out of the park completely and outrageous like it was for Generations, people will stay away from it and lead productive lives But letting these ideas into the Public Square actually draws Kids to a sinful unproductive Deadfull life.

Some say that one of the signs that you've done someone a favor is when you get the stone thrown at your face from the guy who did you the favor.

Legislators!!

Don't fight against God!

God gave you the board members and the legislators your honorable positions & you are proving yourself not worthy of the position you were given by going against God.

June month they call;

PRIDE month,

Why not,

Equality month?

Tolerance month?

Not hurting others doesn't necessarily equal fine and okay action

Bible

מדריש, "וכשאחד מכם חוטא כל הדור כולו לוקה"

"When one of you sins the entire generation is stricken"

Fighting against the sinners is fighting against the people destructing your hard work money & your life.

If you use your freedom against God, very likely God will take away your freedom.

Democracy actually doesn't require you to allow and promote and include sin in school.

God sent us a lot of hints & messages like Kim Jung un, Iran Natural disasters, Economic disasters, Sickneses, etc.

Don't you pick up on it?

Men with attraction to men aren't a different race the only race they have is the race to attack religion:

Atacking Religion is a hate Crime.

Most of mankind develops these desires under duress: for example in jails

If All men were created equal but they don't stay equal

Let's talk about the HETEROPHOBIA & BIBLICALPHOBIA being stirred up in America

Teaching kids how great being gay is, isn't by all means the way to stop bullying.

You are giving these boys a platform to place they re forged victimness.

The precise main reason why these children have Suicidal Thoughts is precisely because they are brainwashed, and manipulated and ingrained with anti God anti Human sin which Rings upon major depression,

Putting an X on the birth certificate

Leads to assisted suicide [including kids]

pornographic billboards in Manhattan New Jersey & around America videos of men & women not dressed foul language constantly on the TV and radios etc etc etc.

Teaching everybody to be indulged in worldly pleasures that ends more proportionately then it starts.

Most New Jersey children do not have a problem with the human being & if they have a problem it's with the homosexual action,

Some people have a desire for hardcore vodka while others would only drink it if they're dead thirsty BUT:

God didn't put too much black pepper in the mix,

The bottom line is:

All young & older boys SHOULD NEVER be taught to be proud of Sinning against God & of preaching their lack of self-control.

lgbtq activist are not the ones to decide if that's the way they were created.

Transgender surgery decision is being allowed at an age that the boy does not know what he will be missing for ever:

The ability to have real children for ever.

Everybody's wondering the reason for Hurricane Sandy & No one could even dream up the reason for billions and billions of dollars going to waste in Texas, Florida Etc

Everybody is too afraid to open their mouth and Ask "WHAT DID GOD DO TO US"?

Maybe sinning with pride & using the youth to rage War against holiness.

====

LGBT stands for

L ying *G* uilty *B* luffing *T* ricksters

=====

The Ban Therapy Scam:

Trick by tricking and displaying the worst therapy cases to make all good therapist look bad and intentionally setting therapist up to be terrible to clients,

This has to do with pornographic images showing this whole country deep in the sewage.

There are so many testimonials of people that therapy HELPED!

Of Course they found some people that of course;
DIDN'T WANT TO GET HELPED ANYWAY,
Because obviously they're pushing their missionary agenda.

They hide their missionary agenda in the fake/tricky Words <EQUALITY> & Tolerance,

By them calling their opposition homophobes they're essentially agreeing with their term homos ,

The homos have created a warped philosophy where people who engage in perverted acts now assume an immutable identity connected with that act.

Let's talk about the movement flourish,

If their agenda would be in general to help struggling people; then why constantly
Singling LGBT out,

If their issue is to help people as they claim & nothing more,
then focus on every issue under the sun why not now it to so called LGBT.

These legislations aren't a promotion of tolerance for people it's promotion of tolerance for sin & tolerance for all actions

All the scientist in the world can't make an apple or a human being so why when it comes to a small boy you claim to be smarter than nature accepted by all animal life as well as Dogs know not to sleep with someone who isn't their wife.

One of many recent stories;

Mother decided boy is transgender & judge forces father to pay for taking away from his child the ability to ever have children.

If Russia and China take over America they will admit half the country into mental institutions.

It's very simple once there's an option for men then people will also Channel their taste desires toward men.

Singling them out is a major issue because

You're establishing the fact that they're homosexuals.

You are giving them a platform to place they're not genuine victimness

300k people dead in America from aids & what God says will come true

Let me be clear you are not a racist for speaking against the action of sinning

I thank you very much for listening/Reading my testimony.

January 8, 2020

NEW JERSEY CURRICULUM

Good afternoon, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today. I come before you as a concerned citizen, regarding our LGBT public school curriculum. I believe that mature sexual themes need not be taught in school. It is best they be taught in the home. Rather than teaching alternative lifestyles to our children, the school should focus on academics. Our tax dollars would be better spent on improving reading, writing, and math skills, which would better equip our children for college, and for future success. Many of our students are ill prepared for college, and as a result must take remedial classes to catch up after graduating high school.

Parents have a fundamental right to direct the upbringing and education of their children, as guaranteed under the First Amendment which states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." Children belong to their parents and not to the State. The government does not have the right to teach doctrine that thwarts parental rights or religious freedom. Many parents believe that not only have their rights been thwarted, but they have also been badly deceived. As a result, I know of several parents who are planning to take their children out of public school, and some who already have. Instead of uniting children, this agenda has already caused a great divide. Parents should have been informed long ago, and should have had a say in it. The methods that were used to form and implement this agenda were not just.

This curriculum was supposed to help people appreciate the accomplishments of those who identify as LGBT, and therefore, raise their perceived value as human beings. Rather ^{what should have been} ~~than~~ simply emphasizing ^{always} that they, as human beings, already have equal dignity and value. Accomplishments by themselves do not define a person: character, personality, morality, and faith beliefs help to identify a person. The emphasis of this program is sex. This helps no one. Another apparent theory that this agenda proposes is that by "normalizing" the idea of "transitioning", those who transition, would feel more accepted by others; therefore, this would decrease their suicide rates. This too is erroneous. One of the many studies we can consider was done in Sweden, one of the most LGBT-affirming nations in the world. Therefore the results cannot be due to societal "transphobia". According to Dr. Cretella, this "large, 30 year study in Sweden found rates of suicide to be **19 times greater** among adults who undergo sex reassignment as compared to the general population". By encouraging transitioning, it will help no one, and will cause confusion among many.

The way these laws were passed and implemented, one might think this was a Socialist or Communist country. When in fact New Jersey State Constitution reads: "We, the people of the State of New Jersey, grateful to Almighty God for the civil and religious liberty which He hath so long permitted us to enjoy, and looking to Him for a blessing upon our endeavors to secure and transmit the same unimpaired to succeeding generations, do ordain and establish this Constitution". Additionally, "Article I" of the New Jersey State Constitution, "Rights and Privileges", number 2a, states: "All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for the protection, security, and benefit of the people, and they have the right at all times to alter or reform the same, whenever the public good may require it". And we do require it! This curriculum was brought about behind the backs of our New Jersey parents, without their knowledge or consent. This curriculum is unconstitutional. And you, our New Jersey State Board of Education legislators, are supposed to protect and support our rights, not dismantle and destroy them. This curriculum needs to be removed from the New Jersey School System; it will hurt many, and help no one. I implore you to reconsider this curriculum, and stand up for truth! Thank you.

and historical Truth (29)
If accuracy ~~is~~ ~~is~~ ~~is~~
Is Important Teach all The Facts

Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich

May 11, 1857 - February 17, 1905

Sexuality

Homosexual

Life Milestones

Governor of Moscow 1891-05

Expelled 20,000-30,000 Jews from Moscow in 1891

Made an exemption, if Jewish women became prostitutes

Started expulsion on Passover without even prior notice

Assassinated in 1905

Ernst Röhm

November 28 1887 - July 1 1934

Sexuality

Homosexual

Life Milestones

Founding member of the Nazi Party

SA (Nazi Stormtrooper) chief of staff 1931-34

Led attacks on Jews and others in the streets of Germany

Attacks led to the rise of the Nazi Party

Gave many homosexuals leading positions in the SA

Assassinated in 1934



Yonatan Teley

HIV

29

HIV and Gay and Bisexual Men

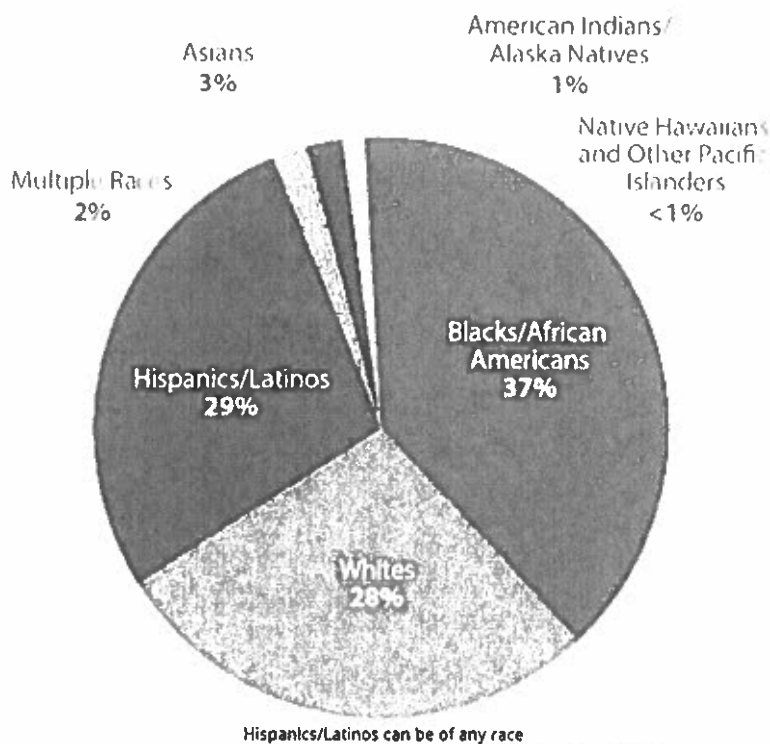
Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men^a are the population most affected by HIV in the United States. In 2017, adult and adolescent gay and bisexual men^b made up 70% (27,000) of the 38,739 new HIV diagnoses^c in the United States (US) and dependent areas.^d Approximately 492,000 sexually active gay and bisexual men are at high risk for HIV; however, we have more tools to prevent HIV than ever before.

The Numbers

HIV Diagnoses^b

OF THE 38,739 NEW HIV DIAGNOSES IN THE US AND DEPENDENT AREAS IN 2017,
**27,000 (70%) WERE AMONG ADULT AND
ADOLESCENT GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN.**

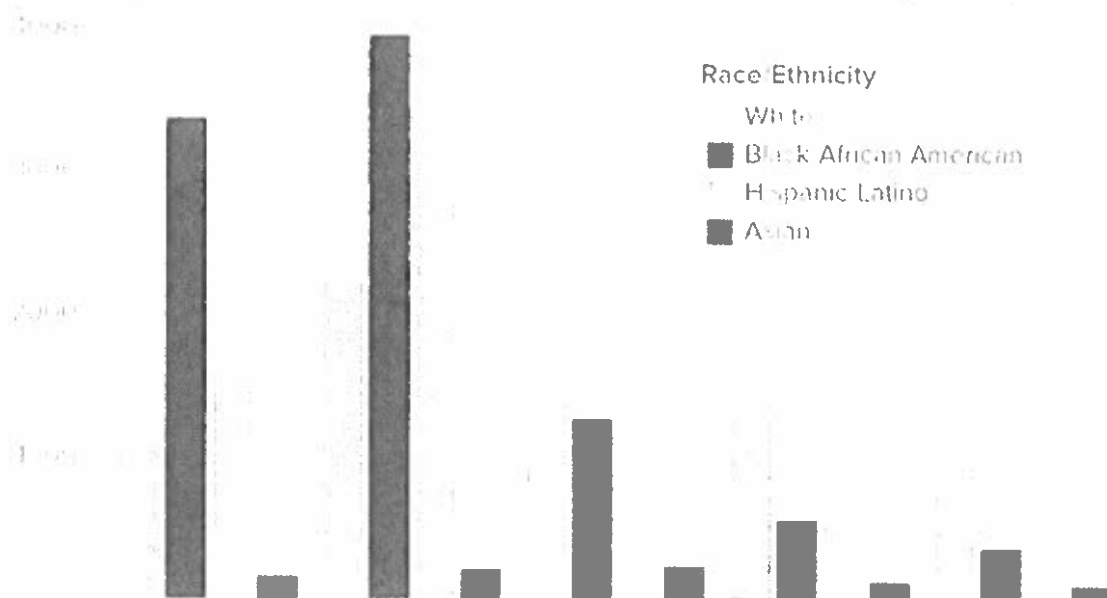
Of the 38,739 new HIV diagnoses in the US and dependent areas in 2017, 27,000 (70%) were among adult and adolescent gay and bisexual men.



Source: CDC. Diagnoses of HIV infection in the United States and dependent areas, 2017. [PDF - 6 MB]

HIV Surveillance Report 2018, 29.

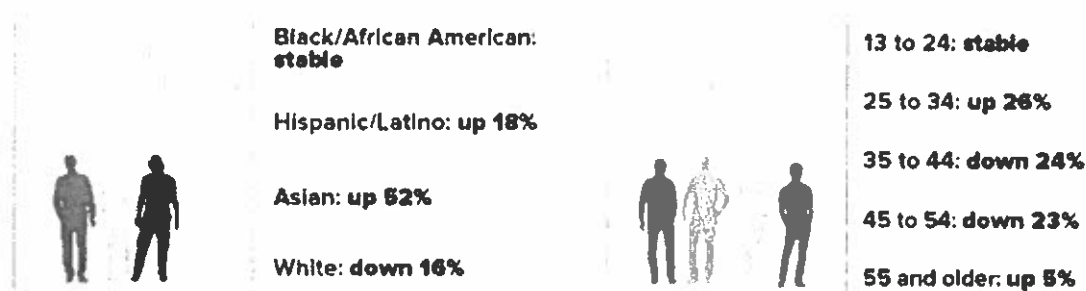
Gay and bisexual men aged 13 to 34 made up 64% (17,194) of new HIV diagnoses among all gay and bisexual men.



Subpopulations representing 2% or less of HIV diagnoses among gay and bisexual men are not reflected in this chart.

Source: CDC. [Diagnoses of HIV Infection in the United States by Sex, Race, and Ethnicity, 2010-2016](#) [PDF - 6 MB] HIV Surveillance Report 2018:29

From 2010 to 2016, HIV diagnoses remained stable among gay and bisexual men overall in 50 states and the District of Columbia. But trends varied for different groups of gay and bisexual men.



Source: CDC, NCHHSTP AtlasPlus. Accessed September 23, 2019.

Living With HIV^b

The continuum of care data for adult and adolescent gay and bisexual men with HIV in 50 states and the District of Columbia: At the end of 2016, an estimated 707,100 gay and bisexual men had HIV. 5 in 6 knew they had the virus. For every 100 gay and bisexual men with HIV in 2016, 72 received some HIV care, 57 were retained in care, and 58 were virally suppressed.

^aIncludes infections attributed male-to-male sexual contact *only*. Among men with HIV infection attributed to male-to-male sexual contact *and* injection drug use, 92% knew they had HIV.

^bHad 2 viral load or CD4 tests at least 3 months apart in a year.

^a Based on most recent viral load test.

Source: CDC. Estimated HIV incidence and prevalence in the United States 2010–2016 . *HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report* 2019;24(1).

Source: CDC. Selected national HIV prevention and care outcomes  (slides). Accessed September 23, 2019.



A person with HIV who takes HIV medicine as prescribed and gets and stays virally suppressed or undetectable can stay healthy and has effectively no risk of sexually transmitting HIV to HIV-negative partners.

Deaths^b

In 2016, there were 7,905 deaths among adult and adolescent gay and bisexual men with diagnosed HIV in the US and dependent areas. These deaths may be due to any cause.

Prevention Challenges



A much higher proportion of gay and bisexual men have HIV compared to any other group in the US. Therefore, gay and bisexual men have an increased chance of having an HIV-positive partner.



Stigma, homophobia, and discrimination affect the health and well-being of gay and bisexual men and may prevent them from seeking and receiving high-quality health services, including HIV testing, treatment, and other prevention services. These issues place gay and bisexual men at higher risk for HIV.



1 in 6 gay and bisexual men with HIV are unaware they have it. People who don't know they have HIV cannot get the medicine they need to stay healthy and prevent transmitting HIV to their partners. Therefore, they may transmit the infection to others without knowing it.



Most gay and bisexual men get HIV from having anal sex without protection (like using a condom or taking medicine to prevent or treat HIV). Anal sex is the riskiest type of sex for getting or transmitting HIV. Receptive anal sex is 13 times as risky for getting HIV as insertive anal sex.



Gay and bisexual men are also at increased risk for other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), like syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia. Having another STD can greatly increase the chance of getting or transmitting HIV. Condoms can protect from some STDs, including HIV.



Socioeconomic factors such as limited access to quality health care, lower income and educational levels, and higher rates of unemployment and incarceration may place some gay and bisexual men at higher risk for HIV.

What CDC Is Doing

CDC and its partners are pursuing a high-impact prevention approach to maximize the effectiveness of current HIV prevention interventions and strategies among gay and bisexual men. Funding state, territorial, and local health departments is CDC's largest investment in HIV prevention.

- Under the strategic partnerships and planning cooperative agreement, CDC will fund a national organization to support integrated HIV programs through the development of strategic national partnerships and enhanced communication efforts. This funding opportunity will also provide funding to health departments to engage community partners in a planning process to help develop jurisdictional *Ending the HIV Epidemic* plans.
- Under the integrated HIV surveillance and prevention cooperative agreement, CDC awarded around \$400 million per year to health departments for HIV data collection and prevention efforts. This award directs resources to the populations and geographic areas of greatest need, while supporting core HIV surveillance and prevention efforts across the US.
- In 2019, CDC awarded a cooperative agreement to strengthen the capacity and improve the performance of the nation's HIV prevention workforce. New elements include dedicated providers for web-based and classroom-based national training, and technical assistance tailored within four geographic regions.
- CDC is funding a demonstration project in 4 jurisdictions to identify active HIV transmission networks and implement HIV interventions for Hispanic/Latino gay and bisexual men. Activities include assessing transmission and risk networks, HIV testing, and linking people with HIV to care and treatment.
- In 2017, CDC awarded nearly \$11 million per year for 5 years to 30 CBOs to provide HIV testing to young gay and bisexual men of color and transgender youth of color, with the goals of identifying undiagnosed HIV infections and linking those who have HIV to care and prevention services.
- Under the friendship community-based organization cooperative agreement, CDC awarded about \$42 million per year to community organizations. This award directs resources to support the delivery of effective HIV prevention strategies to people at greatest risk.
- Through its *Let's Stop HIV Together* campaign (formerly *Act Against AIDS*), CDC provides gay and bisexual men with effective and culturally appropriate messages about HIV testing, prevention, and treatment. For example,
 - *Stop HIV Stigma* highlights the role that each person plays in stopping HIV stigma and gives voice to people living with HIV, as well as their friends and family.
 - *Doing It* motivates all adults to get tested for HIV and know their status.
 - *Start Talking, Stop HIV* focuses on gay and bisexual men and encourages open communication between sex partners and friends about HIV prevention strategies.
 - *HIV Treatment Works* shows how people with HIV have been successful getting care and staying on treatment.
 - *Partnering and Communicating Together (PACT)* raises awareness about testing, prevention, and retention in care among populations disproportionately affected by HIV, including gay and bisexual men.

To learn more about a range of health issues affecting gay and bisexual men, visit the CDC Gay and Bisexual Men's Health site.

^a The term *male to male sexual contact* is used in CDC surveillance systems. It indicates a behavior that transmits HIV infection, not how individuals self-identify in terms of their sexuality. This fact sheet uses the term *gay and bisexual men*.

^b Includes infections attributed to male-to-male sexual contact and injection drug use (men who reported both risk factors).

^c *HIV diagnoses* refers to the number of people who received an HIV diagnosis during a given time period, not when the people got HIV infection.

^d Unless otherwise noted, the term *United States (US)* includes the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the 6 dependent areas of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the Republic of Palau, and the US Virgin Islands.

Additional Resources

Let's Stop HIV TogetherWeb Sites

- Gay and Bisexual Men's Health
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health
- Positive Spin [↗](#)
- National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

General Resources

- CDC-INFO 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
- CDC HIV Website
- *Let's Stop HIV Together*
- CDC HIV Risk Reduction Tool (BETA)

Bibliography

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Page last reviewed November 12, 2019

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

Syphilis & MSM (Men Who Have Sex With Men) – CDC Fact Sheet



Once nearly eliminated in the U.S., syphilis is increasing, especially among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM).

[MSM Fact Sheet](#) | [View Images of Symptoms](#)

The content here can be syndicated (added to your web site).

Print Version  [PDF - 418 KB]

What is syphilis?

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection that can cause serious health problems if it is not treated. Syphilis is divided into stages (primary, secondary, latent, and tertiary), and there are different signs and symptoms associated with each stage.

Should I be concerned about syphilis?

Most cases of syphilis in the United States are among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. (MSM), and syphilis has been increasing among MSM for more than a decade. If syphilis is not treated, it can cause serious health problems, including neurologic (brain and nerve) problems, eye problems, and even blindness. In addition, syphilis is linked to an increased risk of transmission of HIV infection.

How could I get syphilis?

Any sexually active person can get syphilis. Syphilis can be transmitted during anal sex and oral sex, as well as vaginal sex. Syphilis is passed from person to person through direct contact with a syphilis sore. In men, sores can occur on or around the penis, around the anus, or in the rectum, or in or around the mouth. These sores can be painless, so it is possible to have them and not notice them. Correct use of condoms can reduce the risk of syphilis if the condom covers the sores. However, sometimes sores occur in areas not covered by a condom. It is still possible to get syphilis from contact with these sores. You cannot get syphilis through casual contact with objects such as toilet seats, doorknobs, swimming pools, hot tubs, bathtubs, shared clothing, or eating utensils.

What does syphilis look like?

Syphilis is divided into stages (primary, secondary, latent, and tertiary), and there are different signs and symptoms associated with each stage. A person with primary syphilis generally has a sore or sores at the original site of infection. These sores usually occur on or around the genitals, around the anus or in the rectum, or in or around the mouth. These sores are usually (but not always) firm, round, and painless. Symptoms of secondary syphilis include skin rash, swollen lymph nodes, and fever. The signs and symptoms of primary and secondary syphilis can be mild, and they might not be noticed. During the latent stage, there are no signs or symptoms. Tertiary syphilis is associated with severe medical problems and is usually diagnosed by a doctor with the help of multiple tests. It can affect the heart, brain, and other organs of the body.

A detailed description of each stage of syphilis can be found on CDC's syphilis fact sheet.

How common is syphilis among MSM?

Between 2017 and 2018, the number of reported primary and secondary (P&S) cases in the United States increased by 14.4%, and there were 35,063 P&S syphilis cases reported in 2018. Most (64%) of these cases were among MSM.

How can I reduce my risk of getting syphilis?

The only way to avoid getting syphilis or other STDs is to not have anal, oral, or vaginal sex.

If you are sexually active, doing the following things will lower your chances of getting syphilis:

- Being in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested for syphilis and does not have syphilis
- Using latex condoms the right way every time you have sex. Condoms prevent the spread of syphilis by preventing contact with a sore. Sometimes sores can occur in areas not covered by a condom. Contact with these sores can still transmit syphilis.

How do I know if I have syphilis?

The only way to know is by getting tested. Many men who get syphilis do not have any symptoms for years, yet they remain at risk for health problems if they are not treated. Additionally, the painless sores that show up during the early stages of syphilis often go unrecognized by the person who has them. Individuals who are unaware of their infection can spread it to their sex partners.

How will my doctor know if I have syphilis?

Have an honest and open talk with your healthcare provider about your sexual history and ask whether you should be tested for syphilis or other STDs. Your doctor can do a blood test to determine if you have syphilis. Sometimes, healthcare providers will diagnose syphilis by testing fluid from a syphilis sore. If you are a sexually active man who has sex with men, who is living with HIV, and/or who has partner(s) who have tested positive for HIV or syphilis, you should get tested regularly for syphilis.



What is the link between syphilis and HIV?

In the United States, approximately half of MSM with primary and secondary (P&S) syphilis were also living with HIV. In addition, MSM who are HIV-negative and diagnosed with P&S syphilis are more likely to be infected with HIV in the future. Having a sore or break in the skin from an STD such as syphilis may allow HIV to more easily enter your body. You may also

be more likely to get HIV because the same behaviors and circumstances that put you at risk for getting other STDs can also put you at greater risk for getting HIV.

Can syphilis be cured?

Yes, syphilis can be cured with the right medicine from your healthcare provider. However, treatment might not undo damage that the infection has already done.

I've been treated. Can I get syphilis again?

Having syphilis once does not protect you from getting it again. Even after you've been successfully treated, you can still be reinfected. Only laboratory tests can confirm whether you have syphilis. Follow-up testing by your healthcare provider is recommended to make sure that your treatment was successful.

Because syphilis sores can be painless and hidden in the vagina, anus, under the foreskin of the penis, or in the mouth, it may not be obvious that a sex partner has syphilis. Unless you know that all of your sex partner(s) have been tested and treated, you may be at risk of getting syphilis again from an infected partner.



Where can I get more information?

Syphilis – Fact Sheet

STD information and referrals to STD Clinics

CDC-INFO

1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)

TTY: 1-888-232-6348

In English, en Español

Resources:

CDC National Prevention Information Network (NPIN)

P.O. Box 6003

Rockville, MD 20849-6003

E-mail: npin-info@cdc.gov

American Sexual Health Association (ASHA) 

P. O. Box 13827

Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-3827

919-361-8488

Related Content

Clinical Advisory: Ocular Syphilis in the United States (October 16, 2015)

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