

## SCHOOL TRAINING OVERVIEW

Gender Spectrum offers comprehensive programs and resources to create more gender inclusive schools. Working collaboratively with school communities, our mission is to create safe climates in which all students can thrive as they grow and learn. We accomplish this mission by partnering with the school's leadership to design a sequence of activities that will ultimately lead to deeper understanding about gender, children and youth, and the necessary skills to take action accordingly. This sequence is comprised of some or all of the following components, which are described in more detail below. Please contact us at 510-567-3977 or at [info@genderspectrum.org](mailto:info@genderspectrum.org) to discuss our training program in more detail or with any questions you have about partnering with Gender Spectrum.

### COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL SEQUENCE

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| A. Leadership Consultation and Assessment | D. Parent Education                  |
| B. Teacher and Staff Training I           | E. Age-appropriate Student Education |
| C. Teacher and Staff Training II          | F. Additional Services and Support   |

#### A. LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT (1-1½ hours)

We recommend starting your school's education and training with a consultation designed to assess the current school climate with regards to gender, as well as provide school administrators and leaders with an overview of our programs. In this meeting we gather details relevant to specific situations your school may have already encountered or anticipates facing. This meeting also establishes a shared commitment between Gender Spectrum and the school to address them in a proactive and appropriate fashion.

#### B. TEACHER AND STAFF TRAINING I (1½ - 3 hours)

Our initial teacher and staff professional development session allows faculty, administrators, non-instructional employees, and other school personnel to gain fundamental knowledge about gender. This foundation is built upon a gender-framework that incorporates physical traits, outward expression, and internal identity. Your school will gain familiarity with the vocabulary and terminology related to gender identity and an overview of the most current research in the area of gender variance and children. Training I also enumerates the legal requirements and precedents related to gender and schools. Participants leave the session with the ability to distinguish and articulate various components of gender, cognizant of how these components play out in the lives of children and families, and the implications for students' experiences at school.

#### C. TEACHER AND STAFF TRAINING II (2 hours)

Training II is a comprehensive gender education primer for all educational professionals that provides concrete, role-specific practices supporting all students to safely navigate classrooms, play areas, lunchrooms, bathrooms, over-nights and other areas of student congregation. Teacher and Staff Training II is a continuation of the elements addressed in Training I, addressing the specific questions professionals may have as their understanding of gender identity, gender variance and gender expression deepens. This session expands upon the Training I concepts of gender fluidity and variance. We will teach staff and faculty direct anti-bullying and anti-harassment methods related to gender diversity. Where Training I introduces a conceptual framework for understanding gender, Training II is focused on applying that framework to one's professional responsibilities. While not ideal, Training I and II can be combined if necessary.

#### D. PARENT EDUCATION (1 ½ - 2 hours)

Our Parent Education Session is designed to work with families in three ways:

1. To provide a foundational understanding of gender issues, including the connection to school antidiscrimination policies;
2. To gain an informed understanding of the training the school is undertaking as well as the goals and nature of the work being done in classrooms with the students;

3. To foreshadow possible questions that students may come home with as a result and possible ways to answer them.

The session is intended to dispel common concerns frequently brought up by parents or guardians, such as *“Why is the school addressing this topic?”* *“Isn’t this just a sex education unit?”* or *“Aren’t children too young to be learning about gender?”* In collaboration with Gender Spectrum staff, the school leadership and staff are positioned to proactively and confidently address these questions. Additionally, Gender Spectrum will assist the school in drafting a letter to families about the event, incorporating already existing diversity language into the invitation.

#### **E. STUDENT EDUCATION (K-12)** (time varies depending on format, length and number of classes)

Our Student Education component is a dynamic tutorial on acceptance and tolerance of people, no matter how they express gender. Focused on basic values of kindness, acceptance and respect, these developmentally appropriate sessions scaffold student learning by emphasizing the following key concepts:

- Younger students learn that a big part of growing up is figuring out who you are and who you will be, and that there are many ways to be boys and girls in the process. Despite what we get told sometimes, clothes are clothes, toys are toys, hair is hair, and colors are colors. We all need to feel safe as we grow up and go to school.
- Moving up in grade levels, the sessions begin to weave in the complex relationship between bodies, gender expression and gender identity. Students learn that certain types of bodies are thought of as boy and certain types as girl, but that's not true for everyone, and that who you are is not about what others tell you, but something you determine for yourself (even when you get messages that say otherwise).
- Upper elementary and middle grade presentations further incorporate some of the gender-based social pressures facing young people, what it feels like to be excluded, and strategies for navigating their own schools and contexts.
- Finally older students reflect on the conditions of their own schools while examining the roles advocates and allies play in creating truly inclusive environments.

Work with students can occur in a number of ways, including student assemblies or as individual classroom presentations. Incorporating direct instruction, class- and small-group discussions, video, writing, and more, the sessions are engaging and active. Gender Spectrum staff can facilitate the entire session, or the teacher can take the lead with our support as needed. While the concepts above inform the different presentations, Gender Spectrum works closely with the school to tailor trainings that are responsive to and meet the needs of each school’s particular context.

#### **F. ADDITIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT**

- Local, state, and federal compliance and school policy development
- Assistance with curriculum development and implementation
- New teacher and staff training – subsequent years
- Student leadership development
- GSA collaboration
- Advanced and/or specific teacher and staff training
- Specialized classroom workshops (i.e. psychology, sociology, journalism, student leadership, etc.)
- Situational consulting
- Ongoing administration consultations and support
- Resources

Please contact us at [info@genderspectrum.org](mailto:info@genderspectrum.org) or at 510-567-3977 to craft a program of learning that meets the unique needs of your school and community, and thank you for your interest in creating a more gender inclusive and accepting school climate for all kids.