

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

**PROCLAMATION NO. 05-046**

Proclaiming April 6, 2005 Safe Schools Day and the Week of April 4th, 2005 Safe Schools Week in Multnomah County, Oregon

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:**

- a. Growing documentation that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) students, and those perceived to be, are the frequent target for bullying harassment and that significant challenges remain for creating positive school climates for LGBT youth. Important concerns are:
  - In 1999, an estimated 20,000 7th through 12th grade students in Oregon reported that they had been targeted with anti-gay harassment at school or traveling to and from school. These students were three times more likely to report a suicide attempt than their non-harassed peers. (1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Oregon Health Division)
  - Sexual minority youth are three times as likely as their peers to skip school because they feel unsafe (Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, coordinated by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999).
  - Sexual minority youth and the children of sexual minority parents are in every community and every school.
- b. Regardless of a child's sexual orientation, gender identity or perceived orientation or identity, the learning environment is compromised for all children when put-downs and bias comments are allowed. School settings should not foster fear of being targeted or named as different.

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:**

1. All Students, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, deserve the right to a school environment that is safe and conducive to learning.
2. Students should know that what they feel has value, that they are entitled to respect, and that they are not alone.
3. Programs and projects, such as those under Multnomah County's Department of School and Community Partnerships and Equity Foundation's Safe Schools Initiative Summit, that involve, train and provide resources for teachers and

supervisors, administrators, students and parent and community groups are a critical part of raising awareness and changing behaviors. Implementation of school safe zones and support groups, including Gay Straight Alliances, are effective ways to create change.

4. April 6, 2005 is proclaimed Safe Schools Day and the Week of April 4, 2005 is proclaimed to be Safe Schools Week in Multnomah County, Oregon.

ADOPTED this 7th day of April, 2005.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

  
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