

Support LGBTQ+ Youth in Schools By Opposing New Discriminatory Guidelines Proposed by Gov. Youngkin

No matter their race, genders, or where they come from, all students deserve the freedom to fully express their authentic selves free from harassment. Yet, Governor Youngkin's new proposed guidelines target and stigmatize LGBTQ+ students, threatening their safety and well-being in schools.

Youngkin Proposed Guidelines Dangerous for Students

- On Friday, Sep. 16, the Youngkin administration quietly released, "Model Policies on the Privacy, Dignity, and Respect for All Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools." Far from being evidenced or community informed, the drafted policies had no public input. The policies will:
 - Compel school staff, regardless of their desire to protect students, to "out" transgender students, creating likely scenarios that expose students to emotional and physical abuse from unaccepting parents.
 - Disregard students' genders and force them to use school facilities and programs matching their birth sex.
 - Allow staff and students to bully and harass transgender students by not using their names and pronouns. Misgendering students is [incredibly harmful](#) to their emotional well-being.
 - Create additional barriers for students to change their names and genders at school.
- Like with previous guidelines, school divisions ARE NOT REQUIRED TO ENACT these new policies.

Research Shows New Policy Will Make Schools Less Safe for LGBTQ+ Youth

- [When transgender people are aware of anti-trans policies being introduced into their state](#), they report [higher levels of discrimination, greater depressive symptoms, and a decreased sense of belonging](#).
- Students [experience better mental health outcomes](#) when school officials respect their gender and use their chosen names.
- [Research shows](#) that when transgender students feel more connected to their school, they are less likely to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression. Schools that adopt the Youngkin administration's proposed policies will operationalize anti-trans policies and harassment.
- All students deserve to feel safe, and transgender youth report [being physically threatened or harmed at twice the rate](#) of other student groups. Outing students will only increase this.
- Having [non-discrimination policies reduces LGBTQ+ bullying](#) and [increases the presence of positive mental and physical health indicators](#).



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Find this factsheet and more at veanea.org

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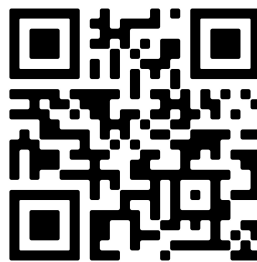
Virginia Can Make Schools More Welcoming for All Students

- The 2021 model policies developed and informed by community partners serving LGBTQ+ youth, the Virginia Department of Education, and over 9,000 public comments were widely praised by advocates who serve and work on behalf of LGBTQ+ students. The current administration sought no guidance on their new policy guidelines. School divisions can and should choose to implement the 2021 evidenced-based guidelines and reject the dangerous new policies.
 - Schools with student groups affirming all genders and sexual orientations have been shown to have less truancy and better health outcomes for all students. Students who engage more in these groups felt more validated at school, an increased sense of safety, and were more hopeful. Virginia schools should seek to grow and support these groups to improve student outcomes.
 - Virginia should look to other states that have a track record of improving conditions for transgender students, like Minnesota's "Safe and Supportive Schools Act," which defines bullying, provides training for teachers, programming for students, and procedures around reporting and responses to bullying. Virginia school boards can also pass model affirming resolutions.
 - Virginia should join the seven other states in the country that mandate LGBTQ+ inclusion in school curricula and standards, so all students can better see their identities reflected in school settings.
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Please Take 5 Minutes to Provide Public Comment Against These Dangerous Proposed Guidelines

Public Comment Is Open On townhall.virginia.gov/L/Forums.cfm From **Sept. 26 - Oct. 26**

Link to Give Public Comment Below



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