

Memo in Support of HB 2307

The Oregon School Psychologists Association (OSPA), which represents the profession of school psychology and the hundreds of school psychologists who work with children, youth and families in Oregon, supports House Bill 2307. We encourage prohibiting mental health professionals from engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with a patient under the age of eighteen years.

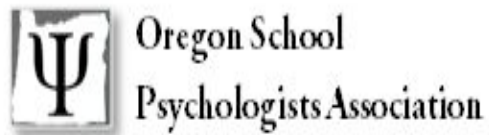
Efforts to change sexual orientation have been shown to cause harm and do not adhere to National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) policies regarding supporting youth in developing their identity (NASP, 2011, 2014). Additionally, the American Psychological Association (APA) and NASP's 1993 joint resolution on lesbian, gay and bisexual youths in schools specifically states the practice of psychology "promotes the individual's development of personal identity including the sexual orientation of all individuals."

Among numerous documents, the National Association of School Psychologists' (NASP) *Safe Schools for Transgender and Gender Diverse Students* position statement acknowledges that neither having a transgender identity, nor being perceived as gender diverse is a disorder, and that efforts to change a person's gender identity are ineffective, harmful, and discriminatory (NASP, 2014).

Research upon the effects of "reparative therapy" on youth indicate that at best, such therapies are ineffective and at worst, such therapies may and do result in increased suicide rates, depression, and anxiety for LGBTQ youth (APA, 2009). Harm caused by health professionals as a result of ignorance, prejudice, or intolerance are absolutely unacceptable and must be avoided by all means. Not only is it fundamentally important that every person who uses health services be treated with dignity and respect; it is also critical to prevent the application of theories and models that view homosexuality as a "deviation" or a choice that can be modified through "will power" or supposed "therapeutic support".

Sincerely,

Executive Board 2015
Oregon School Psychologists Association



References

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National Association of School Psychologists. (2011). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth (Position Statement). Bethesda, MD: Author. Retrieved from http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/positionpapers/LGBTQ_Youth.pdf

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