Amplifying Our Voice: Leading Boldly for Our Students, Our Professions, and Our Union

Beyond the Rainbow: Supporting LGBTQ+ Students, Staff, and Exploring Intersectionality of Identity

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NEA Leadership Competency and Themes

• NEA Leadership Competency Progression Levels:
  – Level 1: Foundational
  – Level 2: Mobilizing & Power Building

• NEA Leadership Competency Themes:
  – Leverages Advocacy Practice
  – Engages Community Around Issues Supporting Student Learning
  – Interprets and Acts on Social Justice Initiatives
NEA Strategic Goals and NEA Organizational Priorities

• NEA Strategic Goals:
  • Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice
  • Empowered Educators for Successful Students

• NEA Organizational Priorities:
  • Early Career Educators
  • Racial Justice in Education
Workshop Learning Objectives

• Workshop participants will:
  – Have an *understanding* of various *sexual orientations* and *gender identities*
  – Examine *experiences* of *privilege, oppression, and intersectionality*
  – *Explore* various ways to make *schools* and *worksites safer* and more *inclusive* for *LGBTQ+ students/staff* and *students/staff of color*
  – *Access resources* to take back to their worksite
Introductions

• In 30 seconds or less, please introduce yourself and share any or all of the following:
  – Your Name
  – Gender Pronouns (he/him/his, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, etc.)
  – Local/State Association
  – Worksite
  – Something You Hope to Gain from this Workshop

• If you choose not to use your full 30 seconds, we will honor the silence during the remaining time
The Power of Kindness
The Power of Kindness

• What are your *reactions* to Lady Gaga’s thoughts on *kindness*?

• In what ways can *unifying* in our *humanity* be empowering?

• Are there times, though, when *kindness*, alone, is *not* enough?
Good Intentions vs. Good Works

“The road to hell is paved with good intentions.”

- Proverb
Unity Through Diversity

• In order to be truly **unified**, people’s **diverse** identities *need* to be:
  • Acknowledged
  • Accepted
  • Free from Prejudice and Discrimination
  • Valued
  • Celebrated
  • Treated *Kindly*
The Basics:
LGBTQ+ 101

• What is the *difference* between *gender identity* and *sexual orientation*?

• What does “*cisgender,*” mean as opposed to “*transgender*?”
The Basics:
LGBTQ+ 101

• With a neighbor, write what you think each of the following “identity” letters, numbers, and symbols stand for:

- L
- T
- I
- 2
- G
- Q
- A
- P
- B
- Q
- A
- +
So what are the “ingredients” of the “Alphabet Soup” of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity?

- **L:** Lesbian
- **G:** Gay
- **B:** Bisexual
- **T:** Transgender
- **Q:** Queer
- **Q:** Questioning
- **I:** Intersex
- **A:** Asexual
- **A:** Ally
- **2:** Two-Spirit
- **P:** Pansexual
- **+:** Plus
The Basics:
LGBTQ+ 101

• Are there any identities that you would *add* to this list?
Taking It A Little Further: LGBTQ+ 201

The Gender Unicorn

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

To learn more, go to: www.transstudent.org/gender
Privilege and Oppression

• On a sheet of paper, write down words that come to mind when thinking of “privilege.”
• On a sheet of paper, write down words that come to mind when thinking of “oppression.”
Privilege and Oppression

• **Privilege:**
  • A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people

• **Oppression:**
  • The state of being subject to unjust treatment or control
Privilege and Oppression

[Diagram showing a network of privilege and oppression categories, such as Genders, Sexualities, Class, Race, and more. The categories are connected in a radial pattern, illustrating the interconnections and hierarchies between them.]
Privilege and Oppression

• *Share with a neighbor:*
  – In what ways, including, but not limited to sexual orientation and gender identity, have you experienced **privilege**?
  – In what ways, including, but not limited to sexual orientation and gender identity, have you experienced **oppression**?

*Serial Testimony:*
Each person will have 1 minute to share, followed by two minutes of cross-talk.
Privilege, Oppression, and Intersectionality

• What does it mean to experience intersectionality of oppression?
Intersectionality

• Intersectionality:
  • the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.
Privilege, Oppression, and Intersectionality

There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.

Audre Lorde
“Everyone is equal and everyone should be treated as equals.”

-Tara Brown, Sam Francois, Columbia High School 12th Graders (She/her/hers, She/her/hers)
“The Women’s March has some participants that understand intersectionality and its implications, but others that don’t - and that is very problematic. If you were there or watched media coverage of the march, there were many visual representations of uteruses and the words “No Uterus, No Opinion.” This excludes transwomen and girls right off the bat. Now consider the pink pussy hats; not every woman has a pussy and not all women’s pussies are pink. This is exclusionary of women of color who have darker skin tone than white women; so when the visual representations of "female power" are portrayed for white, cis-women, it makes me wonder if this movement is self-aware. One of my favorite signs from the march read “Protect Your Sisters, Not Just Your Cis-ters.” Another read “My Feminism Will Be Intersectional or It Will Be Bullshit” as well as the "Black Lives Matter" signs. These messages are seen to some as add-ons, but they are actually so relevant and at the core of all of this... We’re all in this.”

Danni Egan,
Hunter College, School of Social Work
(She/her/hers)
Kimberlé Crenshaw: The Urgency of Intersectionality
Kimberlé Crenshaw: The Urgency of Intersectionality

• What are your reactions to Kimberlé Crenshaw’s findings on intersectionality?

• In what ways does intersectionality affect you and/or someone you care about?

*Serial Testimony:
Each person will have 1 minute to share, followed by two minutes of cross-talk.
Oppression, Intersectionality, and Our Students and Members

• Share with a neighbor:
  – In what ways, including, but not limited to race, gender, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, do our students experience oppression (and intersectionality of oppressions) at school (in class, in the bathroom, on the playground, at P.E. on the bus to and from school, etc.)? Our Colleagues?

*Cross-Talk
Cross-talk with your neighbor for three minutes.
Supporting All Of Our Students and Members

• ..and what could *we*, as educators and educational support professionals, do about it?
How We Can Advocate for Our Students

• LGBTQ+ students need allies.
  – According to a survey by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), LGBTQ+ students report being harassed at school – both physically and verbally - *twice* as much as their non-LGBTQ+ peers.
  – According to a survey by GLSEN, 75% of transgender youth feel unsafe at school
  – 59% of trans students have been denied access to restrooms consistent with their gender identity
  – All of these factors have *adverse effects* on students’ educational outcomes
How We Can Advocate for Our Members

• LGBTQ+ Faculty/Staff need supports.
  – According to a survey by GLAAD more than 40% of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, and almost 90% of transgender people have experienced employment discrimination, harassment, or mistreatment in the workplace.
  – According to Out and Equal, one in four LGBTQ+ employees report experiencing employment discrimination in the last five years and over one quarter (27%) of transgender people who held or applied for a job in the last year reported being fired, not hired, or denied a promotion due to their gender identity.
  – According to a survey conducted by the Williams Institute at UCLA, LGBTQ+ employees who spend considerable time and effort hiding their identity in the workplace, experience higher levels of stress and anxiety resulting in health problems and work related complaints.
  – According to Out and Equal, nearly one in 10 LGBT employees have left a job because the environment was unwelcoming.
  – According to GLAAD, LGBTQ+ staff who are able to be openly out in front of their colleagues are more likely to remain in their current position than the ones who are not.
How We Can Advocate for Our Members

• LGBTQ+ Faculty/Staff need supports.
  – There is no federal law barring employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity
  – State laws vary widely:
    – In 28 states, you can be fired just for being lesbian, bisexual, or gay
    – In 30 states, you can be fired for being transgender
  – More positively, twenty-two states and the District of Columbia prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity by statute
  – According to Out and Equal, the majority of Americans (67%) support federal laws protecting transgender people from employment discrimination
How We Can Advocate for Our Students and Members

• In groups of 4-5 people, write down, on a large sheet of paper, ways that we can *advocate* for our **LGBTQ+ students** (in class, in the hallways, on the playground, on the bus) as well as **members** in our **worksites**.
How We Can Advocate for Our Students
(In School, Overall)

• Ways that We Can Advocate for LGBTQ+ Students:
  – Build an Inclusive School Environment through GSA’s (Gay-Straight Alliances)
  – Create LGBTQ+ Inclusive Curriculum
  – If there are Dress Codes, Be Sure They Are Not Race or Gender Oppressive
  – Designate an All-Gender or Gender-Neutral Bathroom
  – Use Gender Neutral Language for Prom, School Events
  – Adopt an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Anti-Bullying Policy
  – Offer and Promote LGBTQ+ Diversity Training for Administration, Faculty, and Staff
How We Can Advocate for Our Students (In Our Worksites)

• Ways that We Can Advocate for LGBTQ+ Students:
  – Use LGBTQ+ Inclusive Language (Especially Transgender and Cisgender)
  – Invite Students to Share Gender Pronouns During Introductions
  – Address Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Students by Preferred Name and Gender Pronouns
  – Acknowledge Intersectionality of Students’ Identities (The “Whole” Student)
  – Create an LGBTQ+ Inclusive Physical Classroom Environment (e.g. Post a “Safe Space” Sticker)
  – Incorporate LGBTQ+ Figures and LGBTQ+ People of Color Literature, History, Science, Mathematics, Athletics, etc. into Curriculum
  – Promote Respect for All Students and Do Not Tolerate Homophobic, or Transphobic, Racist, or Sexist Behavior or Remarks
  – Communicate Issues of Inequality to Building or District Administrators
  – Make No Assumptions about Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Identity
How We Can Advocate for Our Members

- **Ways that We Can Advocate for LGBTQ+ Faculty/Staff:**
  - Identify **Allies** on Board of Education and in District Administration
  - Build **Support** through Dialogue about LGBTQ+ Concerns with Supervisors
  - Communicate Issues of **Inequality** to Building or District Administrators
  - Push for Designation of an **All-Gender** or **Gender-Neutral Bathroom** for Faculty/Staff in All Buildings
  - Request **LGBTQ+ Diversity Training** for Administration, Faculty, and Staff
  - Encourage Development of **LGBTQ+ Inclusive Non-Discrimination** and/or **Equal Employment Opportunity Policies**
  - Promote **Hiring Practices** that are Inclusive of LGBTQ+/LGBTQ+ People of Color (e.g. Diversity Job Fairs)
  - Develop an **LGBTQ+ Committee** on the Local Level
  - Establish LGBTQ+/LGBTQ+ of Color **Affinity Support Groups** for Faculty/Staff
  - Make **Advocacy Resources** Available to Faculty/Staff:
    - GLAAD: [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)
    - HRC: [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)
    - Center for Transgender Equality: [www.transequality.org](http://www.transequality.org)
Bringing it Back to Kindness..

*Kindness* is everything..

But paired with *knowledge* of systems and *understanding* of struggles with *empathy* and a true *appreciation* of one’s *lived experience*..

It’s *everything*..

And more!
Kindness + True Understanding = Power for Change
Featured Intersectional LGBTQ+ Literature
Intersectional LGBTQ+ Educator Resources

- GLAAD:  
  - www.glaad.org
- GLSEN:  
  - www.glsen.org
- Human Rights Campaign:  
  - www.hrc.org
- National Center for Transgender Equality:  
  - www.transequality.org
- NEA GLBT Caucus  
  - www.nea-glbtc.org
- PFLAG: Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays  
  - www.pflag.org
- SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity)  
  - www.nationalseedproject.org
- Teaching Tolerance – Diversity, Equity, and Justice  
  - www.tolerance.org
- TSER (Trans Student Educational Resources)  
  - www.transstudent.org/gender
Thank You for Participating!

"The time is always right to do what's right."
—Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Sources

• GLAAD:  
  – www.glaad.org

• GLSEN:  
  – www.glsen.org

• Human Rights Campaign:  
  – www.hrc.org

• National Center for Transgender Equality:  
  – www.transequality.org

• Out and Equal  
  – www.outandequal.org

• Teaching Tolerance:  
  – www.tolerance.org

• The American Reader:  
  – www.theamericanreader.com

• TSER (Trans Student Educational Resources)  
  – www.transstudent.org/gender

• White Privilege Conference:  
  – www.whiteprivilegeconference.com
Session Outcomes

The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:

- Having a clearer understanding of the complexities of your students’ and members’ identities
- Creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all of your students and members
- Accessing and sharing intersectional LGBTQ+ advocacy resources with colleagues in your worksites
What Did You Think?

• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session by using the **NEA Summit Mobile APP**!

• Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at [www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment](http://www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment)

• Feel free to contact me if you have any questions and/or would like additional information: philip.s.mccormick@gmail.com