



LGBTQ+ Part 3

Making the Case:

Communication Strategies

Competency

Educators will learn strategies they can use to communicate about LGBTQ+ students and LGBTQ+ issues, including how to prepare persuasive and informative message.

Key Method

Educators will identify common objections to LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and curriculum to better communicate and advocate with stakeholders.

Method Components

Understanding LGBTQ+ Terminology

LGBTQ+ Terminology

The language used to describe people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and have other sexualities, genders, and experiences (LGBTQ+), has evolved over the years. Gender identity and sexual orientation are the first terms to understand.

- **Sexual orientation** is an inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people. These are examples of sexual orientations :
 - Lesbian
 - Gay
 - Bisexual/Bi+
 - Asexual
- **Gender identity** is one's concept of themselves as male, female, or a blend of both, or neither. This is how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. Gender identities you may hear are:
 - Non-binary
 - Binary
 - Male
 - Female
 - Cisgender
 - Transgender/Trans
 - Gender-nonconforming
- **Gender expression** is the external appearance of one's gender identity. It is usually expressed through behavior, clothing, hairstyle and, or your voice. A person's gender expression may or may not conform to the socially defined behaviors and characteristics of being male or female.
- **Educational Equity** is raising the achievement of all students; while narrowing the gaps between the highest and lowest performing students; and eliminating the racial predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories.

Persuasive Arguments

When making the case for more inclusive LGBTQ+ policies, be prepared to make a persuasive argument. This guidance will help you to prepare:

1. Know your Audience

Whether you're leading a read aloud with kindergartners, giving a presentation to your grade-level team, or addressing LGBTQ+ issues with a colleague, it is always important to know your audience.

Consider the following:

- Who are the people that you will be communicating with (e.g., in-person, virtually, in writing, electronically)?
- What is the context and purpose for the conversation?

Your audience could range from peers, colleagues, families, to the school board. Possible scenarios could include:

- Talking with peers at lunch
- Overhearing students and addressing negative comments with students
- Launching or supporting a student club with administration support
- Presenting nondiscriminatory policies

2. Do your research

To make an effective case, you will need to support your position with evidence. Cite facts, statistics, and expert opinions to back up your claims. The more evidence you can provide, the stronger your argument will be.

You should also be prepared to address counterarguments. Anticipate and refute any objections that your audience might have. This will show that you have considered all sides of the issue and that you are prepared to defend your position.

Why it is important to be informed about LGBTQ+ issues:

- To deepen your own knowledge and understanding
- To share verified information with others
- To support your position or argument with data and facts
- To better recognize, understand, and speak out against anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment and bias
- Understand why people object to embracing the LGBTQ+ community to better advocate for equality

3. Messaging

Carefully consider your approach for sharing your message. It's what you say and how you say it that makes communication effective. Your message should include the "ask" or the action you'd like the other person to make. It's important to remember that people can respond differently based on how you approach your conversation. Two ways to communicate your message are by using facts and/or personal stories. Some people will respond better to personal stories that tug at the heartstrings and build a relational connection to you and/or the topic. Other people may respond better when you lay out facts and statistics. In most situations you should include both stories and facts in your message.

When initiating your interaction, it is important to explicitly define the “WHAT” right up front by clearly defining the problem/issue. You also need to state the “WHY” by giving context, rationale, and reasons why this topic is relevant to them.

Example

- “Due to the harassment that LGBTQ+ youth face in schools, they are much more likely to drop out or skip school. You can’t learn if you’re not in school so working to ensure that schools are safer for all students is crucial.”

4. Make an ask

The most effective messages end with a request for action. As you close your conversation about LGBTQ+ issues, ask the people you are addressing to take an action.. There is a basic framework to ending with an ask.

1. Listen and ask clarifying questions about your audience’s view, objections or position
2. Identify a statement you and your audience can agree on
3. Revisit the statement you and your audience agreed upon.
4. Invite your audience to take action to support LGBTQ+ issues.

Additional tips for making your case:

- Establish your credibility. Let your audience know that you are knowledgeable and trustworthy on the topic of your argument. This could be done by sharing your credentials, providing evidence of your expertise, or citing credible sources.
- State your position clearly. What are you arguing for or against? Be specific and concise in your statement of your position.
- Be clear and concise. Your argument should be easy to understand and follow. Avoid using jargon or technical language that your audience may not understand.
- Be passionate and enthusiastic. Your enthusiasm for your topic will help to persuade your audience.
- Practice your argument. The more you practice, the more confident you will be when you deliver your argument.

- Use strong language. Avoid using weak words like "maybe" or "perhaps." Instead, use strong language like "definitely" or "absolutely."
- Be specific. Don't just say that something is good or bad. Explain why it is good or bad.
- Use examples. Examples can help to illustrate your points and make your argument more persuasive.
- Tell stories. Stories can be a powerful way to connect with your audience and persuade them to your side.
- Be respectful. Even if you disagree with someone, you should still respect their opinion. Avoid personal attacks and name-calling.

Responding to Question

When speaking about LGBTQ+ people, your audience may ask what are considered inappropriate or uncomfortable questions. In these situations, it is best to assume the person asking the question does not have an agenda, but is curious and possibly uninformed about the facts and issues being discussed.

There are strategies that can be used during difficult conversations to “stay on message,” which will result in a positive outcome and hopefully lead to action. The list below offers three common approaches to respond to audience questions. The key difference between these three communication strategies is the degree to which they acknowledge and address statements or questions.

- **Deflecting** is a communication strategy used to avoid conflict by redirecting the conversation away from a controversy. This can be done by changing the subject or focusing on a different aspect. For example, if someone asks, “Is your child on hormones?” the presenter may respond by saying, “I’m not here to talk about that today. Instead, I hope that we can discuss ways our school community can support transgender students.”
- **Partial response** is a communication strategy that involves acknowledging the other person’s statement or question but only answering part of it to avoid conflict. For example, with the same question as above “Is your child on hormones” someone may say “some transgender people take hormones, and some do not.”

- **Full response** is a communication strategy that involves answering in a complete and honest way but being respectful and non-confrontational. It involves being respectful, clear, and concise.

The key difference between these three communication strategies is the degree to which they acknowledge and address the other person's statement or question. Deflecting and providing a partial response may be useful in situations where conflict is likely to arise, but they can also be perceived as evasive or dismissive. Providing a full response, on the other hand, can be more effective in building trust and promoting understanding, even if it involves addressing difficult or uncomfortable topics.

Ultimately, the choice of communication strategy will depend on the situation, the capacity for the recipient to be open to understanding, and the relationship with the audience .

When having conversations about any issue that may be considered controversial, be prepared for pushback and objections. It's important not to get drawn into a debate about the issue but rather re-frame the conversation.

Supporting Rationale and Research

American Psychology Association (2023.). *Sexual orientation and gender identity*. American Psychological Association. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/sexual-orientation>

American Psychology Association (2023). *Understanding Transgender People, Gender Identity and Gender Expression*. Retrieved March 25, 2023. <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender-people-gender-identity-gender-expression>

CDC Releases 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results (2020), Retrieved April 1, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/feature/>

GLSEN (n.d.). *Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network*. Retrieved February 25, 2023. <https://www.glsen.org/>

Marx, Robert A. (2016). "Gay-Straight Alliances Are Associated with Lower ... - Vanderbilt News." *News.vanderbilt.edu/*, Vanderbilt Edu.

<https://news.vanderbilt.edu/files/2016-Gay-Straight-Alliances...Victimization.pdf>.

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Wichita State University. (n.d.). *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. Hierarchy of needs. Retrieved February 22, 2023. <https://www.wichita.edu/services/mrc/OIR/Pedagogy/Theories/maslow.php#:~:text=Maslow's%20Hierarchy%20of%20Needs&text=From%20the%20bottom%20up%2C%20the,esteem%2C%20and%20self%2Dactualization>

Resources

[Confronting Anti-LGBTQI+ Harassment in Schools](#) – The U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice

[Conversations on LGBTQ+ Questions](#)

[Leading by Convening](#)

[Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions: Feelings Wheel · Six Seconds](#)

['The Future of Trans' Documentary: Chella Man, ALOK, Patricio Manuel, and more](#)

[Report of the American Psychological Association Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation](#)

Templates

[Artifact 2: Potential Situations](#)

[Artifact 3: Potential Situations & Research](#)

Terminology and Statistics

[Glossary of Terms - Human Rights Campaign](#)

[NEA LGBTQ+ Terms \(BL\)](#)

[The 2017 National School Climate Survey](#)

Articles

[After suspending male student for wearing nail polish, Texas school changes policy](#)

[New bill would ban gender-affirming medication and surgery for Kansans under the age of 21 - Kansas Reflector](#)

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn this micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and be proficient in all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

(200-400 words)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

1. What challenges have you faced as a teacher in creating a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTQ+ students in your school?
2. Have you received any training or support from your school administration on how to support LGBTQ+ students, and if so, what did that training entail?
3. In your experience, how have you developed a learning culture in your classroom?

Passing: Response provides specific examples from the educator's experience to justify the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address the specific needs of both the teacher and the student. Educator

includes a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following 3 artifacts as evidence of your learning. See Rubric for passing score.

*Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.

Artifact 1: Know your Audience

Prepare to communicate with others by answering the following questions about your potential audience. This will help with preparing for future conversations about LGBTQ+ issues.

1. Who at school are you likely to have conversations with about LGBTQ+ issues?
2. What issues, reasons, or situations would inspire a conversation?
3. How familiar is the audience with LGBTQ+ issues?
4. What is their (the audience) source of information?
5. What is their (the audience) position, belief, or view?
6. What objections does your audience have to being more inclusive of LGBTQ+ people/students and issues?

Artifact 2: Potential Situations

Prepare for different contexts by creating a table that lists the audience type on the left and the potential situations on the right. List at least four different audience types and two situations per audience type. An optional table template is listed in resources [Artifact 2: Potential Situations](#) .

Artifact 3: Research

Prepare research that can support your conversations in the above situations and with different audiences. Make a copy of your table from Artifact 2 and add a column for research with notes of the facts needed to support the conversation. Each situation has at least two facts to support the conversation.

Example table [Artifact 3: Potential Situations & Research](#)

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Know your Audience	All six questions are answered with your audience in mind.	At least five questions are answered with your audience in mind.	Less than five questions are answered with your audience in mind.
Artifact 2: Potential Situations	The artifact includes at least four but not more than six different audience types and two situations per audience type. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situations are realistic • Table or summary is easy to read 	The artifact includes at least three different audience types and two situations per audience type. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situations are realistic • Table or summary is easy to read 	The artifact includes fewer than three different audience types and two situations per audience type. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situations are realistic • Table or summary is easy to read
Artifact 3: Research	Research/data is shared to support the potential situations from Artifact 2. Each situation has at least two valid facts to support the conversation.	Research/data is shared to support the potential situations from Artifact 2. Each situation has at least one valid fact to support the conversation.	Research/data is shared to support the potential situations from Artifact 2. Each situation does not have a valid fact to support the conversation.

Part 3 Reflection

(200-400 words)

Use the word count above as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection, review this resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

1. What new information have you learned that surprised you? What would you like to learn more about?
2. How could you share this information with your colleagues?
3. What is a change you will make in your practice immediately, based on your learning?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has impacted the educator in positive ways, related to their learning and interactions with colleagues regarding this topic. Examples are from new information gained from research and interactions with colleagues. Notable action steps stem from research and discussions with colleagues and will be integrated into the educational setting in the future.