



*End discrimination based on
sexual orientation and
gender identity*

SAMPLE KANSAS STATE BOE QUESTIONNAIRE

June 1, 2020

Equality Kansas is the leading lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) political and advocacy organization in the state. Our membership is as diverse as the general population, and is actively engaged in formulating and defending pro-equality, non-discriminatory public policy at the state and local level.

In addition to our public policy activities, our political action committee, the Kansas Equality PAC, endorses and supports candidates who make a commitment to speak out and vote in favor of LGBT equality, and who will defend against the ongoing attempts to legislate LGBT Kansans into second-class status.

Please find the enclosed Equality Kansas 2020 State Board of Education Questionnaire. The topics are among those that have, in the past, been issues before the Kansas legislature and are likely to come before it in the future. Each question may be answered with a simple “yes” or “no” response. There is also room for additional comments, which we welcome and encourage. Many areas of public policy are complex, and nuanced answers from you will help us get to know you as a candidate and officeholder.

THE DEADLINE TO RETURN YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE IS JULY 6, 2020

If you are an incumbent officeholder, we will likely know some of your views from your voting record and public statements. *We encourage you to spend a few minutes on our questionnaire regardless.* There may be issues with which you are unfamiliar, or on which you’d like to offer an opinion. **We value your input, and would like to hear from you.**

Equality Kansas does not publish or share the contents of your questionnaire. This document is used internally for our leadership and government affairs staff to get to know you, and to evaluate your positions for potential endorsement and support of your candidacy.

If you have any questions, please call our office at 316-683-1706, or email witt@eqks.org.

Sincerely,

Thomas Witt
Executive Director

PS: This questionnaire may be scanned and returned via email to witt@eqks.org. You may also request that a fillable PDF be emailed to you. **The deadline for your response is July 6, 2020.** Questionnaires received after that date will not be considered!

1. Kansas currently has a non-discrimination statute called the Kansas Acts Against Discrimination. It protects people from discrimination based on religion, sex, age, race, ethnicity, and national origin in employment, housing, and public accommodations. It does not include protections based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Many school districts across the state have added these protections for faculty and staff to their board policies.

a. Do you support encouraging school districts to adopt non-discrimination policies inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity?

Yes No

Comments:

2. The Kansas Legislature has seen at least four bills introduced that would ban the use of public bathrooms by gender non-conforming school children. Two of them placed a “bounty” of \$2500, to be paid to the reporting student, on any transgender or gender non-conforming child caught in the “wrong” bathroom. Another bill would have banned transgender children from participating in competitive school sports.

a. Do you support allowing school children to use the restroom for the gender with which they identify?

Yes No

Comments:

b. Do you support allowing school children to participate in all school activities for which they are qualified, regardless of their gender identity or expression?

Yes No

Comments:

3. In 2007, the Legislature passed a statute requiring public schools districts in Kansas to adopt policies and develop implementation plans to combat bullying. The statute currently lacks enumerations of protected classes, or any transparency or enforcement provisions. As a result, many school districts across Kansas are not in compliance with the statute. In school districts that have taken steps to follow the law, the quality of compliance varies widely. We have found that districts whose bullying prevention materials are readily available to parents have the qualitatively most comprehensive plans. We have also found that those districts whose materials are difficult to access place little to no emphasis on following the law. In 2019, a KSDE-led task force studied bullying prevention in public schools, but no action was taken to address the task force findings.

a. Do you support school district policies banning bullying of students based on sexual orientation or gender identity?

Yes No

Comments:

- b. Do you support requiring school districts to post their bullying policies and implementation plans online, and to file them with the Kansas Department of Education?

Yes No

Comments:

- c. Do you support requiring school districts to publish comprehensive data regarding bullying in their schools?

Yes No

Comments:

4. There have been ongoing attempts, locally and in the Kansas Legislature, to limit access to comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education in public schools. We believe these policies would put all children, and especially LGBT youth, at risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

- a. Do you support requiring Kansas school districts to implement comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education policy?

Yes No

Comments:

5. There have been recent controversies over LGBT materials in public school. Some of these disputes have included demands to remove LGBT materials from shelves.

- a. Would you oppose efforts to ban materials in school libraries simply because they had subject matter dealing with LGBT issues?

Yes No

Comments:

6. Most middle and high schools in Kansas allow extra-curricular student clubs to meet on campus at designated times during the school day, to conduct fundraisers on school property, and to promote themselves and their mission to other students. LGBT students, and their allies, frequently form GSA, or "Gay/Straight Alliance" clubs, in schools across the nation. Although courts have held that LGBT students and clubs must have the same access as all other extra-curricular clubs, many schools block or interfere with their formation and/or operation.

- a. If elected, will you support the right of students to form GSA or similar clubs in schools where extra-curricular clubs are otherwise permitted?

Yes No

Comments:

Additional Comments:

SAMPLE