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# An All-Inclusive Curriculum

— Developing Best Practices for —  
Success in the Classroom

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# New Jersey Law -Chapter 6

**An Act** concerning instruction and instructional materials in public schools and supplementing chapter 35 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

**Be It Enacted** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.18A:35-4.35 History of disabled and LGBT persons included in middle and high school curriculum.

1. A board of education shall include instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, in an appropriate place in the curriculum of middle school and high school students as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

C.18A:35-4.36 Policies, procedures pertaining to inclusive instructional materials.

2. A board of education shall have policies and procedures in place pertaining to the selection of instructional materials to implement the requirements of section 1 of this act. When adopting instructional materials for use in the schools of the district, a board of education shall adopt inclusive instructional materials that portray the cultural and economic diversity of society including the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, where appropriate.
3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to the 2020-2021 school year.

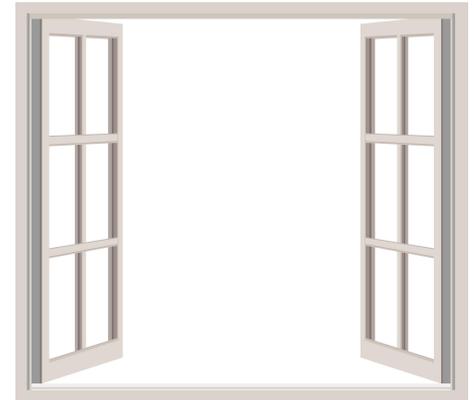
\*Approved January 31, 2019.

# Key Points of the Legislation for Persons with Disabilities & LGBTQ

- The legislation is NOT an LGBTQ / Persons with Disabilities “Curriculum”
  - There is no “opt out” option given that contributors to LGBTQ/Persons with Disabilities are to be INFUSED into ALL curricular content areas and grade levels (Gr. 6-12).
- The legislation does NOT require the creation of separate lesson or unit plans, but rather emphasizes that educators “*provide instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in an appropriate place in the curriculum of middle school and high school students.*”
- **Districts are responsible to ensure instructional materials are inclusive of contributors of persons with disabilities and LGBTQ.**

# Curriculum As a “Window” and a “Mirror”

- Curriculum can serve as a **mirror** when it reflects individuals and their experiences back to themselves.
- At the same time curriculum can serve as a **window** when it introduces and provides the opportunity to understand the experiences and perspectives of those who possess different identities. These windows can offer views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange.
- Applied to an all-inclusive curricular content, these mirrors and windows can help create a more positive environment and healthy self-concept for LGBTQ students and those with disabilities while also raising the awareness of all students.



# Why Is An All-Inclusive Curriculum So Important?



- It can promote safer school environments by developing lessons that avoid bias and that include positive representations of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people, history, and events.
- People with disabilities are one of the largest and least understood minority groups in America. It is estimated that over 50 million Americans have some type of disability; one sixth of the world's population has some type of significant disability or chronic health impairment.
- For LGBTQ students, attending a school with an inclusive curriculum is related to less-hostile school experiences and increased feelings of connectedness to the school community.
- Ignorance feeds discrimination and stereotypes -People with disabilities continue to lag behind the general population in numerous indicators of well being (i.e. unemployment/graduation rates, income, participation in social life, etc.). Our children and youth have little familiarity with the history of discrimination and exclusion that has led to this status.
- An all-inclusive curriculum benefits all students by promoting acceptance and respect, and teaching them more about the diverse people and families in the world.
- Inclusive curriculum supports students' abilities to empathize, connect, and collaborate with a diverse group of peers, skills that are of increasing importance in our multicultural, global society. [Rudine Sims Bishop (1990)]

\*Information above obtained from [GLSEN.org](https://www.glsen.org) and [Infusing Disability Studies into the General Curriculum](#)

# Why Is An All-Inclusive Curriculum So Important?

- An All-Inclusive Curriculum benefits **ALL** students by:
  - Exposing them to more inclusive and accurate accounts of history.
  - Helping them have better understanding of and encouraging them to question stereotypes about LGBTQ people and those with disabilities. To eliminate stereotypes, we first have to see them and then challenge the assumptions behind them.
  - Promoting acceptance. The more our children and youth know about LGBTQ people and those with disabilities -the discrimination they have faced in history, the stereotypes we apply to them -the more comfortable they will become with their classmates.
- An All-Inclusive Curriculum benefits **LGBTQ** students and those with **disabilities** by:
  - Validating their existence and experiences.
  - Reinforcing their value and self-worth.
  - Providing space for their voices.



\*Information above obtained from [GLSEN.org](http://GLSEN.org) and [Infusing Disability Studies into the General Curriculum](#)

# Why Is An All-Inclusive Curriculum So Important?

- We should recognize the important contributions that people with disabilities and the LGBTQ population have made throughout history. History should not be only about the “headlines and heroes” of past generations, but should include the equally heroic accounts of what the daily lives of these populations were like as they battled the barriers of exclusion and discrimination.
- Bias hurts all children, both those directly affected and those who learn in an atmosphere of fear and tension, afraid to explore their own lives because of worry about disapproval and rejection. Beginning these conversations in elementary and middle school will help young people develop empathy for a diverse group of people, and to learn about identities that might relate to their families or even themselves. It is never too early for schools to set up a foundation of understanding and respect.
- Students of all ages must be given an opportunity to learn that the words “gay,” “lesbian,” “transgender,” and “disabled” are adjectives that should be used with respect to describe people in their community, not words used in a negative way to hurt, insult, and degrade.
- All students deserve to see themselves in their curriculum, including students who identify as LGBTQ and those with disabilities and come from families that identify as such.

# Language Arts

## Writers

- Walt Whitman, poet & journalist
- Jacqueline Woodson, author
- James Baldwin, author
- Leslea Newman, author and poet
- Oscar Wilde, author & playwright
- Tennessee Williams, playwright
- Langston Hughes, author
- David Sedaris, humorist
- Alice Walker, author
- Allen Ginsberg, poet
- Lorraine Hansberry, playwright & author
- Agatha Christie (Learning Disability- Dysgraphia)
- F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Eric LeGrand
- Audre Lorde (Poet, Activist)
- Jhamak Ghimire (Nepalese Poet and Writer)



Resources:

[American Library Association](#)

[Berry College](#)

[Monmouth County Consortium for LGBTQ Youth](#)

## Texts

- *Gracefully Grayson*, Ami Polonsky
- *Hurricane Child*, Kheryn Callender
- *Picture Us in the Light*, Kelly Loy Gilbert
- *Hammer of Thor* by Rick Riordan
- *Little & Lion*, Brandy Colbert
- *The 57 Bus*, Dashka Slater
- *As the Crow Flies*, Melanie Gillman
- *Becoming Jazz*, Jazz Jennings
- *Fresh Ink: An Anthology*, Lamar Giles
- *October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard*, Leslea Newman
- *Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*, Rob Sanders
- Eric LeGrand - "A Walk to Believe" (Rutgers football player's journey back from on-field injury that left him paralyzed)
- *Freak the Mighty* by Rodman Philbrick - types of disabilities and stereotypes
- Rick Riordan- Percy Jackson series (Child has ADHD and Dyslexia)
- *The Kid Nobody Could Handle* | *Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.* (feeling of being left out and not good enough)
- *The Running Dream* by Wendelin Van Draanen (runner loses leg)
- *Tangerine* by Edward Bloor (visually impaired)



# Social Studies/Math/Science

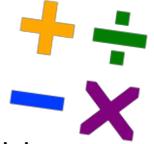
## Social Studies

- Friedrich Von Steuben/ Military Officer - helped General Washington form a proper Military at Valley Forge
- Bayard Rustin - civil rights activist
- David Blunkett (British Politician and Blind)
- Judy Heumann- Assistant Secretary of Educations (Polio)
- Franklin D. Roosevelt (Polio and Paraplegic)



## Math

- Alan Turing - Mathematician who helped British intelligence to decode Enigma messages during WWII.
- John Nash (schizophrenia)



## Science

- Francis Bacon - deductive system for empirical research earned him the title “the Father of Modern Science”
- Sally Ride - America’s first female astronaut - Presidential Medal of Honor
- Allan Cox - geophysicist specializing in plate tectonics
- Neil Devine - major contributor to modern theory of star formation and prediction of meteoroid and space debris environments
- Margaret Mead - anthropologist
- Steven Hawking (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a motor neuron disease (MND))
- John Wesley Powell (lost arm-founded the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology)
- Albert Einstein (Dyslexia)



# Specials

## Health and Physical Education:

### Athletes

- Jason Collins / US NBA Basketball Player
- Michael Sam / US NFL Football Player
- Martina Navratilova / US Tennis Player
- Greg Louganis / US Olympic Swimmer
- Megan Rapinoe/US Olympic Soccer
- Billie Jean King / US Tennis Player
- Sheryl Swoopes / US WNBA Basketball Player
- Abby Wambach / US soccer player
- Kyle Maynard (Congenital amputation - won ESPY)
- Greg Louganis, Olympic swimmer (Dyslexia, Depression, HIV/AIDS)



### Actors/Entertainers

- Montgomery Clift / US Film Actor
- Rock Hudson / US Film Actor
- Tab Hunter / US Film Actor
- Ellen Degeneres / US Actor and Comedian
- Lily Tomlin / US Actor and Comedian
- BD Wong / US Actor
- Robin Williams (ADHD, Bipolar and later Parkinson's Disease)
- Michael J. Fox (Parkinson's Disease)
- Tom Cruise (Dyslexia)
- Daniel Radcliffe (Dyslexia)
- Elton John (Epilepsy)
- Stevie Wonder (Blind)
- Millie Bobby Brown (Partial Hearing Loss)
- Marilyn Monroe (Stuttering- Actress)



## Visual and Performing Arts:

### Artists

- Leonardo Da Vinci/ Italian Renaissance Artist
- Michaelangelo Buonarroti/ Italian Renaissance Artist
- Jean-Michel Basquiat/ US Painter
- Keith Haring / US Painter
- Annie Leibovitz / US Photographer
- Carravaggio/ Italian Baroque Painter
- Robert Rauschenberg/ US Pop Artist
- Kehinde Wiley/ US Painter
- Frida Kahlo/Mexican Painter (Polio)
- Vincent Van Gogh (Bipolar)
- Walt Disney (Dyslexia)



### Musicians

- Katherine Lee Bates / US Songwriter (America the Beautiful)
- Cole Porter / US Composer
- Leonard Bernstein / US Composer
- Peter Tchaikovsky / Russian Composer
- Amy Ray & Emily Saliers / US Musicians (Indigo Girls)
- Andrea Boccelli (Blind-Singer)
- "Blind Tom" Williams (Autistic- Composer)
- Justin Timberlake (ADHD)



# Additional Resources

- [Culturally Responsive Score Card for Analyzing Curriculum Inclusivity](#)
- [LGBTQ - Persons with Disabilities Guidance](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals.](#)
- [LGBTQ Inclusive Picture Books](#)
- [30 Children's Books with LGBTQ Characters](#)
- [Make It Better For Youth Monmouth County Consortium For LGBTQ Youth](#)
- [Professional Learning Resources](#)
- [PBS Learning Media Resources](#)
- [Queer Art: 1960's to the Present](#)
- [One Archives Foundation](#)
- [Tinton Falls Book Club Selections](#)
- [Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network](#)
- [National Institute for Urban School Improvement: Infusing Disability Studies into the General Curriculum](#)

\*This curriculum was developed in collaboration with the Monmouth County Curriculum Consortium (MC3). For more information about the consortium, visit its [website](#).

**Thanks for attending this information session!**

We are happy to take questions and  
comments at this time!