



Ministry of Education

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**Supporting Students of all Sexual  
Orientations and Gender Identities  
(SOGI)**

**November 25, 2017**



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

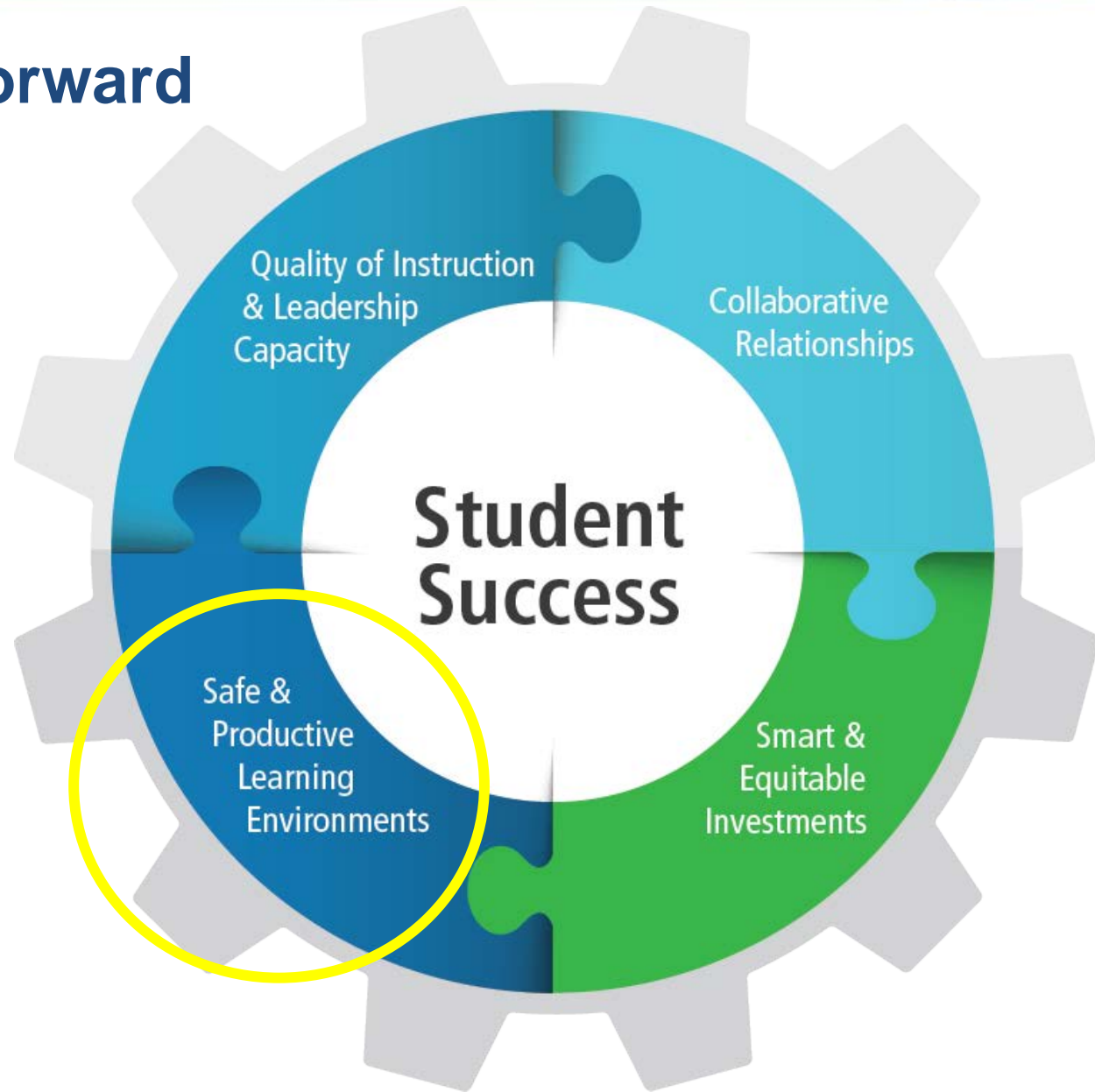
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# Moving SOGI Forward

Creating safe,  
welcoming and  
inclusive  
learning  
environments  
for all BC  
students...





# Connections

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- *“Respond to the crisis in mental health and addictions...developing and implementing a Mental Health and Addictions Strategy and a Youth Mental Health Strategy” (CSA 2017)*
- *“Implement BC’s new school curriculum and provide new technology, lab equipment, learning material and professional development support for teachers” (Minister mandate letter)*
- *“Recommendation 6 – Address the mental health needs of youth who are often additionally marginalized” (BCTF Priorities for Public Education, August 2017)*





## LGBT2SQ Youth in BC

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- **15% of male and 23% of female** B.C. high school students identify as **gay, lesbian, bi** or not exclusively heterosexual.
- **1%** of B.C. high school students identify as **transgender** and **5% of Aboriginal** students identify as **Two-Spirit**
- **38%** of British Columbia's **street-involved** youth identify as **gay, lesbian, bi** or not exclusively heterosexual.



## Why is this work important?

- **64% of queer and trans students in BC feel unsafe in school** - especially in change rooms and washrooms, and because of bullying, violence and homophobic slurs.
  - 42% of BC LGBTQ K-12 students report being **victims of cyberbullying** compared to 14% of non-LGBTQ students.
  - 90% of Canadian trans youth hear **trans-phobic comments daily or weekly from other students.**
- **69% of Canadian trans youth have expressed suicidal ideation** in the last year, compared with 8-11% of the general youth population.





## Protective Factor – School Connectedness

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- Trans youth who report high levels of connectedness are twice as likely to report having good mental health.
- Research has shown that having any supportive adult inside or outside the family reduces suicidality, and increases happiness and self-esteem.
- In schools with anti-homophobia policies, students are:
  - less likely to hear homophobic comments;
  - less likely to be the target of harassment; and
  - less likely to abuse alcohol, **regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.**





# Accomplishments to Date

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- ✓ Formed SOGI Working Group (incl. BCTF)
- ✓ Hosted SOGI Education Leadership and Policy Summits
- ✓ Implemented province-wide SOGI 1 2 3 campaign
- ✓ Created instructional samples for educators to support the new curriculum
- ✓ Continued partnership with ARC Foundation – new Provincial SOGI Education Lead
- ✓ Ensured codes of conduct/anti-bullying policies are SOGI inclusive





## Current State

- 59 of 60 Boards of Education and all independent schools have updated their codes of conduct and policies re SOGI.
- Ministry staff are working with the remaining district (Nisga'a).
- Development of educational videos and eLearning modules – September 2017 release.
- Provincial SOGI Network meeting on Oct 4, 2017 – 49 participating school districts





## Work Ahead

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- 1. Provide provincial leadership to support SOGI inclusive education*
- 2. Build school cultures where all students and staff feel safe, connected and welcomed*
- 3. Support educators and parents with tools and resources*



*Students of ALL sexual orientations & gender identities thrive and live authentic lives*



Thank you

