



## **St. Albert Pride Week - June 10 to 14, 2024**

### **Re. Parent/Guardian Letter**

June is nationally recognized as Pride month both in Canada and internationally. We at St. Albert Public Schools are excited to be celebrating Pride Week the week of June 10-14. This week is full of fun learning activities like artwork, dressing in the colours of the rainbow and highlighting literature and history that celebrate the accomplishments of our 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Our school division is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, supportive environment for all of our students and staff, including those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. We are also committed to providing curriculum and activities that reflect our students, in a respectful and belonging manner. During Pride Week, and throughout the year, our teachers help students understand the unique perspective and realities of this and other communities. Topics of discussion this week will include different types of families, overcoming histories of discrimination and oppression, fostering positive relationships, and building welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy working and learning environments.

### **FAQs:**

#### **Why does St. Albert Public recognize Pride Week?**

St Albert Public Pride Week is a time when schools are intentional about representing the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Many St Albert Public students, staff, families and community members identify as part of this community, and St. Albert Public Pride Week is an opportunity for students and staff to see their identities reflected. Our Pride Week complements the regular inclusion of these identities that happens throughout the school year.

#### **Why do we recognize Pride Week in our schools?**

Students of all ages deserve to have their unique families and identities represented positively in their educational journeys. Youth may have family members that are part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community or may be considering their own feelings and identities as they grow. Representation contributes to these diverse identities and orientations. Lessons and activities are age appropriate and connected to curricular outcomes.

**How do I explain Pride Week to a child?**

Keeping your discussion simple using words and examples that your child can relate to can help them more easily grasp the history of 2SLGBTQIA+ people and what it takes to be an ally. Your child may have not yet asked you about the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, this does not necessarily mean they are not curious. This is an opportunity to talk about how there are many different experiences in the world, and that being kind to all people is important. Being able to express what it means to be accepting and respectful at a young age is a great thing. We all live, study, and work in a diverse society. Today's students are growing up in a world with new understandings about gender and identity, and it is important to acknowledge and create an environment that respects all identities and orientations. Creating an inclusive culture helps prevent students, staff and families from experiencing distress, discrimination, bullying and negative health outcomes, and helps prepare students for the diverse world in which they will be learning and working in.

**What if Pride Week does not align with my family's beliefs and values?**

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and St. Albert Public Schools creates schools which are safe spaces for everyone. Regardless of someone's personal values and beliefs, everyone must follow the Alberta Human Rights Code that protects marginalized groups from discrimination and harassment, and everyone who works for or with St. Albert Public Schools must be respectful of other identities and align with St. Albert Public policy. Pride activities are based on ties to Alberta curriculum, including building positive relationships, respect and understanding of different cultures and experiences, and reduction of discrimination. Individuals do not have to change their belief system, however all students and staff are expected to be respectful. Parents have the choice of requesting their child be exempt from any activity or event. We will respect and maintain the dignity of all parties when a student is exempted from an activity.

**What division documents support this work?**

St Albert Public Schools has a Sexual Orientation and Gender identity policy A-160: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Board Regulation A-160-BR: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity which direct schools in fostering environments which support and reflect 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and families.

If you have any questions about what is specifically happening for Pride Week in your school community, please contact your school administration.