

Jackson County: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning Health Equity Report



Reprinted with permission from Rosemary Ragusa Photography



**SO Health-E Regional
Health Equity Coalition
Winter 2015**

Prepared by Joanne Noone, PhD, RN, Oregon Health & Science University

The project described was supported by Funding Opportunity Number CMS-1G1-12-001 from the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

The contents provided are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or any of its agencies.

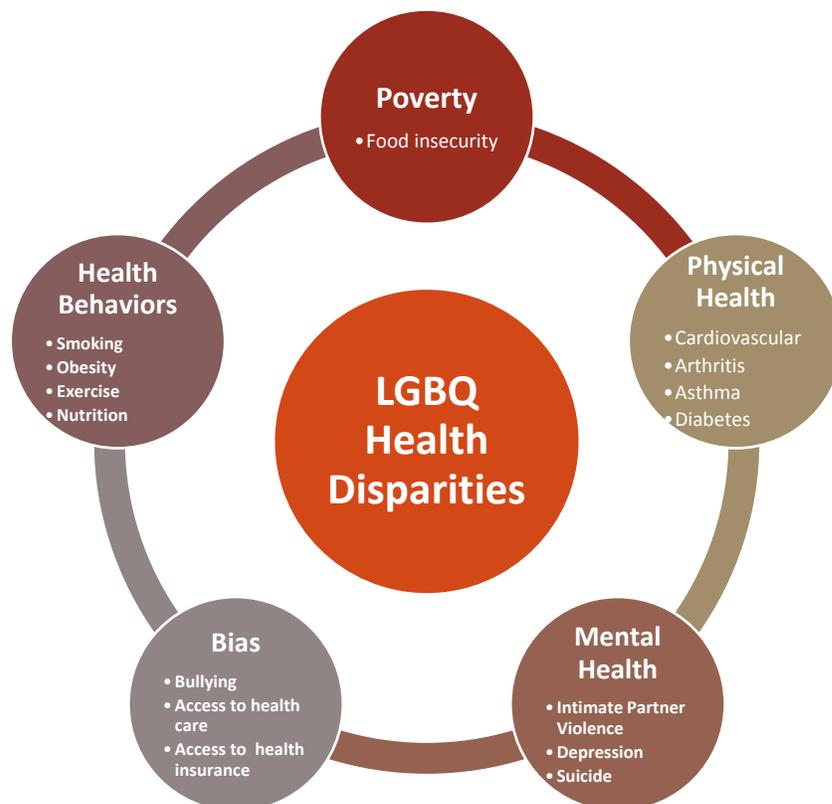


Introduction

According to the Center for Disease Control, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and those questioning or unsure of their sexual orientation (LGBTQ) experience health inequities. Sometimes these disparities are associated with the social discrimination and stigma LGBTQ people face. Within the state of Oregon, approximately 3% of the adult population is LGBTQ (Oregon Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2005-2009), although a 2012 Gallup survey places estimates at closer to 5% (Gallup Daily Tracking, June-December, 2012). 8.6% of 11th graders on the 2014 Oregon Student Wellness Survey identify as LGBTQ.

Terms used in this report: The acronym LGBTQ will be used throughout this report when data includes information on all categories and is most commonly used with youth who still may be questioning or unsure of their sexual orientation. Since there is little known data in Oregon on the health of transgendered clients, the acronym LGB may be used for data limited to those subpopulations.

Known LGBQ Health Disparities in Oregon



Sources: CD Summary, Oregon Health Authority, Nov. 20, 2012 (Vol. 61, No. 21); Oregon Public Health Division State Health Profile September 2012

There are some known disparities within the state of Oregon related to lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) populations – little is known related to transgendered health. In Oregon, LGB populations experience:

Poverty:

- Despite higher percentages of education, LGBQ adults are more likely to live in poverty. LGB adults are more likely to be college graduates (43% vs. 34%) than heterosexual adults, yet more LGB adults have an annual household income less than \$20,000 (17% vs. 12%) and live in poverty (13% vs. 10%).
- LGB adults experience more household food insecurity (18% vs. 12%) than heterosexual adults.

Physical Health:

- More LGB adults live with arthritis, asthma, diabetes or cardiovascular disease than heterosexual adults (41% vs. 33%).
- In particular, nearly twice as many LGB adults report being diagnosed with asthma as heterosexual adults (17% vs. 9%).

Mental Health:

- Nearly twice as many LGB adults report frequent mental distress (14 or more days of poor mental health in the last 30 days) as heterosexual adults (17% vs. 9%).
- More than twice as many LGBQ youth report feeling “sad or hopeless for 2 or more weeks” in the past 12 months as their heterosexual peers (42% vs. 18%).
- One in five LGBQ youth report a suicide attempt in the last 12 months, compared with one in 25 heterosexual youth (20% vs. 4%).
- LGB adults are twice as likely to ever experience intimate partner violence as heterosexual adults (29% versus 14%).
- LGBQ youth are more than twice as likely to experience intimate partner violence within the last 12 months as their heterosexual peers (12% versus 5%).

Bias:

- Nearly 15% of LGBQ youth have missed school due to safety concerns in the last 30 days, compared to 4% of straight youth.
- LGB adults are less likely than heterosexual adults to have medical insurance (77% vs. 82%) or a usual health care provider (70% vs. 77%), and are more likely to report recent barriers to accessing healthcare due to cost (23% vs. 15%).

Health Behaviors:

- 28% of LGB adults smoke compared to 19% of heterosexual adults; and 31% of LGBT youth report smoking in the last 30 days compared to 14% of straight youth.
- LGB adults are less likely to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- LGBQ youth are less likely to meet the CDC recommendations for physical activity and more likely to experience obesity.
- Lesbian and bisexual adult women are more likely to experience obesity than straight women (32% vs. 25%).

There is also some national attention towards understanding the health of LGBT elders and the impact to their health due to a lifetime of experiencing these inequities. A local survey of LGBT

elders in southern Oregon is currently underway and may help to understand local disparities for LGBT elders.

Known LGBTQ Health Disparities in Jackson County

The 2014 Student Wellness Survey provides data on health issues for 11th grade youth that can be assessed at the county level and provides information on experiences of LGBTQ youth. According to the 2014 Student Wellness Survey, 8.6% of 11th graders in Oregon identify as LGBTQ and 10.3% of Jackson County 11th graders.

Table 75: Which of the following best describes you?

	Grade 6		Grade 8		Grade 11	
	County	State	County	State	County	State
Heterosexual (straight)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	89.7	91.5
Gay or lesbian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	1.2
Bisexual	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.5	4.9
I wonder/think I'm transgendered	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.5
Not sure	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.0
N of Valid	0	0	0	0	856	16,699
N of Miss	1,057	20,922	1,137	21,632	11	209

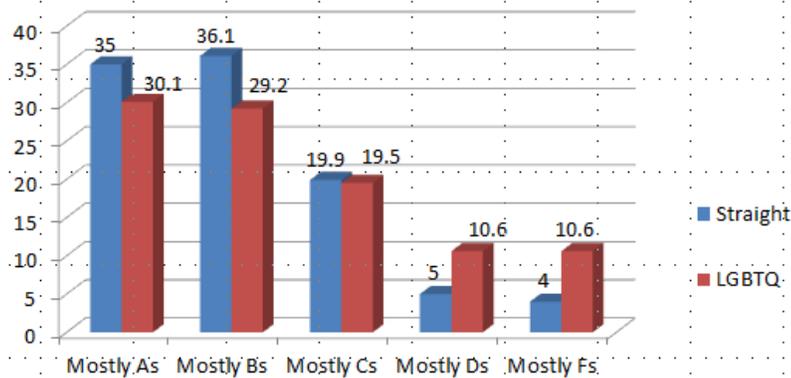
*This was not asked in grades 6 and 8

10.3% of Jackson County 11th graders reporting

School Engagement

In Jackson County, LGBTQ 11th graders were twice as likely to have poor grades (21.2%) than straight youth (9%).

Putting them all together, what were your grades like last year?



Opportunities for Participation

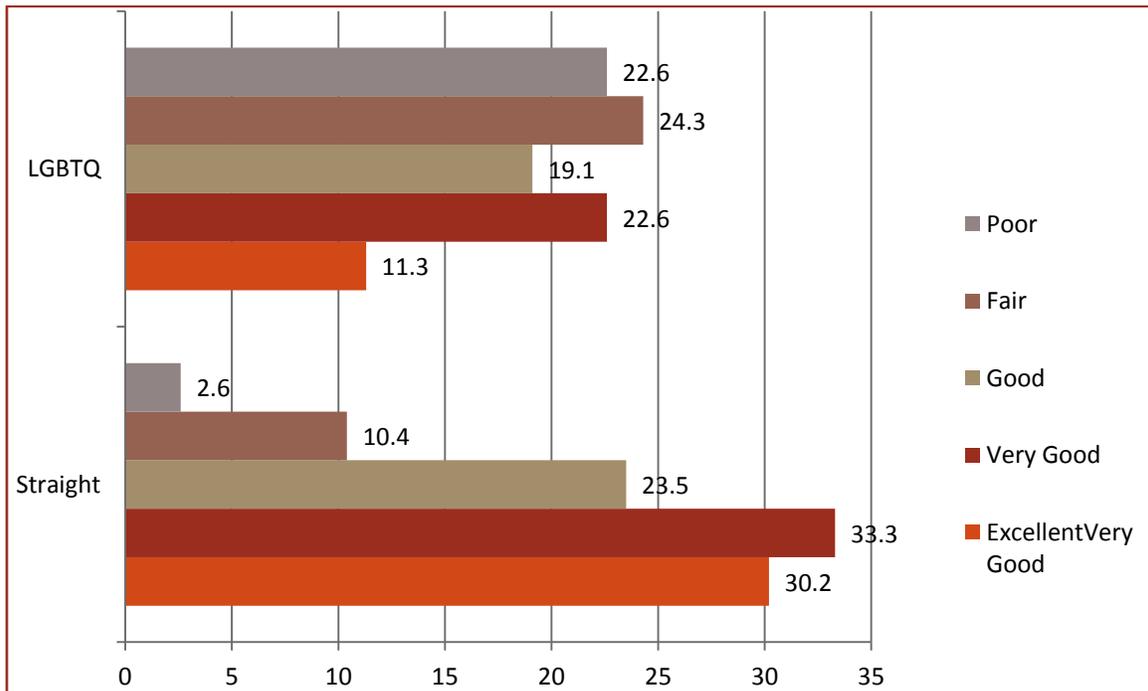
	Straight		LGBTQ	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions and activities	92.8%	7.3%	83.4%	16.6%
There are lots of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs and other school activities outside of class	92.9%	7.1%	84.7%	15.3%

LGBTQ youth were twice as likely to feel uninvolved in class discussions and activities (16.6%) as well as after-school activities (15.3%) than straight youth (7.3 and 7.1%, respectively).

General Health

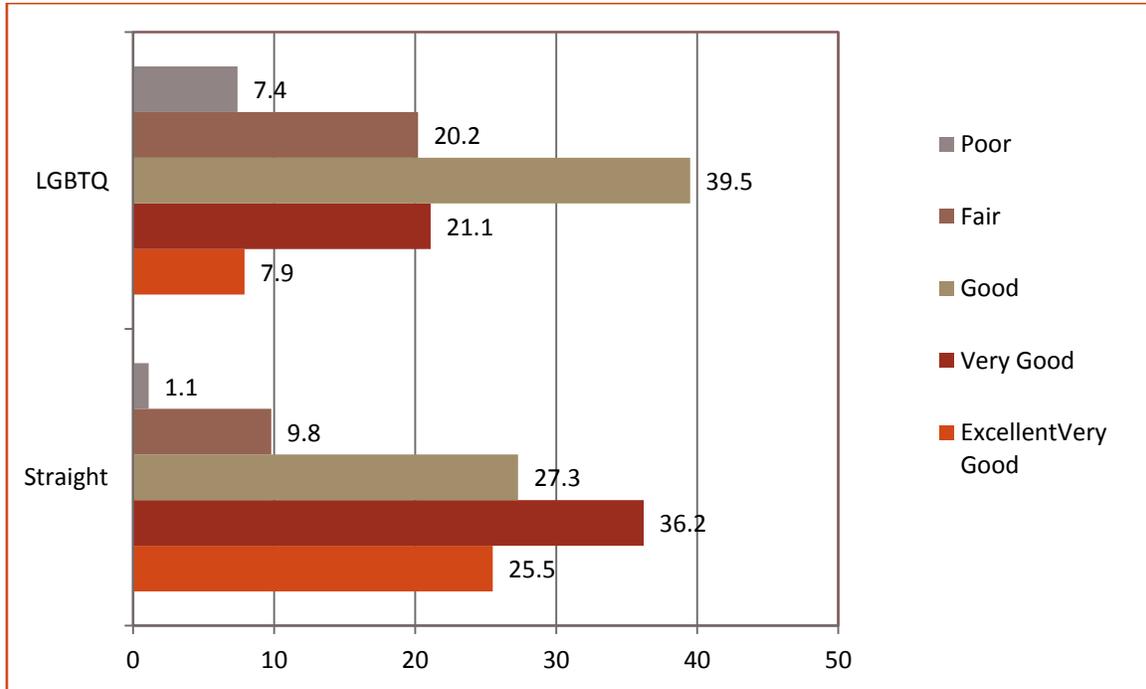
Almost four times as many LGBTQ 11th graders in Jackson County (46.9%) than straight youth (13%) reported poor or fair emotional or mental health on the 2014 Student Wellness Survey.

Would you say that in general your emotional-mental health is?



Two and a half times as many LGBTQ youth (27.6%) than straight youth (10.9%) reported poor or fair physical health.

Would you say that in general your physical health is?



Positive youth development is a set of questions related to physical health, emotional/ mental health, competence, confidence, support and service. Students who answer yes to 5 of 6 questions have met the benchmark. The Student Wellness Survey also asks a series of five questions known as the Mental Health Inventory (MHI-5). When responses for all five are considered together, the result is an estimate of the level of psychological distress that youth are experiencing. MHI-5 scores range from 5 to 30. Scores of 21 or higher are an indication that youth may be experiencing a mental health concern that requires further assessment. LGBTQ youth are less likely to have strong positive youth development and are at three times higher risk for psychological distress than their straight peers.

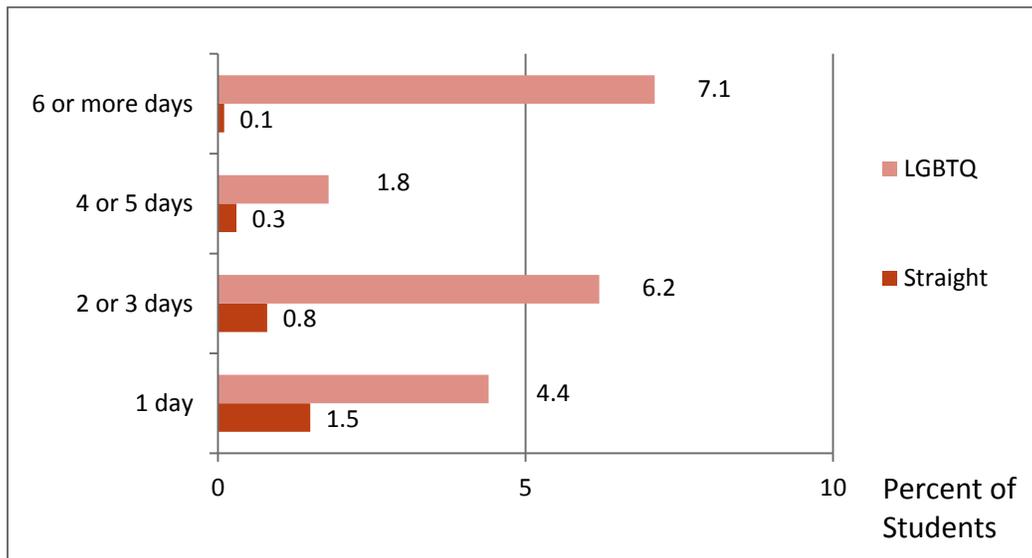
Youth Development and Psychological Distress

	Straight	LGBTQ
Strong positive youth development	69.5%	43.8%
Psychological distress - Mental Health Inventory of 21 or higher on 5 mental health questions	9.7%	30.3%

Safety

Data reported in this section includes survey results from the 2014 Student Wellness Survey for Jackson County 11th graders about verbal and physical harassment, fighting and missing school due to safety concerns. LGBTQ youth were ten times more likely to report missing school related to safety concerns than straight youth. 29.5% of LGBTQ youth reported missing at least one day of school in the past 30 days because of safety concerns compared to 2.7% of straight youth.

During the past 30 days, on how many days did you not go to school because you felt you would be unsafe at school or on your way home from school?



LGBTQ youth were twice as likely (29.8%) to be in a fight within the last year as straight youth (15.4%).

During the past 12 months, how many times were you in a physical fight?

	0 times	1 time	2-5 times	6-9 times	10 or more times
Straight	84.6%	7.5%	6.4%	0.5%	1.0%
LGBTQ	70.2%	12.3%	6.1%	2.7%	8.8%

LGBTQ youth are experiencing harassment on or traveling to school sites at a much higher rate than straight youth. For a significant number, this is occurring on a weekly basis.

In the past 30 days how many times have you been harassed at school, on a school bus or going to and from school because?

		0 times	1 time	2-3 times	4 or more times
Someone said you were LGBTQ	Straight	95.1%	2.1%	1.5%	1.3%
	LGBT	65.5%	12.4%	10.6%	11.5%
Of how you look (weight, clothes, acne or other physical characteristics)	Straight	82.3%	6.8%	6.4%	4.5%
	LGBT	62.5%	10.7%	12.5%	14.3%
Through email, social media sites, chat rooms, ...texting, phone	Straight	85.9%	6.8%	4.6%	2.7%
	LGBT	76.8%	4.5%	3.6%	15.2%

Mental Health

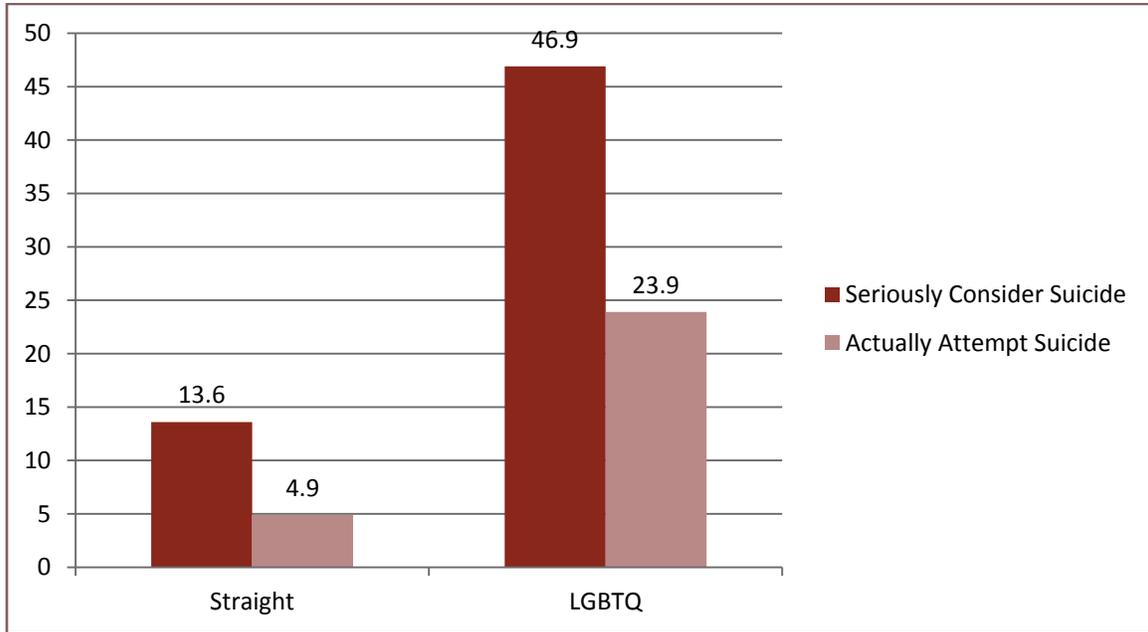
LGBTQ 11th graders in Jackson County are experiencing sadness and depression at 3-4 times that of straight youth.

In the past 30 days how much of the time, have you?

		All/most of the time	A good bit of the time	Some of the time	A little/ none of the time
Felt so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer you up	Straight	7.1%	7.2%	10.7%	75%
	LGBT	28.8%	9.9%	11.7%	49.5%
Been a happy person	Straight	57.2%	22.0%	12.4%	8.4%
	LGBT	30.6%	17.1%	19.8%	33.8%
Felt downhearted and blue	Straight	11.4%	13.2%	18.0%	57.3%
	LGBT	31.2%	14.7%	23.9%	30.3%

LGBTQ 11th graders in Jackson County were three and a half times more likely (46.9%) to seriously consider suicide than straight youth (13.6%) and almost five times more likely to report an actual attempt (23.9% vs 4.9%) in the last twelve months.

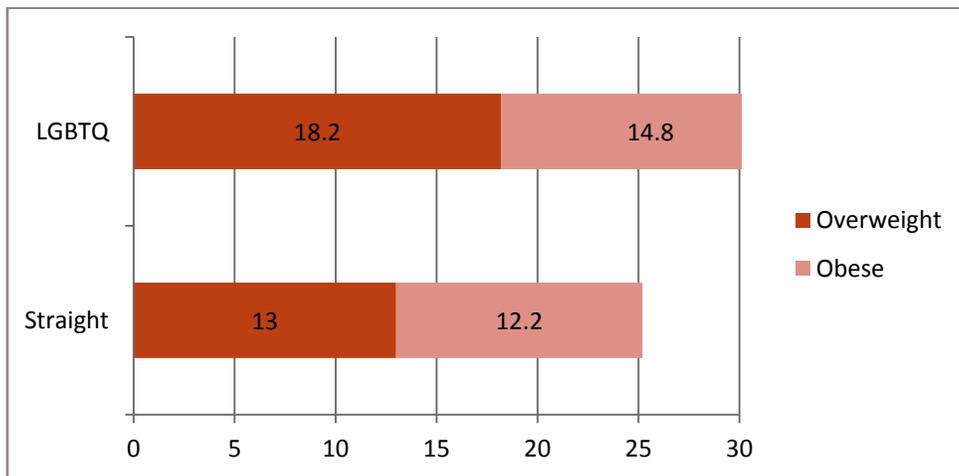
During the past 12 months, did you:



Health Behaviors

LGBTQ 11th graders in Jackson County were more likely to be overweight /obese and to smoke cigarettes. 30% of LGBTQ youth reported being overweight or obese compared with 25% of straight youth. LGBTQ youth were two and a half times more likely (24.6%) to smoke in the last 30 days than straight youth (9.8%).

Percentage of Overweight and Obese 11th Graders



In the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?

	0 days	1-9 days	10-19 days	20 or more days
Straight	90.2%	5.8%	0.9%	3%
LGBT	76.4%	10%	2.7%	10.9%

2014 Safe School Act Awards – Jackson County

The Oregon Safe Schools and Communities Coalition annually rates school districts for their compliance with 2009 Oregon Safe Schools Act.

Ranking Definitions and Jackson County Rankings 2014

Ranking	Definition	Jackson County School District
Gold Star	Governance documents regarding harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence, and cyberbullying are substantially compliant* with current Oregon statutes and expressly reference gender identity and gender expression as protected classes.	Central Point Phoenix-Talent
Silver Star	Governance documents regarding harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence, and cyberbullying are substantially compliant* with current Oregon statutes.	Eagle Point
Bronze Star	Governance documents regarding harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence and cyberbullying need updating and/or modification to achieve substantial compliance with current Oregon statutes.	Medford Ashland

**“Substantially compliant” harassment, intimidation, bullying, and cyberbullying governance documents contain at least 80% of the statutorily required elements, including four key elements required by the Safe Schools Act and passage of Senate Bill 1555: (1) acknowledgment that interfering with the psychological well-being of a student creates a hostile educational environment; (2) a statement that bullying may be based on, but not limited to, the protected class status of a person; (3) a requirement that school employees report acts of bullying; and (4) a statement as to how the anti-bullying policy is to be publicized within the district, including, at a minimum, a statement that it will be made annually available in a handbook and readily available at each school or district office and website.*