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Elementary Teaching Strategies for LGBTQ Inclusion

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Abstract

It is the responsibility of teachers to create a classroom environment that is both inclusive and validating to the identities of students and their families. This capstone project explores how teachers can create this environment for students and families that are a part of the LGBTQ community. Because of the discrimination that presents itself through bullying based on LGBTQ identities, and the lack of LGBTQ representation within classroom lessons, there is a need for a higher quantity and quality of resources for teachers to create these inclusive environments, specifically in elementary schools. To assess our local community, teacher interviews were conducted to examine the current climates of Monterey County classrooms regarding issues of LGBTQ inclusion. Through the information gained in action research and literature reviews, a resource guide was created to help elementary teachers create gender inclusive and LGBTQ accepting classrooms.

Keywords: LGBTQ, queer, non-nuclear families, elementary teaching strategies, gender inclusive.

Elementary Teaching Strategies for LGBTQ Inclusion

At 17 years old I came out to one of my teachers. I went to his office hours and sat with him and told my story. The response from the man I thought I trusted was one of the pivotal moments in my life. He said that I was too young, too inexperienced to understand the complexities that is sexuality. In that moment, my confidence in myself shrunk. I believed these words for three years and forced myself to try and live a different lifestyle. I want to make it clear that I was not closeted. Closeted LGBTQ youth are those who know their identity but choose to stay hidden, my identity was pulled away from me. The LGBTQ community doesn't choose to be in the closet. The walls are built around us made of heteronormativity, sexism, gender roles, sociocultural harassment, and ignorance. We are pushed in and are surrounded by the message that we are abnormal.

Breaking down the closet walls is so much harder than building them up, but teachers can help in that struggle. Through breaking down strict gender roles, respecting non-nuclear families, and most importantly bringing LGBTQ representation into the classroom we create a door to acceptance. It may not happen overnight, and it may not happen when these students are in our classroom, but with enough support and encouragement LGBTQ students may one day be brave enough to open that door. Starting them with positivity at a young age is the key. Showing positive LGBTQ messages in elementary classrooms leads to that moment of acceptance.

Literature Review: The Problem

The problems facing LGBTQ inclusivity in schools aren't simple. The LGBTQ community is forefront in our society in the fight for their civil rights. These issues find their way into the classrooms as well through LGBTQ based bullying, the strict enforcement of gender roles, and lack of protective policies. Many in the school community are affected by these issues including parents, teachers, and staff who are members of the LGBTQ community. Most importantly are elementary students who currently identify within the LGBTQ community, or may one day identify within the community.

School Climate and Bullying

One way many schools have decided to try and create an inclusive environment is to have anti-bullying programs conducted for their students. These programs are often filled with hands on activities, role play, and discussions. This is intended to help students understand what the negative effects of bullying are and how to better handle their conflicts. However helpful these programs may be, bullying can stem from societal values that are subconsciously taught to our children. Poteat & Russell argue that schools anti bullying programs aren't focused on adding an understanding of minority based bullying. This includes all marginalized groups including LGBTQ students or students who have LGBTQ family members (Poteat & Russell, 2013). Without addressing minority bullying in these programs schools may create unsafe environments for students who identify within a variety of minorities.

One example of what LGBTQ based bullying might look like is name calling. Words such as gay, faggot, or sissy may be used either directly to a student or in another derogatory way. When these actions happen within a classroom one would believe that most teachers intervene. Gerouki however states that teachers who choose not to intervene when their young students say words like faggot or sissy, do so because they believe that the students don't know what they mean (Gerouki, 2010). This lack of intervention may lead to students believing that their word choices are ok because they have never been questioned. This lack of intervention leads to continues bullying and promotes the idea that being gay is inherently negative.

The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) produced a 2012 report titled "Playgrounds and Prejudice: Elementary School Climate in the United States". The network conducted surveys to test the climate of inclusivity of LGBTQ students in elementary schools across the United States. What they found was that while 80% of teachers feel comfortable intervening in LGBTQ based bullying, only 50% would be comfortable answering questions from their students about gay, lesbian, or bisexual people. That number drops to only 40% feeling comfortable answering questions about transgender people (GLSEN, 2012). This goes to prove that even if teachers feel comfortable stopping LGBTQ based bullying, they still might deem

LGBTQ topics inappropriate for the classroom. This could lead to an environment where students feel uncomfortable to ask any questions in class, which could affect their schoolwork and wellbeing.

Heteronormativity and Erasure

DePalma and Atkinson define heteronormativity in a school as “...the heterosexist assumption that all teachers and parents are heterosexual and all girls and boys will grow up and eventually (want to) marry a person of the opposite sex” (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). Heteronormativity is especially dangerous, because LGBTQ students are a type of diversity that isn’t asked about, and thus may not be thought about. School Accountability Report Cards (SARC) not only show the academic success of schools, but also give the demographics of their students. Students with disabilities, English language learners, and different ethnicities will end up on a SARC report of a school, while LGBTQ identity remains an invisible diversity. This can make it harder for teachers to remember to cater to this population. Because of this, teachers need to reach beyond tolerance and actively bring discussion of LGBTQ identities into the classroom (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). By creating discussion, students who are LGBTQ, or who come from families with LGBTQ members will be able to see that their identities are valid and not just tolerated.

Even when LGBTQ conversations are brought into the classroom, it is often through a limited lens of inclusion. Many educators use the more common term LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*), however a simple and more inclusive approach means including the Q at the end. Q stands for queer, which is an umbrella term for those who do not identify as heterosexual (straight) or cisgender (identifying with the gender assigned at birth). One example of an identity that often is overlooked, in both classroom inclusion and queer studies overall, is asexuality (Decker, 2014). Asexuality is the lack of sexual attraction towards any gender. Because of their lack of attraction, asexual youth are often dismissed by adults due to lack of experience or their young age. The lack of representation in schools and in the LGBTQ community causes many asexuals report that before finding the asexual identity, they felt broken (Decker, 2014).

Sociocultural Harassment in Curriculum

Sociocultural harassment is when any message to students related to queer identity is negative in nature, or completely nonexistent. (Henning-Stout & Macintosh, 2000). Queer identities being erased from the conversation or queer identities being shown in the light of tragedy leads to the demoralization of LGBTQ youth. By not having visible queer people in positions of leadership, history, or in the media, LGBTQ+ youth have little options for people to see as role models. The constant invisibility leads some to believe that there aren't successful queer people in fields beyond the entertainment industry. The constant negativity leads some to believe that they will never be successful or happy in life (Henning-Stout & Macintosh, 2000).

While finding ways to incorporate LGBTQ history into the classroom, it is important that we remain critical about how well actions reflect intentions. Donahue examines the idea of creating an "LGBTQ Hero" and explains the pros and cons of this approach. Many educators have chosen to teach the story of politician Harvey Milk, the first openly gay Californian politician, as a way to incorporate LGBTQ history. While this is a good way to add an additional person into our curriculum, it doesn't challenge current curriculum and incorporate queer identities into existing historical figures (Donahue, 2014). Using Harvey Milk as the face of the LGBTQ movement is significantly limiting as he was only centered in California politics. Beyond our state, it might be hard for some educators to justify teaching Harvey Milk in their classrooms. Harvey Milk, while inspirational, can also add to the negative portrayal of LGBTQ people as he was assassinated. He is another LGBTQ story that ends in tragedy.

A different approach to LGBTQ inclusion is taking historical accounts that are already taught in our classrooms, and teaching the LGBTQ addition on top of their current storyline. This would be an approach to end invisibility of LGBTQ stories from the curriculum. Vecellio states that when teaching the Holocaust students should know about all cultural groups the Nazi's placed in concentration camps, including gay individuals. By students understanding that LGBTQ people also faced persecution, they can understand why some of the hardships for this group remain (Vecellio, 2012). While this eliminates the invisibility of LGBTQ people who suffered in the holocaust, it again adds to the story of tragedy.

Sociocultural Harassment in Textbooks

Sociocultural harassment also can be present within the textbooks and other materials provided to teachers. In a 2014 published study, Hudson examined composition readers and their inclusion of LGBTQ identities. One common trend found was that composition readers often used the same sex marriage debate as a topic to teach argumentative writing. Though not intentionally harmful, these manuscripts cast LGBTQ people in a negative light and brought the issue of their citizen rights into question (Hudson, 2014). Though argumentative writing is a useful and needed skill for our students, it is important that we pick topics which don't dehumanize our students or their family.

One other way LGBTQ people can be dehumanized is by their associations within textbooks. Wilmot and Naidoo state that often times when LGBTQ people are represented in textbooks, it usually coincides with being an "at risk" group. Their stories are often linked with issues such as suicidal ideation, drug abuse, and living with HIV or AIDS (Wilmot & Naidoo, 2014). Though members of the LGBTQ community may face any number of these negative issues, it does not mean they are any less of a human. Nor does it mean that every member of the LGBTQ community will encounter these issues firsthand or because of their identity. By seeing these associations, students will attribute being LGBTQ as inherently having these problems. The reality is individuals who identify as LGBTQ are deemed at risk not because of their identity, but because of the societal values around their identity. It is not inherently being queer that is the problem, but rather the negative reactions from others to one being queer or being perceived as queer.

Conclusion of Problem

The early years in elementary school are children's first contact and engagement in society. Their classroom is one of the first places they learn to build community and experience conflict. Though LGBTQ identities do not appear as part of the School Accountability Report Cards, they are members of our schools. Bullying, heteronormativity, and sociocultural harassment lead to classroom environments that are detrimental to the portrayal of LGBTQ people.

Literature Review: Solutions

When seeking to create a more inclusive classroom surrounding LGBTQ identities, it is important to be critical of the sources and studies we are pulling from. The solutions found are building blocks for inclusivity rather than singular approaches. Educators should be inspired by them, however should remember to look deeper into their values and find authenticity in creating solutions to align with their values. The following solution research may not be completely applicable to every learning environment, but the essence of each method can be adapted if teachers are up for the challenge.

Pre-service Teacher Training

Looking into what experiences teachers have in their pre-service credentialing programs is essential to understand where the starting point is. All teachers must go through some sort of credential program before making their way fully into the classroom. Because of this, one way to help teachers foster inclusivity is by teaching them skills before they make their debut in front of students. Credential courses should prepare teachers for the issues they may face inside the classroom, and should help them gain the knowledge and skills needed to navigate those issues. All those within marginalized identities deserve the opportunity to have their school be a safe haven, LGBTQ students included.

Kimberly Cosier and James H. Sanders III are both professors for pre-service teachers and specifically focus their queer inclusivity in the realm of art education (Cosier & Sanders, 2007). Art is a unique form of education because it allows students an outlet for their emotions and experience that can be abstract. For students who may not be ready to talk about what they are going through, they can use art to work through their issues and still be observed. Because of these reasons, it is important that art education not be presented through the lens of heteronormativity. Both Cosier and Sanders strive to help these future educators consider how they are responsible for shaping their students' views on society. This includes views about gender and sexuality (Cosier & Sanders, 2007).

Another topic that would benefit pre-service teachers is inclusion of non-nuclear families. It is common to assume that every student will have a mom and dad however a variety of situations might create a different family structure. Students may live with extended family members, may come from two households, may be raised by a single parent, or may have LGBTQ parents. No matter what the situation is, non-nuclear families are more common than we might believe. By addressing these family structures during pre-service education, we can help set teachers up for success with their students' families (Shea, 1982). Even a simple step such as learning to address notes to "Parent or Guardian" rather than "Mom and Dad" is one step closer to inclusion.

Another approach in pre-service teacher's education is reflection in their own identities. Often when discussing LGBTQ identity, a common belief is that the knowledge of ones' sexuality or gender doesn't set in until puberty (Curran, Chiarolli, & Pallotta-Chiarolli. 2009). This belief is part of the reason why it is hard to find resources for incorporating LGBTQ inclusivity into elementary schools. Asking teachers to look into their own experiences and their own narratives may help them understand that puberty isn't the true marker we believe it to be. Examining questions such as when do you recall having your first crush may help teachers look into when, or if, their feelings developed. The question, when did you first know your gender will help them realize just how young gender identity sets into our experiences. They can also examine the messages they received about gender from a young age. Doing reflection work like this allows teachers the personal connection needed for the lesson to sink in (Curran et al, 2009).

Queering Curriculum

Adding queer theory into our lesson plans can be a tricky practice to navigate. While it is seemingly easier to add queer theory into subjects such as history or literature, creative minds can find ways to add lessons into any subject. The knowledge can be direct to students through content, or indirect through inclusive practices. Educators can incorporate LGBTQ inclusion into all of their lessons.

Math is a seemingly unbiased subject, but even numbers can have significance making an inclusive classroom (Rands, 2009). An easy and visual way of incorporating LGBTQ identities is through the use of

symbols and flags. Showing the gay pride flag and asking what fraction of the flag is blue will allow students the exposure to the material and make it a normalized part of their lives. The same could be done for any of the other pride flags or other LGBTQ symbols, such as the pink triangle. To incorporate math into the conversation about exclusion of LGBTQ identities, students could be asked to go to the library and find the ratio of books with LGBTQ characters to the amount of books overall. This could lead into conversations about other marginalized identities and their struggles with representation as well (Rands, 2009).

Physical Education is another subject that can choose a gender inclusive lens. As PE is a male dominated field, creating a gender inclusive space means breaking down strict gender roles (Larsson, Quennerstedt, & Öhman, 2014). When teaching a dance curriculum, it is important to break free from binary gendered thinking and teach boy and girl parts. Instead parts should be taught as lead and follow if it is pair based. Teaching group based folk dances can also break the binary of traditional dancing curriculum, and could allow an opportunity to incorporate multicultural dancing as well (Larsson et al, 2014).

Part of the responsibility of public education is to teach students what it means to be a citizen of the United States. Our country was founded on the belief that the government has the responsibility to educate its members in a public setting. As part of this responsibility, we teach the laws and documents that have helped shape our society. It is common to teach about the 19th amendment or the civil right act because these were fights against discrimination that happened decades in the past. What isn't so commonplace is to teach about laws and propositions that are going on currently that deal with social justice and civil rights (Rhoads & Calderone, 2007). Students deserve the opportunity to begin to understand how our current political situations are going to affect their lives. Teaching some of the LGBTQ civil rights milestones, especially the ones that are currently happening can allow students the context for our society. However, when teaching these current issues, it is important to make sure not to engage the class into a debate. This could lead to students being targeted for discrimination. Rather teachers could focus on researching the topics and creating historical timelines.

When adding diverse literature to classrooms forgetting to critically read the text is an easy mistake. Unfortunately, many LGBTQ books aren't as inclusive as they should be. Though books about coming out stories are important, far too often those are the only problems LGBTQ characters face in novels (Wickens, 2011). By only presenting books that have homophobia and coming out as the main problems for LGBTQ characters, we enforce the idea that queer characters only face problems because of their identity. When searching for books to use we should try and find a wide variety of storylines, especially ones that include queer characters whose problems encompass other aspects of the human experience (Wickens, 2011).

Response to LGBTQ Based Bullying

Bullying of any nature is detrimental to the development of students. When combined with marginalized identities it becomes a larger social issue on how we handle the dynamic of power and privilege within our schools. LGBTQ identity or perceived identity ranks as the second highest reason for bullying within schools (Harris/GLSEN, 2005). Knowing this information, it is important to think about how we as educators address these issues within our classrooms and schools.

It is commonplace for schools to have anti bullying programs, however only 2/3 of these programs have shown to be effective (Evans & Chapman, 2014). One possible explanation for why the programs aren't having the impact desired is that they don't go into detail surrounding LGBTQ based bullying. This oversight not only allows students to continue to harass others based on LGBTQ identity or perceived identity, but also allows for teacher ignorance when faced with LGBTQ bullying. By incorporating LGBTQ themes into our anti bullying programs, we can make sure that both students and teachers are held responsible for their actions (Evans & Chapman, 2014).

Anti-bullying programs alone may inform students and educators about bullying, but it cannot work without inclusive policies to provide accountability. By specifically addressing LGBTQ identities within nondiscrimination policies, it is made known that a school or district is welcoming and reliable for those who identify within the LGBTQ community. When creating these policies, it is important to include students, staff

and families so that all members of the school community have protection (Mustanski, Birkett, Greene, Hatzenbuehler, & Newcomb 2014).

No matter what actions are taken, bullying will never be fully eradicated from our lives. While we can do everything in our power to reduce the number of incidents that occur, it is just as important to handle any further incidents with poise. One way is to create a dialogue with students when something happens. One gay teacher's classroom was graffitied on multiple occasions with homophobic remarks. Rather than choosing to ignore the issue, the teacher instead decided to bring his students into the conversation. They discussed how hurt they were that their classroom was vandalized by other students and that their teacher was attacked for being himself. Together the classroom decided to celebrate pride week in order to show support for the community and their teacher (Jiménez, 2009). By choosing this restorative path, the students were allowed to express their beliefs and feeling regarding the incident. When faced with bullying or prejudice it is important that we choose not to remain silent and instead engage it as a teachable moment.

Conclusion of Solutions

Creating an LGBTQ inclusive pedagogy as an educator isn't simple work. Some of these solutions aren't things that can be implemented overnight. Others such as policy changes would need the support of many people, including those in high positions within districts. However, even the smallest change in our behavior can mean a world of difference. An example of this simplicity is remembering the Q in LGBTQ rather than just LGBT. It seems like one letter wouldn't make much of a difference, however it adds a depth of representation that would otherwise go unnoticed. By choosing to start with simple changes, we can eventually be brave enough to tackle the larger challenges on the road to inclusion.

Action Research

Research Questions

What are elementary teachers currently doing to create LGBTQ inclusive classrooms?

Action Project Significance

Through the research I found ways in which teachers are creating inclusive spaces. I also found some examples of how traditional gender roles are still being implemented. From the information gathered I was able to assess possible solutions to the issue and listen to feedback from teachers about what they think would work in the current climate.

Benefits of Action Project

Through the completion of the research, teachers were able to reflect on their classroom environments and think of ways they could improve their inclusivity. Teachers were also able to reflect on their credential programs and the professional development they have received throughout their career.

Method

Context

I chose to find a school in Salinas to interview teachers at so that I could see what our local community was like in terms of LGBTQ inclusivity. I specifically sought out elementary teachers for the study.

Researcher

As a member of the LGBTQ community I had both insights into the needs of this issue as well as a bias when searching for answers. In high school I came out to a teacher and was told that I was “too young and unexperienced” to understand that portion of my identity. Through this research I hoped to give teachers the resources to make a positive impact and make sure that they have the understanding to accept their students.

Participants

When seeking participants, I made sure to get a variety of teachers in terms of their years of experience and the programs they teach in.

Teacher A has been teaching off and on for 10 years in the classroom. She has also been involved in other educational areas when not teaching directly. She currently teaches in a Dual Immersion Spanish Program.

Teacher B has been teaching for 37 years and is retiring after this year. She is currently in an English classroom, but has had Dual Immersion experience.

Teacher C is in her first year of teaching and is in an English classroom. She is an alumna of the CSUMB Education Program.

Procedure

I conducted an in person interview with each of the participants and recorded the interview so that I could reflect on it at a later time.

Protections

There was little to no risk with involvement in this study. I asked that each participant sign the CSUMB Human Research Consent Form (Appendix A) so they could be protected in participation. I also asked that they each sign the AV consent form (Appendix B) so that the interviews could be recorded for my personal reflection.

Data Collection Tools

During our interview I asked the teachers questions about their classroom decoration, classroom management, curriculum, and their teacher education (Appendix C).

Action Project Solution

Research Results

When discussion classroom decoration each of the teachers' responses were similar. All three teachers didn't pick supplies based off of gender. Teacher C has different colored table groups, so her supplies go off of

those colors. All three teachers make sure to give separate craft options, but don't categorize them by gender. Teacher B gave the example that for a Halloween project she had bats, pumpkins, and witches and that the kids were free to pick what they want. Teacher C said that when making self-portraits of the students, she referred to their options as the long-haired child and the short-haired child. When students tried to ask for the "boy" or "girl" option she would repeat her question or the long-haired option or the short-haired option. When asked about bathroom passes, Teacher B was the only one to have a separate boys and girls bathroom pass, though she only lets one go at a time.

When discussing management strategies and lining children up, Teacher A stated that she has to have specific children in the front of the line due to behavioral issues, but not based on gender. Teacher B says she randomly selects tables to be excused so they are always mixed up in line. When calling attention to students, Teacher A stated that she makes a conscious effort to use gender neutral terms such as *clase* or *estudiantes*. Teacher C stated that she often uses the term *guys* with her students, and is trying to break the habit.

When discussing curriculum, only Teacher C had read books that featured LGBTQ characters. All three teachers have used books that feature non-nuclear families, and Teacher C commented that one of the readers from their curriculum set featured a child being raised by their grandparents.

Teacher A and Teacher B stated that they didn't talk about LGBTQ student needs in their undergraduate or credentialing programs. Both were quick to state that it has been a long time since they were in school however, and hoped that today's programs feature some of these conversations. Teacher C stated that she experienced some content on LGBTQ student issues during her undergraduate experience. However, she stated that her credentialing program barely talked about inclusivity beyond the Latino community. She said that while it was a good addition for the community here, it didn't cover the full spectrum of minority identities and may not be applicable if she chose to move elsewhere.

Through additional conversation, each teacher made some insightful comments. Teacher A commented that because she teaches in Spanish, it is a naturally gendered language. The strict gender binary is harder to

break down when even inanimate objects are assigned roles. Teacher B commented that a majority of the parents at her school are religious, and that you need to tread carefully around them.

Solution Options

Through the conversations with these teachers, and my own research, I've identified three different solutions to address the issue of LGBTQ inclusivity. The first is adding inclusion sensitivity into pre-service teacher credential programs. The second is requiring mandatory safe zone trainings for teachers as part of their professional development. The third is creating a resource guide to educate teachers on books that teachers could use in their classrooms to open discussion of LGBTQ topics.

The first option would be the most beneficial in teaching these strategies to our educators before they set foot into the classroom. By addressing these issues early, universities would be creating future teachers that have inclusivity in mind as they navigate each aspect of their career. As stated in earlier research teachers should be asked to unpack their own identities so that they can connect their lived experiences to the needs of their future students. A limitation to this is that these students aren't yet in classrooms and may not have the experiences with youth to connect these ideals to. This would also be a large feat in either changing current university curriculums, or creating a new class entirely. While it would be a highly effective solution, it requires large amounts of prep work before it could be implemented fully.

The second option targets teachers after they have already been established in their careers through professional development. Safe Zone trainings are usually a day long class where the participants explore the needs of LGBTQ students and discuss different strategies in creating that inclusive space. This would be beneficial to current teachers as they would have classroom experience to connect the teaching to. A limitation to Safe Zone trainings is that majority of the current trainings are geared towards high school and college level educators. There are little resources in Safe Zone materials geared towards elementary schools and the unique landscape they provide. Another limitation is that Safe Zone trainings require special trainers to work with the teachers. If the area doesn't have any of these trainers nearby, they might not be accessible.

The third option is to create a resource guide for teachers filled with book suggestions, state standards, and teachable moment tips so they could learn how to implement some LGBTQ curriculum into the classroom. The book suggestions would feature a small description of the story as well as the AR listing for grade level. Also featured would be Spanish or Bilingual books since there is a large portion of Dual Immersion programs in the county. Features would also include teachable moment tips to help teachers navigate moments of LGBTQ based bullying or student questions. While this would be a resourceful guide, it wouldn't have a broad outreach and would be a lesser impact in the teaching community.

Between the three options, the resource guide is the most accessible for me currently. Though the impact won't go far it will be something that will benefit not only current teachers, but family members who might be searching for LGBTQ inclusive books as well. While the other two options are both beneficial, they require many years of work and power within educational departments. The resource guide however requires research and the ability to find proper resources to compile together.

Action Project Solution Description

Many different components were compiled to create the Resource Guide (Appendix D). The main focus I wanted to compile was the book recommendations. I believe that this is one of the more important parts, because it shows the students that LGBTQ are real and exist in literature.

In order to create the book list, I searched for books featuring LGBTQ characters that were at the elementary reading level. I also searched for books that challenged gender roles. For both categories I looked into the book descriptions and looked for key phrases that might indicate the book wouldn't be inclusive. One example is books featuring trans* characters that misgender the characters. This would look like "a boy who believes he is a girl" when the proper pronoun use would be "a girl who was born as a boy". The first doesn't respect the gender identity of the character. It is also important to look into books with LGBTQ characters and make sure that the characters have traits beyond their LGBTQ identity to create a holistic character.

There are also a few books for teachers to read that will help give them insight into these topics. One that is specifically of interest is *One in Ten Teachers in the New Millennium*. This book is a compilation of 20 LGBTQ teachers and their experiences being queer in the classroom. This can help teachers some knowledge about how to be more accepting towards their peers as well.

I searched through the California Social Studies standards and found standards that taught about being accepting of other's differences, building community, and showcasing heroes that have created lasting impact. In all of these standards, teachers can address how LGBTQ people deserve respect and acceptance. They can also talk about the LGBTQ people who have made a difference in history.

Conclusion

Through the research conducted for my literature reviews and my own personal research interviewing local teachers in the community, the most profound truth I found was how credential programs fail to prepare their teaching candidates with inclusion strategies. Though the biggest priority of schools is that children learn the basics of education, that shouldn't be the sole focus in our credential programs. Creating these inclusive spaces where children feel safe allow them to focus more on schoolwork than the fear of being harassed based on their identity.

Though I plan on going into higher education rather than elementary schools, I believe that any person who interacts with students has the potential to be an educator. My person motivation in this pursuit of education is "Be the person you needed when you were younger." I needed educators who believed in my search for personal identity, I needed educators that brought LGBTQ representation into classrooms so that I could begin the journey of seeing myself. While I found some of those educators in the university setting, I needed them when I was much younger. It is my hope that I become that person for the younger generations I interact with. And it is my hope that teachers I have the opportunity to share my knowledge with continue on this path of inclusion.

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Appendix A



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
Monterey Bay

100 Campus Center
Seaside, CA 93955-8001

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: Elementary Teaching Strategies for LGBTQ Inclusion

We would like you to participate in a research study conducted by Nicole Cox, an undergraduate student to be used for her Capstone Project at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB).

The purpose of this research is to determine what strategies and classroom management skills current elementary teachers are using that effect LGBTQ inclusion.

You were selected as a participant in this study because of your current status as an elementary school teacher.

The benefits of participating in this project include providing helpful information for the researcher to create a resource guide to help teachers provide more inclusive environments around LGBTQ topics.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to complete a short interview of around 20 minutes discussing your teaching methods and credential program experience.

There is little to no risk to the participants in this study. The participants have the right to decline any individual questions and can at any time decline participation in this study.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study that can reveal your identity will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your written or witnessed verbal permission or as required by law. Pseudonyms will be created to identify teachers within the study, and to protect their anonymity.

With the participants consent the researcher will audio record the interview to review at a later time. The audio recordings will not be shared and will be deleted upon completion of the study.

Taking part in this project is entirely up to you. You can choose whether or not to be in the study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

If you want to know more about this research project or have questions or concerns, please contact me at ncox@csumb.edu. Instructor contact information Dr. Deedee Perez-Granados (831) 582-4322 dperez-granados@csumb.edu

The project has been reviewed and accepted by the Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) California State University Monterey Bay's review board for research involving humans as subjects. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

If you have questions about CSUMB's guidelines and policies for human subject research, they're posted online at: <http://spo.csumb.edu/guidelines>. To speak with someone about human subjects, please contact the CPHS Chair, Dr. Chip Lenno, at (831) 582-4700, clenno@csumb.edu, or in person at CSU Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Media Learning Center (Building 18) , Seaside CA 93955.

You will get a copy of this consent form. Thank you for considering participation.

Sincerely,
Nicole Cox, Undergraduate Student

Consent Statement

I understand the procedures described. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I freely agree to participate in this study. I know what I will have to do and that I can stop at any time.

I have been given a copy of this Consent Form.

Signature

Date

Signature of Researcher

In my judgment, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix B



100 Campus Center
Seaside, CA 93955-8001

**AUDIO/VIDEO SUPPLEMENTARY CONSENT FOR
HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

PROJECT TITLE: Elementary Teaching Strategies for LGBTQ Inclusion

As part of this project, I will be making audiotape recordings of you during the research. Please indicate what uses of these tapes you are willing to permit by putting your initials next to the uses you agree to and sign the form at the end.

This choice is completely up to you. I will only use the tapes in ways you agree. In any use of the tapes, you will not be identified by name.

At the end of the study the tapes will be deleted.

The tapes can be studied by the research team for use in the research project. _____

Consent Statement

I have read the above descriptions and give my consent for the use of the tapes as indicated by my initials above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I freely agree to participate in this study. I know that I can stop taping at any time.

I have been given a copy of this Consent Form.

Signature

Date

Signature of Researcher

In my judgment, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

Signature of Researcher

Date

Appendix C

Interview Questions

- Classroom Decoration
- When answering these questions please think about your specific classroom (not your school overall) and any arts and crafts projects your students have created.
 - Do you have a separate bathroom pass for the boys' restroom and the girls' restroom?
 - Yes or No
 - When doing crafts with students, do you create separate options for different genders? If so please describe an example, if not please explain why not.
 - When picking supplies for students, do you chose separate colors for different genders? If so please describe an example, if not please explain why not.
- Classroom Management
- When answering these questions, please think about how you interact with your students and how you arrange them into groups.
 - When asking students to form lines do you separated them into a boys line and a girls line, or done a pattern such as boy, girl, boy, girl? Please explain.
 - When calling attention to your students, do you use terms such as “guys”, “boys and girls”, “ladies and gentlemen”, or any additional gendered terms? Please explain.
- Curriculum
- When answering these questions please think about the lesson plans you have delivered to your students.

- Do you read any books that feature LGBTQ characters to your class? Please describe what books you use.
- Do you ever teach lessons about non-nuclear families? If yes, please describe.
- Teacher Education
- When answering these questions please think about your education in becoming a teacher and any professional development you've experienced.
 - During your undergraduate experience did any of your classes discuss the needs of LGBTQ students? Please describe your experience.
 - During your credential program, did any of your classes discuss the needs of LGBTQ students? Please describe your experience.
 - Have you had any professional development that discussed the needs of LGBTQ students? Please describe your experience.
 - How many years have you been teaching?

Appendix D

Elementary Teaching Strategies for LGBTQ Inclusion
Resource Guide

Compiled by:

Nicole Malibu Cox
California State University Monterey Bay

How to Look for Inclusive Books

When searching for books to use in the classroom it is important to make sure you are looking into the book's content and making sure it is inclusive. Here are some things to consider.

Pronoun Use

- If looking for a book that has a trans* character, does it correctly respect the gender identity of the character?
 - Good example
 - When people look at George, they think they see a boy. But she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl. George really wants to play Charlotte in Charlotte's Web. Will she be able to?
 - The main character identifies as a girl and the author uses the pronoun she
 - Bad example
 - Grayson has been holding onto a secret for what seems like forever: he is a girl on the inside. Will new strength from an unexpected friendship and a caring teacher's wisdom be enough to help Grayson?
 - The main character identifies as a girl but the author uses the pronoun he
 - Don't rely on online descriptions alone. Different sites will write different book descriptions, some respectful and some not. Try to find the actual book if possible to see what the author uses.

Coming Out Stories

- Often when searching for books featuring LGBTQ characters, many stories are about their process of coming out.
- While this may help students in the search for their own identity, it is important to have a wide variety of stories so that students can see LGBTQ characters as holistic people.

Non-Nuclear Families

- Remember that there are a wide variety of non-nuclear families beyond just LGBTQ parents.
- Many of our students come from these diverse families
 - Divorced or unmarried parents
 - Single parents
 - Living with extended family members
 - LGBTQ parents
- One excellent series is the "My Family" books written by Claudia Harrington. The multiple books feature Lenny as he visits the homes of his classmates.
 - My Two Homes
 - My Mom and Dad (Features an interracial couple)
 - My Military Mom
 - My Grandparents

- My Two Dads
- My Two Moms

Books Featuring Same Sex Couples

My Two Moms

Harrington, Claudia

AR Quiz No. 175715 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.1 - AR Pts: 0.5

When classmate Lenny visits Elsie's home, he discovers she has two moms.

My Two Dads

Harrington, Claudia

AR Quiz No. 175713 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.5 - AR Pts: 0.5

When classmate Lenny visits Jazz's home, he discovers she has two dads.

Uncle Bobby's Wedding

Brannen, Sarah S.

AR Quiz No. 121740 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.7 - AR Pts: 0.5

Chloe is jealous when her favorite uncle announces that he will be getting married, but as she gets to know Jamie better and becomes involved in planning the wedding, she discovers that she will always be special to Uncle Bobby.

Who's in My Family? All About Our Families

Harris, Robie H.

AR Quiz No. 153767 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.8 - AR Pts: 0.5

Nellie and Gus discuss all kinds of families during a day at the zoo and dinner at home.

King & King

Haan, Linda de

AR Quiz No. 58275 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.9 - AR Pts: 0.5

When the queen insists that the prince get married and take over as king, the search for a suitable mate does not go well until one of the princesses presents her brother.

And Tango Makes Three

Richardson, Justin

AR Quiz No. 87170 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.5 - AR Pts: 0.5

At New York City's Central Park Zoo, two male penguins are trying to start a family by taking turns sitting on an egg that Mr. Gramzay gave them. The coauthor is Peter Parnell.

Families

Kuklin, Susan

AR Quiz No. 104036 EN Nonfiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.6 - AR Pts: 1.0

This book presents brief interviews with children from fifteen diverse American families including large, small, mixed-race, immigrant, gay and lesbian, divorced and single-parent reflecting the diversity of each family.

Donovan's Big Day

Newman, Lesléa

AR Quiz No. 143853 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.4 - AR Pts: 0.5

From the moment Donovan wakes in the morning, he painstakingly prepares for his special role in the wedding ceremony of his two mothers.

The Misadventures of the Family Fletcher

Levy, Dana Alison

AR Quiz No. 167385 EN Fiction

IL: MG - BL: 4.8 - AR Pts: 8.0

This story relates the adventures of a family with two fathers, four adopted boys, and a variety of pets as they make their way through a school year, kindergarten through sixth grade, and deal with a grumpy new neighbor.
Book #1

Books that Challenge Gender Roles**Red: A Crayon's Story**

Hall, Michael

AR Quiz No. 171697 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 1.6 - AR Pts: 0.5

Red's factory-applied label clearly says that he is red, but despite the best efforts of his teacher, fellow crayons, and family members, he cannot seem to do anything right until a new friend offers a fresh perspective.

Looking Like Me

Myers, Walter Dean

AR Quiz No. 134434 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.6 - AR Pts: 0.5

Jeremy sets out to discover all the different "people" that make him who he is, including brother, son, writer, and runner.

The Knight and the Dragon

De Paola, Tomie

AR Quiz No. 172375 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.7 - AR Pts: 0.5

A knight who has never fought a dragon and an equally inexperienced dragon prepare to meet each other in battle.

Allie's Basketball Dream

Barber, Barbara E.

AR Quiz No. 26754 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 2.8 - AR Pts: 0.5

Determined in her effort to play basketball, a young African-American girl gives it one more shot with the help of a special friend.

Pinky and Rex

Howe, James

AR Quiz No. 20656 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.1 - AR Pts: 0.5

Rex and her best friend Pinky, find their visit to the museum and its gift shop complicated by Pinky's little sister.

I Am Jazz

Herthel, Jessica

AR Quiz No. 169695 EN Nonfiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.3 - AR Pts: 0.5

Based on Jazz's real-life experiences, this is a story of a transgender child who was born a boy but felt like a girl. The coauthor is Jazz Jennings.

Kate and the Beanstalk

Osborne, Mary Pope

AR Quiz No. 44754 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.6 - AR Pts: 0.5

A girl climbs to the top of a giant beanstalk, where she uses her quick wits to outsmart a giant and make her and her mother's fortune.

Different Dragons

Little, Jean

AR Quiz No. 163 EN Fiction

IL: MG - BL: 3.7 - AR Pts: 3.0

Timid Ben learns how to deal with his fears when he spends the weekend with Aunt Rose and meets Gully the big Labrador.

The Sissy Duckling

Fierstein, Harvey

AR Quiz No. 59571 EN Fiction IL: LG - BL: 3.7 - AR Pts: 0.5

Elmer, the duck, is teased because he is different, but he proves himself by not only surviving the winter, but also saving his papa.

The Seven Chinese Sisters

Tucker, Kathy

AR Quiz No. 69675 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.0 - AR Pts: 0.5

When a dragon snatches the youngest of seven talented Chinese sisters, the other six come to her rescue.

The Bat Boy & His Violin

Curtis, Gavin

AR Quiz No. 20672 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.1 - AR Pts: 0.5

Reginald is more interested in practicing his violin than in his father's job managing the worst team in the Negro Leagues, but when Papa makes him the bat boy and his music begins to lead the team to victory, Papa realizes the value of his son's passion.

Brothers of the Knight

Allen, Debbie

AR Quiz No. 43483 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.5 - AR Pts: 0.5

In this contemporary retelling of a fairy tale, a Reverend in Harlem endeavors to discover why the shoes of his twelve sons are worn to pieces every morning.

Grace for President

DiPucchio, Kelly

AR Quiz No. 121418 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.6 - AR Pts: 0.5

Grace decides to run in her school's mock election, where she learns about the American electoral system and sets out to be the best person for the job, even though her opponent, Thomas, seems to be winning all the boys' votes.

It's O.K. to Be Different

Teal, Joyce Willard

AR Quiz No. 25956 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.7 - AR Pts: 1.0

Zebie learns to be happy that he is not the same as everyone else and that differences make us all special.

Don't Kiss the Frog! Princess Stories with Attitude

Waters, Fiona

AR Quiz No. 129954 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 4.9 - AR Pts: 1.0

This book is a collection of six stories about princesses who are anything but ordinary princesses.

Bilingual or Spanish Edition Books

Drum, Chavi, Drum!;/Toca, Chavi, Toca!

Dole, Mayra L.

AR Quiz No. 78066 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.1 - AR Pts: 0.5

AR Quiz Types: RP

Chavi knows she is a good musician and looks for a way to prove it.

Antonio's Card/La tarjeta de Antonio,

González, Rigoberto

AR Quiz No. 87166 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.2 - AR Pts: 0.5

AR Quiz Types: RP

With Mother's Day coming, Antonio finds he has to decide what is important to him when his classmates make fun of the unusual appearance of his mother's partner, Leslie.

The Story of Ferdinand/ El Cuento de Ferdinando.

Leaf, Munro

AR Quiz No. 5493 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.7 - AR Pts: 0.5

AR Quiz Types: RP, RV, VP

Ferdinand is a little bull who would rather just sit and smell the flowers than fight.

The Paper Bag Princess/La Princesa Vestida con una Bolsa de Papel

Munsch, Robert N.

AR Quiz No. 8032 EN Fiction

IL: LG - BL: 3.8 - AR Pts: 0.5

AR Quiz Types: RP, RV, VP

Elizabeth, a princess, outwits a dragon to rescue Ronald, the prince she intends to marry. But when she discovers that Ronald, who looks like a prince and acts like a bum, she decides not to marry him after all.

Books for Teachers

Raising My Rainbow: Adventures in Raising a Fabulous, Gender Creative Son.

Lori Duron.

A frank, heartfelt, and brutally funny account of a family's adventures of distress and happiness raising a gender-creative son. Whereas her older son, Chase, is a Lego-loving, sports-playing boy's boy, her younger son, C.J., would much rather twirl around in a pink sparkly tutu

One Teacher in Ten in the New Millennium

Compiled by Kevin Jennings

Twenty completely new stories of negotiating the triumphs and challenges of being an LGBTQ educator in the twenty-first century

Supporting Transgender and Gender Creative Youth: Schools, Families, and Communities in Action.

Elizabeth Meyer and Annie Pullen

Specifically addresses issues and challenges in education, social work, medicine, and counseling as well as recommendations that are relevant for parents, families, practitioners, and educators.

California Social Studies State Standards

Here are some state standards that talks about respecting others, creating a diverse community, and talking about heroes that created a difference. These are some of the stepping stones for bringing LGBTQ topics into classrooms.

1.1 Students describe the rights and individual responsibilities of citizenship.

2. Understand the elements of fair play and good sportsmanship, respect for the rights and opinions of others, and respect for rules by which we live, including the meaning of the “Golden Rule.”

1.5 Students describe the human characteristics of familiar places and the varied backgrounds of American citizens and residents in those places.

1. Recognize the ways in which they are all part of the same community, sharing principles, goals, and traditions despite their varied ancestry; the forms of diversity in their school and community; and the benefits and challenges of a diverse population.

2.5 Students understand the importance of individual action and character and explain how heroes from long ago and the recent past have made a difference in others’ lives (e.g., from biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Louis Pasteur, Sitting Bull, George Washington Carver, Marie Curie, Albert Einstein, Golda Meir, Jackie Robinson, Sally Ride).