Supporting transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, and Two Spirit

(TGNBGN2S) students in the classroom

Victor Clayton

A portfolio submitted to the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay,

Ontario

Supervisor: Dr. Jenny Roth

Committee Member: Dr. Gerald Walton

March 25, 2025

Gratitude

I am indebted to the hours of work, support, and guidance Dr. Jenny Roth has given me as my supervisor and Dr. Gerald Walton has given me as my Committee Member. My dream could not have been achieved without their help. I am further indebted to all the support I received from the Pride and Gender Equity Centre at Lakehead University, where I served as the Transgender Inclusion Coordinator while researching and conducting surveys for my module. From the support of the queer community to Gwen's Closet, which provided me with free gender-affirming clothing, I am indebted to those who ensured I kept my sanity.

I wish to give thanks to all those who partook in the survey and gave me a basis for my research. The module would not be complete without your insights.

I am further grateful to those whose shoulders I stand on. Many 2SLGBTQIA+ rights have been fought for and won in Canada, but the fight is not over. I am indebted to queer, transgender, and Two Spirit writers, poets, artists, activists, fights, lovers, and politicians who fought for our rights and preserved our culture and education, and laypeople who simply lived their lives so that I may live mine today.

Lastly, I give gratitude to the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis who kept the land on which I live, work, play, and flourish in health. As a treaty person by virtue of being born on this land, I am indebted to the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis who continue to fight for the land I live on. I give gratitude to Two Spirit First Nations, Inuit, and Métis who have done their part in keeping the land safe. May the treaties and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis self-determination be respected.

Introduction

The goal of my research and Portfolio was to create an online training module for teachers that will better educate them on how to support TGNBGN2S students in their classrooms. Studies show that transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, and two-spirit (TGNBGN2S) students face barriers specific to their gender identities in schools. TGNBGN2S is an acronym I coined, which is meant to draw attention to non-cisgender gender minorities. TGNBGN2S differs from the common Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual/aromantic, etc. (2SLGBTQIA+) acronym in that TGNBGN2S focuses on gender specifically and not sexuality. The TGNBGN2S community is a subset of the marginalised orientations, gender alignments, and intersex (MOGAI) community. MOGAI will be used in place of the traditional 2SLGBTQIA+ acronym in order to be more inclusive and encompass the diversity in the community, except for when the discussion is gender-focused, then TGNBGN2S will be used. 2SLGBTQIA+, or other variations of the acronym, may also be used if a referenced document is using that acronym specifically. MOGAI is also used in the module and is added to the definitions section, with seven other key definitions centred around the community. A longer document defining several other definitions is also provided in the module should teachers wish to explore further. MOGAI was a term I discovered in online queer spaces, specifically on Tumblr, when I was younger, and have since fallen in love with. At various points, my portfolio will address gender at times, thus referring to the TGNBGN2S community, and sexuality *and* gender at other times, thus referring to the MOGAI community.

An Ontario study of 409 transgender individuals found that 19 avoided school due to their transgender appearance (Scheim, Bauer, & Pyne, 2014). While Scheim, Bauer, and Pyne's article is a decade old, TGNBGN2S youth are still struggling in schools. YouthLine (2020), an Ontario-wide 2SLGBTQ+ peer-support line, surveyed transgender youth in

Canada and found that 40% say their mental health needs are not met and overall report a

4.5/10 rating in regards to their sense of connection to the 2SLBTQ+ community. Austin et

al. (2022) surveyed transgender youth aged 14-18 in the US and Canada and found that the

transgender youth surveyed attempted suicide half as much when their school affirmed their

gender identity. Halving the suicide attempt rate is significant for a population with a

reported suicide rate as high as one-fifth (The Trevor Project, 2022). Therefore, a module to

train teachers how to provide a school that affirms gender identity is critical to mitigate

TGNBGN2S students' suicidal ideation, mental health barriers to education, and negative

sense of self-worth. Taylor et al. (2016) found that teachers in Ontario schools struggle to

give the support TGNBGN2S students need due to a lack of training. Their study found that

two-thirds of teachers felt their Bachelor of Education program did not prepare them to

support TGNBGN2S students, and 33.4% of 3400 surveyed Canadian teachers from all

provinces and territories reported they do not teach 2SLGBTQIA+ content due to a lack of

training and resources (Campbell, Peter, & Taylor, 2021). Furthermore, 25% of education

workers surveyed in Ontario felt they lacked support from administration to support

transgender students (Martino, Omercajic, & Kassen, 2022). Because of these and other

issues, LGBT YouthLine (n.d.) has called for mandatory teacher training in LGBT youth

support. With mandatory training may come individuals who have no interest of partaking in

the training but are being forced to. In *Teaching 'Trump Feminists'*, Josephson (2018) details

how some students in their first-year gender studies courses struggled to engaged with the

material due to being conservative, often appropriating the terminology of the marginalized

to claim they were experiencing oppression in the classroom. Josephson (2018), while

suggesting working through what being unsafe truly means for marginalized groups with the

students, struggles to comes to a satisfactory answer on how to teach so-called Trump

feminists. How to provide better training for pre- and in-service teachers will be discussed further in my portfolio.

The module I created is online to ensure wide accessibility, and to provide teachers the opportunity to revisit it at any time. The module is made with Mindsmith and has the general format of that in Figure 1. The module begins with thanking the educators for taking the module, explaining why TGNBGN2S-specific training matters, some important definitions for the module with a note on language, information on the gender spectrum, and what to avoid in using the language around the TGNBGN2S community. The first quiz follows, which allows participants to guess statistics around the TGNBGN2S youth community. Figure 2 shows an answer to the first question of the quiz with the answer shown for when the question is correct. After the quiz, Lakehead District School Board's *Policy 8000: Sexual Orientations and Gender Identity* is detailed. Discussions on cisgender privilege; transmisogyny, or the unique way transphobia and misogyny impact transgender women and transfeminine individuals; and transmedicalism, or the implication that all transgender people will undergo a medical transition; and their impacts follow. Another quiz then follows on cisgender privilege, transmisogyny, and transmedicalism. The last section involves a list of calls to action given by researchers; a discussion on SWOT tests, which are detailed by Potvin (2017) and will be discussed further in the literature review; a discussion on how to support TGNBGN2S students of colour; and a discussion on how to support Two Spirit students. Then, a section for resources is given, broken into sections: a list of further reading on supporting TGNBGN2S students of colour, TGNBGN2S history resources, and resources for supporting religions TGNBGN2S students. The last part of the section focuses on how to support TGNBGN2S students in an unsupportive household, information on when to seek a counsellor for a TGNBGN2S student, a discussion on how to handle the parental rights movement, and a discussion on how to handle bigotry. There is a final quiz on the last

overarching section, involving all topics since the previous quiz. The final section is a list of resources to be used in a classroom broken up by grade, a list of Gender Identity Workbooks for students, and additional readings. The final question of the module asks the participant to reflect on one goal to set after completing the module they can undergo to better support TGNBGN2S students. The third last screen thanks the participant for undertaking the training before all the references are given.

Four TGNBGN2S individuals who went through the Ontario public school system in the last four years provided their feedback on what went well, and what could have gone better, in their schooling, through online surveys. The participants were recruited using a poster disseminated on the Lakehead University campus, and through the Unofficial Pride at Lakehead Discord server, an informal Discord server for members of the MOGAI community at Lakehead to join, but not run by Lakehead University. Their feedback is discussed in my Analysis section. Although this small number of survey respondents limits findings, incorporating more than just my own voice was important to the module to ensure a variety of experiences were included. Not every TGNBGN2S student will have or has had the same experience in the Ontario school system. A Two Spirit or transfeminine student may have a very different experience from me, a transmasculine individual, and two transmasculine individuals may have different schooling experiences. As will be discussed in the Analysis section, even the limited selection of four survey results shows we cannot homogenize TGNBGN2S students' experiences. Even this exploratory pilot provided valuable feedback on what the module should include for teachers, such as resources on TGNBGN2S Canadian history and ways to create student groups that do not involve separating the students based on gender, and illustrated the diversity of TGNBGN2S experiences in school.

Figure 1. *The What To Avoid slide of the module, showing the general layout of the module.*

What To Avoid

The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) (2024) recommends:

- Avoiding terms such as "born a man/woman", "biologically male/female", and "genetically male/female".

- Remembering that transgender is an adjective and not a noun or a verb, so avoid saying "a transgender", "those transgenders", or "a transgendered". These do not stand alone as nouns; however, they may appear as adjectives, i.e.: a transgendered person.

- Avoiding terms such as "preferred pronouns" and "preferred name", as the term *preferred* implies they are somehow less required than the pronouns and names used by cisgender individuals.

↑ ↓

Figure 2. *An example of a question and answer for the quizzes in the module.*

What is the suicide rate for transgender youth?

Select one

1. 1/10
2. 1/5
3. 1/3
4. 2/5

▷ Check

Researcher Positionality

Laughter is a form of resistance, survival, a way of mustering forces. Shouting, too.
When you belong to an oppressed group, you have to learn how to laugh in the face of
the enemy, says Ringgold. The problem is things aren't so clear anymore. You end up
not knowing anymore who's the oppressor and who's the oppressed; or rather, it's

difficult to see yourself as both the oppressor and the one who is oppressed. I guess in

that case you have to laugh at yourself. (Preciado, 2013, pp. 136-135)

Paul Preciado is a Spanish transgender theorist whose writings I find much joy in

reading. Stating and acknowledging my positionality acknowledges the social power which

guides my work and the catalyst of my data production (Bilgen, Nasir, & Schöneberg, 2021).

I am a White Treaty Land Inhabitant[1] who was born in Canada to Canadian-born parents. My

mother's side has resided in what is now called Ottawa for generations, and that is where I

was born, the land which the Algonquin call home. My father's side has resided in what is

now called Alberta; my father was born in what is now called Calgary, in Treaty Seven

Territory, which is home to several nations, including the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai

(Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Tsuut'ina (Sarcee), and the Stoney-Nakoda (University of Calgary,

2021), although his family moved there from Saskatchewan. My earliest ancestors outside of

Canada came from Crimea.

Currently, I am privileged to work, study, and live on the lands of the Fort William

First Nations, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty. I am indebted to the original

caretakers of the land, the Ojibwe, along with all the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis who have

taken care of the land I work and live on. Centring ourselves on the land has been a part of

Indigenous traditions in Canada prior to contact. However, non-Indigenous Canadians have

been called to do so through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Shahzad,

2017). Centring the land from an Indigenous point-of-view is an act of reconciliation that

states that Indigenous governance exists, is ongoing, and extends into the future (Shahzad,

2017). Decolonization is argued by Ashburn (2019) to be a part of TGNBGN2S-inclusion in

schools, especially for Two Spirit youth, as Canada's colonial history instilled the gender

---

[1] Centering ourselves as Treaty Land Inhabitants reminds us that everything we do is from the treaties, a form of affirming Indigenous governance. For more on the term Treaty Land Inhabitant, see Cuthard (2021).

binary and patriarchy on the Indigenous peoples in Canada. As more frequent gender and race-based harassment leads to higher rates of depression (Zongrone et al., 2022), Canada's colonial history must be challenged through the affirmation of Indigenous self-governance.

Because of my personal location and own experiences, I support transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, and Two Spirit liberation. All of my work has been with the intention of care. Care is discussed extensively and described as lacking in teacher training education by Owis (2022), who conducted interviews during July 2021 and found that queer teachers of colour worked within the limitation of care as defined by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), which defines care in a very specific and Eurocentric way. Threats of the blue pages, pages in a magazine which lists teachers who breach trust and break the OCT's guidelines, impede the ability of teachers to, for example, give a crying student a hug when deemed necessary (Owis, 2022). My module could give teachers the confidence and ability to care for their TGNBGN2S students. However, the limitations set forth by the OCT must be acknowledged. My work is not petitioning the OCT to change; however, my module will help ensure students taught under the current OCT guidelines (as of 2025) be supported to the best of teachers' abilities.

My Experience in an Ontario Public School

During my time in the education system, I was identifying as a cisgender girl before coming out as gender-fluid in the ninth grade, a label I still hold. Although the fluidity of my gender often made me confused, I would settle for other labels, such as a transgender man or bigender, at different points during my schooling. Many events that shaped my experience show confusion in the education system due to my gender, confusion which shows up constantly through the Literature Review that follows. For example, in Grade 10, there was an assembly at my school on sexual assault, which all female students had to attend. Teachers were unsure whether I should attend or not. Eventually, the teachers agreed I should attend,

and I did, but I found myself wondering why any student was being excluded from an assembly on sexual assault on the basis of their gender. After all, while some demographics are at a higher risk of sexual assault, is everyone not in danger of being sexually assaulted? Is limiting sexual assault not the duty of everyone? Similarly, asking my teacher in Grade 11 if I could change my gender in the school system was met with me ending up in a therapy-like guidance counsellor appointment, rather than being pointed towards the correct administrative form. Martino, Omercajic, and Kassen (2022) found that 28% of Ontario education workers were unaware of their Board's policy on transgender students and 25% felt a lack of support in policy implementation, putting my experiences in a broader, systemic context. Many teachers and education workers are unaware of how to support TGNBGN2S students.

I saw the struggles many transgender students faced and experienced them first-hand. I also saw my peers in the Bachelor of Education program that I took struggling with how to support transgender students, feeling as though our classes only focused on how hard being transgender is, rather than teaching supportive strategies and the courage and resistance TGNBGN2S students demonstrate by simply existing. Considering Miller (2016) found that pre-service teachers feel more confident supporting TGNBGN2S students, my experience with my peers in the Bachelor of Education raises concerns about in-service teachers. Teachers on my placements expressed to me they felt ill-prepared to discuss these topics in their classrooms, a topic devoted extensively to in my Literature Review. My own experience with my teachers as a transgender student in Ontario seemed to be like those of my teaching peers' struggles to support transgender students, which led me to make a training module to better prepare teachers to support transgender students.

Literature Review

In this literature review, I explore the scholarship on TGNBGN2S-focused training for teachers. 151 articles, books, chapters of books, and media were analysed for my literature review. The articles were found using resources such as the Lakehead University library's online portal, Omni, along with Google Scholar and the in-person libraries, the Chancellor Paterson Library and the Education Library. Notes were taken via Google Sheets based mostly around the data found in the literature and main points the literature was making. The literature was then all compared for similar themes and commonalities between them. I will discuss the existence of surveillance of TGNBGN2S students and the role of hegemony through the enforcement of cisheteronormativity in schools, along with a review of the findings of TGNBGN2S youths' mental health, an analysis of school policies, the role of media, and examples of teacher discussion in regards to TGNBGN2S topics with students. I will explore the compounding effects and intersection of racialized gender minorities that live in Western, cisheteronormative society. Lastly, I will detail calls to action from educators and researchers, as well as resources for the module. These topics show how some TGNBGN2S students experience their lives in the schools, and what could change to help support them; some of the resources currently available to teachers; and the importance of teacher training to support TGNBGN2S kids in school.

My analysis takes place within the context of the political turmoil that Donald Trump taking office for the second time in the United States has caused, especially around what being a TGNBGN2S American now means, and how President Trump's policies are adversely influencing Canadians, specifically TGNBGN2S Canadians. President Trump has defined gender as immutable and at conception, a definition which leaves out intersex identities and ignores that sexual differences do not take place until the first six weeks after conception (Alfonseca, 2025), to say nothing of how Trump's definition erases TGNBGN2S

identities. Trump has also ordered the removal of references to TGNBGN2S and queer American history, including from the Stonewall National Monument's webpage (Burke, 2025). Canadian TGNBGN2S-supporting organizations, such as Celeste (2025), have recommended TGNBGN2S Canadians avoid all non-essential travel to the United States. The turmoil occurs all while Trump threatens to annex Canada, to which our current Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, points out "is a real thing" (Yousif, 2025, para. 3). TGNBGN2S Canadians who hold American citizenship, who have American family, or travel to the United States frequently are heavily impacted, but Trump's redefinition of gender will likely have impacts in Canada as time goes on. A common, yet slightly xenophobic, phrase in Canada details how policies from the United States are often shipped to Canada a few years later. We already see some of these stances in Canada with the parental rights movement, which will be discussed further in the literature review. While much of my work was completed prior to President Trump taking office, the beginnings of his second term are impacting TGNBGN2S communities not just in the United States, but also around the world, as I complete writing my portfolio and creating the module.

Requests for Teacher Training

Hidalgo and Chen (2019) interviewed the parents of 30 transgender and gender expansive youth younger than 11. The parents reported that many of the people they interacted with were not educated enough to properly engage with the TGNBGN2S community. One of the places where social education takes place is at school. Bowskill (2017) interviewed 25 adults in the UK who worked with transgender youth. The education workers reported their own lack of knowledge about, and lack of available information to support, TGNBGN2S students (Bowskill, 2017). The UK teachers reported that the search for information and resources wasted significant time in the classroom (Bowskill, 2017), which was one reason they were disinclined to seek out the resources.

To fix the gap in teacher knowledge, Gegenfurtner (2021) calls for more teacher training in Bachelor of Education programs. Potvin (2017) calls for improved training that supports teachers in supporting MOGAI students. Miller (2016) surveyed two groups: one exclusively of in-service teachers, and one a mix between in-service and pre-service teachers. Miller found that pre-service teachers felt more confident teaching lessons focused on TGNBGN2S content. Despite Miller's finding, two-thirds of teachers in Canada felt their Bachelor of Education program did not prepare them to teach TGNBGN2S topics in a classroom, and 55% reported that what education they did get only focused on the issues TGNBGN2S students faced, and not how to actually support them (Taylor et al., 2016). Therefore, continued teacher training, implemented after the Bachelor of Education program, could ensure more teachers have confidence to teach TGNBGN2S content in order to create a safer space for TGNBGN2S students. Youthline (n.d.), an organization that provides confidential support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in Canada, specifically calls for teachers in Canada to get more professional development and education on MOGAI-specific training to meet the demands of MOGAI students.

TGNBGN2S Students in Schools: Surveillance, Cisheteronormativity, Parental Rights, and Power

Surveillance in Schools

Through exploration of TGNBGN2S students' experiences in schools, as outlined in the literature, I found surveillance of TGNBGN2S students and cisheteronormative hegemony present within Ontario public schools. Miceli (2010) studied the history of GSAs in schools and argues for researchers to shift away from the assumption that the reason for mental health challenges and bullying with MOGAI students is an intrinsic issue in the student, and, instead, work towards an extrinsic or systemic analysis of why mental health challenges and bullying occurs. An example of Miceli's shift would be to acknowledge that

low self-esteem may be caused by the context of cisheteronormativity hegemony in schools, rather than issues inherent to the MOGAI student.

Still, regardless of how some schools may implement measures to counteract cisheteronormativity, Callaghan (2005/2006) explores how schools can discursively uphold cisheteronormativity in the shadow - or hidden - curriculum, through two theories: Foucault's concept of disciplinary surveillance, and Gramsci's theories of domination and hegemony. Foucault's concept of disciplinary surveillance suggests that surveillance and discipline "makes individuals" (Callaghan, 2005/2006, p. 69). However, power is never total, and while surveillance and discipline can lead to submission, both can also lead people to protest and fight back against the system even simultaneously with submission.

Further to Foucault, Gramsci defines two areas of control: domination through physical coercion, and hegemony through ideation control and consent (Callaghan, 2005/2006). Callaghan (2005/2006) takes Gramsci's theory of hegemony with Foucault's concept of disciplinary surveillance and argues that within Canadian Catholic schools, surveillance and normativity is implemented in an attempt to discipline and control MOGAI students.

To argue their point, Callaghan (2018) shares the example of a gay Albertan principal who hosted an event with coworkers and felt the need to reorganise his entire house for fear that the displays would out him, and cost him his job (p. 43). The school may or may not have fired him for being gay; however, the teacher took it upon himself to enact surveillance of his own house, suggesting, at least, a level of internalized self-surveillance and potentially internalized homophobia. Callaghan (2018) thus argues that some Catholic schools in Canada act as a panopticon for MOGAI students and teachers where self-surveillance becomes internalized, making connections to the theory of the panopticon as proposed by Jeremy Bentham and elaborated on by Foucault. Callaghan (2018) explains the panopticon as an

architectural device that allows a guard in a prison to observe prisons without being seen; the lack of the ability to see the guard causes the prisons to conform, because they may be watched at any given time (p. 181). Callaghan (2018) also details Gramsci's prison notes, which discuss hegemony, specifically how education is used for hegemony, and how domination can be done through consent. However, I would argue that the panopticon and Gramsci's theory of hegemony applies to all schools in Canada, not just Catholic schools, and that both mechanisms of control grow out of the historical genealogy of the surveillance of MOGAI students and teachers.

For example, Lugg (2006) analyses literature in the West as early as the 1920s, and explores how the application process gatekept MOGAI teachers. According to her, teacher candidates were required to adhere to dominant gender norms, be married to a member of the opposite sex, and align with the board's homophobic ideology at the time . She gives an example from a 1946 article in *American School Board Journal*, which requires male teachers to be a "former collegiate athletic hero" and "not be labelled as an effeminate human being" (p. 44). The *American School Board Journal* further goes on to detail that male teachers' physiques must be comparable to that of "any of the mythical Greek gods" (p. 44), rather ironically. These systemic barriers, Lugg (2006) argues, led to a *double* panopticon, one that monitored sexuality and gender conformity of both students and teachers and one that has a long history within the education system.

Cisheteronormativity

Although not as overtly regulatory today, cisheterosexism continues to be systemically present in the education system in Canada. Cisheterosexism is the structure that upholds cisgender and heterosexual as the default and expected identity of everyone. A review by Bazzul and Sykes (2010) of a common Ontario biology textbook, McGraw Hill Ryerson Biology 12 (2002), revealed a hidden curriculum of heterosexism. The textbook had

photos of heterosexual couples but no homosexual couples; confusion of biological sex with gender identity, as in the example of sex hormones as the cause of erections "in males" and "female orgasm"; and a comment that an intersex person could be "fixed" with a surgery (Bazzul & Sykes, 2010, p. 275). Although published over twenty years ago, the McGraw Hill Ryerson Biology 12 (2002) is still on the Ontario Trillium list of approved textbooks as of November 2024. Through the use of such material, being cisgender, heterosexual, and perisex (that is, not intersex) are normalized.

A similar study by Greytak, Kosciw, and Diaz (2009) found that in the United States less than one-fifth (16%) of students surveyed reported MOGAI topics in their textbooks and only 11% reported exposure to MOGAI content in the classroom. The lack of any mention of MOGAI identities in classrooms, which include TGNBGN2S identities, relegates these topics to the null curriculum. The null curriculum describes how what is taught in schools through the absence of certain ideas, worldviews, and people is also important in describing what is taught in schools (Yonas & van Hover, 2024). The implication here is that TGNBGN2S identities, and the MOGAI community as a whole, are not to be talked about, and need to be fixed, which could produce shame in MOGAI students. Furthermore, the MOGAI null curriculum implies that marginalized orientations, gender alignments, and intersex are somehow detrimental identities, hazardous, and/or taboo (Lewis & Sembiante, 2019). When teachers refuse to teach these topics, a hidden or null curriculum is nested within the explicit one. Thus, allies are paramount to ensure that the lesson that the MOGAI community is detrimental, hazardous, and/or taboo, and that a class environment that erases MOGAI people can be identified and rejected. Although Greytak, Kosciw, and Diaz (2009) was 16 years ago, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (2023) found that only 13.8% of LGBTQ+ American youth reported being taught about LGBTQ+ history, showcasing how current of an issue the null curriculum is for MOGAI students.

Potvin (2017) defines an ally as someone who improves the experiences of marginalised people, changes the ways people conceive of difference, challenges power and privilege, and discusses the challenges involved when an anti-oppression system is adopted. Their definition leads to an assessment of schools for their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for MOGAI youth which can indicate the school's safety (Potvin, 2017). A checklist through which teachers can assess the SWOT of their schools and classrooms has been provided in the module as a way for teachers to assess the safety of any given school, or their own classroom.

The Parental Rights Movement

TGNBGN2S healthcare and the right for youth to transition was a repeated topic in the literature, especially in regards to the parental rights movement in the United States, Canada, and beyond. The parental rights movement is an informal but powerful movement among some parents and conservative groups that seeks to challenge MOGAI-inclusive education in schools, claiming the right to choose what is taught in classrooms is a parental right (Benchetrit, 2023b). The parental rights movement did not appear out of a vacuum; anti-trans rhetoric and policies have existed in multiple social spaces, including education for a long time. In the mid-2010s, for example, St. Joseph's Secondary School in Mississauga, Ontario published a document that encouraged MOGAI students to undergo therapy or live a chaste life (Niblett & Oraa, 2014). More recently, a CBC article by Cheese (2023) discusses parents angry over MOGAI safe space stickers in a York Catholic board meeting, where one teacher commented they should read "danger zone" instead (para. 4), and another parent demanded MOGAI students should not be allowed to attend Catholic schools as homosexuality is a sin (para. 7). In the CBC's Fifth Estate episode *The war on books that's dividing a small town* (2025), the parental rights movement is connected to very real conspiracy theories, such as the idea that MOGAI individuals are fully accepted in Canadian

society and that MOGAI-focused programs and education are meant to erase heterosexual, cisgender life entirely. Since the pandemic, the Fifth Estate reports there are now four times as many book challenges in libraries, with half in 2023 due to the books having a connection to the MOGAI community (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2025). T. J. Kenny is detailed in the Fifth Estate as a man who checks out library books he deems as a danger to society, as a means to hoard them, saying his motivation is to "protect my children and this community's children from sexualization" (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2025, 33:53). The parental rights movement is a difficult situation, and will impact the implementation of any policies and training that takes place within Ontario's publicly-funded schools, including my module. Thus, the module includes suggestions for how to have difficult conversations with parents who may not be open to TGNBGN2S content in the classroom.

In Australia, Dimopoulos (2021) explored who has the right to choose when a youth seeks gender-affirming care, specifically in regards to *Re Kelvin*, a court case in which the judge ruled that the courts do not have the right to decide whether a child can access gender-affirming care. Dimopoulos analyses how the court decided that parents and doctors were found to have the right to choose, but provide the youth with an "invisible" rights approach (p. 660). By failing to mention the rights of the child to decide their own healthcare even once, the courts in Australia failed to acknowledge the rights of the child as relevant at all, rendering their rights invisible. The court document mentions the rights of the parents nine times but fails to mention the rights of the child, thus the right to choose gender-affirming care is defaulted to the parents (Dimopoulos, 2021). Dimopoulos argues that the lack of any mention of the rights of the child is due to the assumption that the audience of the court ruling are adults and not youth. However, the courts in Australia can help ensure that legal rulings which directly involve children are conscious of the child's voice in the ruling were the

courts required to write letters to the child which summarize the court's ruling in child-friendly language, a process Dimopoulos advocates (Dimopoulos, 2021). Had the court decided to write a letter to Kelvin, a minor, the court case may have considered the rights of the child to decide their own gender-affirming care.

The courts in Australia are not the only system to fail to consider when a child's right to their bodily autonomy supersedes that of the parent's right. Although Priest (2019) argues that the parents' consent is not considered in all cases, for example in the situation where a child is in an abusive household and must be removed, the gradual advances in TGNBGN2S youth's right to their autonomy in their own medical decisions has led to the parental rights movement. The movement demands that parents have a right to know within 24 hours if a child chooses to use a different name or pronouns within a school; parents get to choose if a child has a right to use said name and pronouns in a school; that students should not be able to use their bathroom of choice; and that parents have a right to know and have a say in what is taught in schools in relation to MOGAI topics (Benchetrit, 2023a). Thus, parents could have a large impact on TGNBGN2S students' mental health at school as well as at home, which can affect youths' ability to engage positively in school.

Resulting Mental Health Disparities for TGNBGN2S Students

As the parental rights movement and its impact shows, school safety expands far beyond curriculum. Lefevor et al. (2019) found that transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals experience more anxiety, depression, psychological distress, and eating concerns than their cisgender peers. Transgender and genderqueer individuals reported they were more likely to engage in self-harm and to consider suicide than their cisgender peers; two thirds contemplated suicide and nearly half attempted in their lifetime (Lefevor et al., 2019). Austin et al. (2022) reported that 56% of transgender youth had made a suicide attempt in their life and 86% reported suicide ideation. Transgender youth who felt they did not belong at school

reported lacking a feeling of belonging in school as one of the three main reasons for their suicide ideation (Austin et al., 2022). Youth who felt they belonged at school reported half as many suicide attempts than their counterparts who felt they did not belong (Austin et al., 2022).

Potentially, then, one way to reduce suicidality, self-harm, and suicide ideation among TGNBGN2S students is for teachers to have TGNBGN2S-specific training. In addition to the more extreme outcomes of suicide attempts and ideation, and self harm, Bowskill (2017) identifies other effects of an unsupportive school environment: anxiety, regret, anger, low self-esteem, and frustration. Budge et al. (2018) interviewed transgender youth to discover how they coped with these detrimental outcomes. Transgender youth in Budge et al.'s study (2018) reported that they avoided questions related to their gender, bottled up their emotions, and avoided their chosen gender presentation through the use of normative pronouns associated with their assigned gender. Transgender youth also reported they often used a loss of control as a means to self-sooth, such as through violence against others and themselves (Budge at al., 2018). However, Paceley et al. (2021) found Midwestern American transgender youth engaged in resistance by affirming their own identity and self-worth through self-talk, ensuring they felt authentic in their self expression, resisting oppressive narratives, finding hope including through social media, and engaging in activism through educating others, standing up for themselves, and organizing in groups. One respondent remarked: "As a trans Black woman, my work will be questioned and interrogated... it was really important for me to resist those narratives that were portrayed and say we're thriving. We're doctors. We're doing shit. We're people. We're existing. We're trying" (Paceley et al., 2021, p. 36). While some TGNBGN2S students can develop significant mental health problems and dangerous behaviours, many TGNBGN2S students will react with resistance. TGNBGN2S-focused

school training can support TGNBGN2S students with their mental health needs, limiting the need for more and more resistance.

Social Supports for TGNBGN2S Students

Schools are very social places where students spend seven (or sometimes more) hours a day, five days a week. An analysis of the social supports TGNBGN2S students form and require inside and outside schools informed the module. Information about the necessity for social supports, and how to ensure TGNBGN2S students access supports properly will be provided to the teachers. Youthline (2020) surveyed Canadian transgender youth and found they report a low sense of connection to the broader 2SLBTQ+ community, rating their connection at 4.5/10 and 40% say their needs are not met (p. 3). To further understand the low community connection score YouthLine (2020) reported, I explore additional ways TGNBGN2S individuals find support outside of schools in this section.

Graham (2014) reports four forms of strong social support: "instrumental support (e.g., resources like money, time, and labour), informational support (e.g., advice), emotional support (e.g., caring, listening, love), and appraisal support (e.g., affirmations and positive feedback)" (p. 283). Graham (2014) argues that these supports are prevalent within the TGNBGN2S community, notably early in transition. Unfortunately, regardless of community support, family support can be complex. Having a TGNBGN2S loved one can be a source of tension in a family. Disagreement about how supportive parents want to be of a child's gender diverse identity can put strain on a marriage (Hidalgo & Chen, 2019). 58% of parents report negative future expectations for their transgender child, 43% report difficult feelings, 20% report perceived rejection, 23% report social rejection, and 28% report their child has difficulty with self-care behaviours (Hidalgo & Chen, 2019, p. 872). The parents interviewed by Hidalgo and Chen (2019) worried a lot about their child's future and labelled some relatives as non-affirming. The added strain on a family that needs to support a TGNBGN2S

youth within cisnormative society should be a consideration when a teacher provides support for a TGNBGN2S student within their classroom, as these students most likely still live at home. Informed by what was found in this section of the literature review, how to navigate a discussion with home, and support a TGNBGN2S student in a non-affirming home is part of the module.

Moving from the home into schools, GSAs provide important social support for TGNBGN2S students. However, out of all schools in Canada with a highest grade of 6, only 4% have a GSA (Taylor et al., 2016). The lack of GSAs in elementary schools is the result of a common belief that MOGAI topics are not for students before they hit puberty. As two Ontario teachers remarked in Martino, Omercajic, and Kassen (2022):

> This shouldn't be something in elementary schools. Back in the day girls were tomboys and didn't need to identify as being questionable. Now students are confused and think that it's cool. (p. 86)

> This should be age appropriate. A 5-year-old is just as likely to identify as a cat as she/he is a different gender. (p. 87)

The importance of allies in the education system is shown both in Hidalgo and Chen (2019), and in Potvin's (2017) identification of teachers who run GSAs in Ontario schools as usually straight, White, women who identify as allies. On one hand, these allies provide important support: schools with GSAs are three times more likely to support lesbian/gay/bisexual students being out, and are places where it is significantly less likely to hear homophobic slurs in the hallways (Griffin et al., 2004). However, according to Griffin et al. (2004), most MOGAI students of colour, out MOGAI individuals, and students who want to be counselled do not view the GSA as a safe space due to the fact that White, heterosexual women are also most of the GSA attendees in school, at least in Griffin's sample.

An American study shows that transgender and gender-nonconforming students of colour find more support from other people of colour, compared to MOGAI community organizations in a school, such as a GSA (Zongrone et al., 2022). Religious MOGAI students also report isolation from GSAs, which leads Thompson (2012) to argue that GSAs are not the whole solution to homophobia in schools, although they are important spaces to help produce a supportive school environment. The role GSAs have in schools, and how to ensure that GSAs remain a safe space for all students is included in the module.

Laws and Policies Affecting TGNBGN2S Students

Policies exist to support MOGAI students in schools. Bill 13 (2012) and Bill 33 (Toby's Act) (2012) are two Ontario bills, and Bill C-16 (2017) is a federal bill; all three will be discussed in this section. Bill 13 also makes transgender/transsexual a protected ground against bullying (p. 2), and states school boards and schools must provide resources to students who are bullied on these grounds (p. 4). Bill 13 also states that schools must provide organizations, such as a GSA, to support MOGAI students in the school, and that the school cannot prohibit the name GSA from a school club (p. 6). Bill 13, also known as Toby's Act, adds gender identity and gender expression to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in Canada. Toby's Act was named in honour of the transgender musician Toby Dancer (Ubelacker, 2015). Toby raised awareness of the discrimination and harassment that transgender Canadians experienced (Ontario Women's Justice Network, 2025). Likewise, Bill C-16 makes gender identity and gender expression an identifiable group in the Canadian Human Rights Act and adds assaults against those who identify with these groups to the Criminal Code as a hate crime. Schools in Ontario theoretically must adhere to these Bills.

Within the context of the Bills, school boards have made their own policies that vary from each other and affect transgender students in differing ways. In a case study of two Canadian school boards, Omercajic and Martino (2020) found trends between the school

boards on TGNBGN2S policies. The trends included the lack of accountability and allocation of resources, the encouragement of literature that includes transgender characters and people, educational steps for educators, libraries to have transgender-affirming literature, the onus to teach transgender-affirming lessons on the teacher, and transgender students to "out" themselves in order to be accommodated (Omercajic & Martino, 2020). Obviously, these policies are not without limitation for students, as, for example, in a study by Genovese et al. (2011), which found that less than 50% of students who identify as Two Spirit knew if their school had an anti-harassment policy.

Catholic boards have a unique situation in their need to support TGNBGN2S students because of the intersection between Catholic religious teachings / belief, and transgender existence. A study by Airton (2022) reviewed Ontario Catholic board policies for transgender students. Airton found that less than 50% of Catholic boards applied their policy in situations where their application was required, compared to secular boards. Additionally, they found that transgender-related words only appeared 32 times in Catholic documents, that gender and gender expression were often omitted from lists in these policies, and that some schools boards, such as the Bruce-Gray Catholic District School Board, deferred to *pastoral* rather than legal documents, which removed them from the Federal and Provincial Bills that bind all school boards (Airton, 2022).

Additionally, teachers' responses to the policies matter since they are the ones who largely implement the policy on a day-to-day basis. Martino, Omercajic, and Kassen (2022) did an intensive study of 1194 education workers' responses to transgender-inclusive policies in Ontario. They found that 73% of teachers were somewhat aware or very aware of their school's policy (p. 77), 28% were unaware of the policy (p. 77), 14% felt the policy should only be implemented once a student discloses themselves as transgender (p. 79), 25% felt there was a lack of support or intervention in policy implementation (p. 80), 24% felt just

because a board had a policy did not mean the policy would be implemented (p. 83), and 5%
outright rejected the policy (Martino, Omercajic, & Kassen, 2022, p. 85).

Martino, Omercajic, and Kassen's (2022) data show clear issues in the policy
implementation process, as all educators should know and implement the policy regardless of
whether a student feels comfortable coming out or knows for certain they are transgender.
Furthermore, Catholic teachers in Canada are not significantly more likely to struggle with
TGNBGN2S students in their classrooms compared to secular teachers; however, they are
significantly more likely to fear termination if they teach these topics (Taylor et al., 2016),
which highlights a structural issue in addition to some teachers' attitudes. Furthermore,
Niblett and Oraa (2014) found that even with schools that had GSAs, MOGAI students did
not flourish if teachers felt they would be fired if they taught these topics. It is necessary for
school boards to have strong policies that protect TGNBGN2S students and teachers when
they teach TGNBGN2S content. However, teachers need to know about these policies, which
can be achieved through training.

The Role of Media in TGNBGN2S Students' Lives

Schools are a significant part of the cultural milieu that surrounds students, a milieu
that is not just confined to school and home, but which is impacted by external institutions
such as media and its representations. Media also plays a large role in TGNBGN2S
individuals' lives, and it is likely that representation of TGNBGN2S characters will continue
to increase. However, increased visibility is a double-edged sword: more TGNBGN2S
characters lead to more representation for the TGNBGN2S community, but can also lead
society to over-police TGNBGN2S people, as transphobic and homophobic individuals are
now more aware of MOGAI-identified people's presence within broader society (Mocarski et
al., 2019). Since only the end of transition, or specific milestones within a transition, are often
shown on social media or in television or film narratives, TGNBGN2S people in other stages

of transition or who choose not to undergo a medical transition can feel ashamed of their progress (Mocarski et al., 2019). Mocarski et al. (2019) labels the assumption that all transgender people will undergo a binary transition as "transnormativity" (p. 420). Visibility is further skewed by gender, ironically, whereby transfeminine individuals are hypervisible, while transmasculine individuals are rendered invisible (Mocarski et al., 2019).

Similarly, Serano (2007) argues that transgender women find themselves perceived differently by cisnormative society than transgender men. Serano argues that the cisheteronormative culture makes many individuals more uncomfortable, and therefore more obsessed, with what is perceived as a man in a dress compared to a woman in pants, which leads cisnormative society to fear transgender women while transgender men are obscured (Serano, 2007). The obsession with presumed men in dresses leads to the erasure of transmasculine individuals in media while transfeminine individuals are focused on through a misogynistic lens (Mocarski et al., 2019). These additional areas of surveillance and visibility have a knock-on effect in how TGNBGN2S students experience their lives both in and out of school.

Some examples of media and their limitations with TGNBGN2S representation follow. Mocarski et al. (2019) discussed Caitlyn Jenner's role in the media, and how her presence made some TGNBGN2S individuals feel inferior due to their inability to access all the gender-affirming care she could:

> I can't do what Caitlyn did, I can't go and get all these surgeries and go away and transition and come out, like that's not anywhere possible for me, and so I think it's bringing awareness but it's also giving people more room to make assumptions... (p. 425)

Caitlyn Jenner showcases to broader society a specific type of binary, medical, upper-class, and White transition, one which the participants feel broader society is now expecting of

them (Mocarski et al., 2019). The Olympics, although viewed as a sporting event, is also a
media event, with halftime shows and sporting entertainment broadcast globally. After being
disqualified by the 2023 International Boxing Association due to an unspecified gender
eligibility test, Imane Khelif was assumed to be a transgender woman during the 2024
Olympics (Morrison, 2024). The fixation on transfeminine individuals caused a cisgender
woman to be assumed to be a transgender woman, with people calling for her to be
disqualified from the games (Morrison, 2024). However, not all media is negative, as a
participant in Mocarski et al. (2019) explains through the website myhusbandbetty.com. The
blog, which details a transgender woman's life, improved the participant's marriage:

> She was like "wow, I really feel like she speaks directly to me, this is my partner,"
> and in that she found comfort in knowing that, "wow, if she can do that and stay with
> her partner through the transition. ..." "You know, I am not in love with your parts as
> much as who you are as a person." (p. 429)

The role of media can take several different forms, but the media's role can be quite large for
some TGNBGN2S individuals.

Reported Issues TGNBGN2S Students Face in Schools

One shortfall in the literature is that only 4% of transgender-specific studies
identifiable through the University's library focus on youth (Budge et al., 2018), showing a
lack of research on TGNBGN2S youth. However, common themes arose between studies
done with youth and adults. In Ontario, Scheim, Bauer, and Pyne (2014) surveyed 409
transgender individuals aged 16 and over. Of those surveyed, 19 avoided school because they
felt perceived as transgender (Scheim, Bauer, & Pyne, 2014). Although 4% of the
participants avoiding school due to feeling perceived as transgender is statistically minor, the
perceived unsafe school environment cannot be ignored. An unsafe school environment can
be avoided and always should be for each and every student. The parents of transgender

youth younger than 11 in Hidalgo and Chen's (2019) work reported perceived rather than experienced discrimination in schools. Participants described discrimination as scrutinization by peers, and when peers were reticent about their child in public (Hidalgo & Chen, 2019). Taylor et al. (2016) found that students were more likely to hear homophobic comments than sexist comments and fatphobic comments in Canadian schools. They found that over one-third (38%) of the teachers in Ontario were reported by participants in their study to have used homophobic language (p. 49). Taylor et al. (2016) further found that 50% of students in their study heard negative comments about boys acting like girls and 30% heard negative comments about girls acting like boys (p. 18).

Similarly, an American study by Johns et al. (2021) found that, in 2017, 35% of transgender students in their dataset were bullied and 24% were threatened or injured with a weapon, while in 2015, 24% were physically attacked and 17% left school due to mistreatment. Potvin (2017) reports that custodians in Ontario would sometimes hear negative comments about MOGAI students in the hallways but not intervene because the staff believed that correcting student behaviour was not part of their janitorial duties. Furthermore, an Ontario case study found that teachers felt underprepared, and would often use a transgender student coming out as the catalyst for their own professional development. Only when a student came out did many teachers re-evaluate school layouts such as binary bathrooms, worry about how transgender-themed lessons would affect other students in the classroom, feel that transition was very visible unless the social or medical transition happened prior to when the student came to the school, and ultimately would revert to the cisheteronormative curriculum (Martino, Kassen, & Omercajic, 2022).

Martino, Kassen, & Omercajic's work illustrates that some teachers take a reactive rather than proactive approach to safe schools when they use a transgender student's coming out or visibility as a catalyst for their own training. However, a reactive approach misses the

bigger picture: TGNBGN2S students in the closet and cisgender students still deserve a TGNBGN2S-inclusive education, which is lost when a teacher waits until a student comes out before they begin training. Wider issues, such as binary bathrooms in a school, also get missed in a reactive rather than proactive approach. When educators take on the role of gender police and force students to use a disabled toilet rather than the girls' or boys' washroom (Ferfolja & Ullman, 2021), along with confusion or a general lack of knowledge about the name- and gender-change systems in the schools, teachers take a reactive rather than proactive approach (Frohard-Dourlent, 2015) that can be harmful to students.

When the school has a reactive rather than a proactive approach, many disabled toilets are converted into gender-neutral toilets, which can have an effect on a student's mental health, as reported by Ferfolja and Ulman (2021):

She was put in a disabled toilet as – [an answer to the question] where do we put this child? During that time, she came home and she was very upset about her body. It actually impacts on her mental health. She said, am I disabled? Am I different now? Her mental health actually was impacted quite considerably (p. 803).

These examples show that, rather than have TGNBGN2S-inclusion in the school's foundation, often, policy makers wait until a TGNBGN2S student either comes out or enters the school, and by then the school is already built on a cisnormative structure. The choice one teacher made to "[follow] the curriculum" although it was cisheteronormative in Martino, Omercajic, and Kassem's study (2022, p. 81), highlights the importance of a curriculum that affirms TGNBGN2S students within Ontario. In the absence of a TGNBGN2S-affirming curriculum, the teacher left out TGNBGN2S-affirming content (Martino, Omercajic, & Kassem, 2022). Avoidance, lack of training and resources, dismissal of the need to teach transgender topics, an assumption that students are too young, parental opposition, and religious opposition (Campbell, Peter, & Taylor, 2021), leaves out TGNBGN2S-affirming

class content. The lack of TGNBGN2S-affirming content can cause many transgender students to be completely uneducated about their own identity, community, culture, and health, and cisnormative students remain in an echo chamber that leaves them ignorant about the diversity of humanity.

Additionally, one of the teachers Potvin (2017) interviewed discussed his fear of being less hireable if he disclosed his position as an ally (p. 86). Given that teachers can choose not to teach TGNBGN2S topics, such as when they worry about their own hireability, raises several questions. For example, if a singular TGNBGN2S-affirming teacher leaves the school, what will the school do? Can new teachers be expected to teach TGNBGN2S-focused lessons without any administrative leadership on the issue? Teachers believe schools mitigate bullying against MOGAI students and are more MOGAI-inclusive, even though studies suggest the opposite (Potvin, 2017), and transgender students beg for support and system changes:

> "All gender bathrooms should be mandatory by now." (Youthline, 2020, p. 6)
>
> "I would make identification of pronouns upon personal introduction more popular, normalized, and prioritized." (Youthline, n.d.)
>
> "More education about queer/trans/two-spirited identities and the barriers they face" (Youthline, n.d.)
>
> "Before my name was legally changed, someone [...] gets on the intercom in my French class [and calls me by my legal name...] where everyone, nobody knows that I'm trans. I had to get up and go and everyone was just like... and it was awful." (Johns et al., 2021)

For the teachers' part, when it came to transgender youth, some teachers reported that instead of training themselves about how best to support students, they asked other teachers who identified as sexuality-minorities, but cisgender, about the transgender experience

(Meyer & Leonardi, 2017). Non-transgender teachers cannot give perspective about transgender experiences, which shows a lack of knowledge about TGNBGN2S and MOGAI identities. As well, teachers perceived Muslim students to be at odds with MOGAI acceptance (Potvin, 2017); therefore, teachers who did not want to appear Islamaphobic or to place assumed transphobic and homophobic Muslim students outside their comfort zone impacted both Muslim and TGBNGN2S students who want to learn about the topic. Furthermore, the assumption that all Muslim students are at odds with MOGAI students also makes unfounded assumptions about Muslim students in the classroom, particularly those who may be TGNBGN2S, which is merely another version of reductive Islamophobia.

Reported Experiences of TGNBGN2S-Based Education in Schools

How educators teach and discuss TGNBGN2S topics and students can indicate what gaps exist in their knowledge and the effects that mistakes can have on TGNBGN2S students. Martino, Kassen, and Omercajic (2022) recorded a class they observed that focused on pronoun use, which used the analogy of a Mac's Milk, renamed to Circle K, to TGNBGN2S people who change their names. When the students commented that people in the city still called Circle K Mac's Milk, the teacher encouraged the comparison. Calling Mac's Milk Circle K is an incorrect analogy, because it would be akin to deadnaming a transgender person, or calling a TGNBGN2S person by their assigned name at birth (Martino, Kassen, & Omercajic, 2022, p. 762). Similarly, Cumming-Potvin and Martino (2018) reported one teacher who said:

> I explicitly say when I am reading it: You know with some girls and boys this is what happens, they are very young and you are a girl, like say you are me, right, and you might think "Oh my gosh, I don't even feel like I am a girl. I feel like I have the wrong parts." So I will say that to them as I am reading it and they get it and are like "Wow, really" and I am like, "Yeah, it really honestly happens and it happened to this

> guy," and I'll pull up the you tube videos of the real kid and the family … they get to
>
> see the real kid. (p. 820)

In this example, the teacher does not shy away from the topic and discusses it explicitly and

clearly with the students. The language is student-friendly and easy to understand.

      Another example of how effective training can create safer spaces can be found in

Mangin (2022):

> One of our students comes in a lot of the time wearing a button-up shirt and a necktie,
>
> sometimes a little bowler hat, not what you would normally wear, but she likes to
>
> experiment. When she comes in that way, we make a point to say, "You look
>
> wonderful" and let her know "We see how you chose to dress today and we love it."
>
> (p. 330)

The teacher was able to provide a safe space for gender-nonconformity in the classroom.

      Unfortunately, not all of the comments are positive from these reports. Mangin (2022)

also cited a teacher who omitted TGNBGN2S-focused education because of a transgender

student, as they felt if they mentioned TGNBGN2S topics in the classroom, the mention

would single the student out and draw attention to a student who was already largely accepted

by the student body (p. 331). I would argue that the choice to omit TGNBGN2S-focused

content in the classroom robs all students, not just transgender students, of important

education.

      Other examples show various ways teachers handle or mishandle TGNBGN2S-

focused topics in the classroom. For example, Potvin (2017) reported an instance in which a

teacher put a question on the board that implied a gender binary, and after growing

uncomfortable with their suggestion that only two genders exist, they admitted that the

question was wrong to the class, which prompted a student to express gratitude:

> I had this student come up to me [who said] "Thank you so much for doing that, I
> don't see myself on one end of this binary or another and I really appreciate that [you
> acknowledged gender exists outside of boy and girl] and I've never had another
> teacher [in] this school who would do that or would have said that." (p. 113)

The teacher explicitly stated that gender was a spectrum, and told the student that their gender identity existed for the first time within that school, which reminded the student explicitly of their own validity and existence.

The interaction acts as both empowerment to the student and to the teacher, which fosters a stronger relationship. Explicit instruction on related topics in classrooms, such as how gender is a spectrum, could be the goal of teachers after they take the module. However, while the teacher in Potvin's (2017) example asserted clearly that gender was not binary, another teacher heard a student go "ugh" when the teacher outed a transgender student to them (p. 147). The teacher did not follow up on the sound of disgust as the student did not "say anything to that student, she didn't take it any further, she didn't say anything rude" (p. 147). While the teacher could have explored why the student made a sound of disgust and discussed why the student felt it necessary to make the sound, creating a teachable moment, the teacher opted to ignore the situation instead. The teacher had also outed the student without explicit consent.

Potvin's (2017) interviews illustrate what happens when a teacher affirms that gender is not binary but a spectrum, and when teachers struggle to embrace TGNBGN2S teachable moments. While some teachers challenge the norms present in the school system, others are either too afraid to do so, or are unable to properly do so and miss their chance to give the support TGNBGN2S students need.

Intersection of Race-Based and Gender-Based Discrimination

The module is intersectional in order to support students who sit at the intersection of multiple identities. While there are many different ways for someone to be TGNBGN2S *and* another identity (such as TGNBGN2S *and* disabled, TGNBGN2S *and* Muslim, etc.), harassment along two or more marginalised identity positions is more detrimental than if a student faces only gender-based harassment and otherwise occupies privileged positions. This is not to say that otherwise-privileged transgender students do not suffer; it is simply to point out that oppression operates differently when multiple oppressions intersect. I examine the intersection of those who identify as TGNBGN2S *and* Black, Indigenous, or as a person of colour (BIPOC), simply because more frequent gender and race-based harassment leads to higher rates of depression (Zongrone et al., 2022). Gender-based harassment combined with race-based harassment showed stronger association with lower self-esteem than race-based harassment alone (Zongrone et al., 2022). Within the context of schools, transgender and gender-nonconforming BIPOC students reported that they are more likely to find support from other BIPOC students around them than in school-led queer-focused groups, such as a GSA (Zongrone et al., 2022). Ashburn (2019) similarly argues that outness is different for MOGAI BIPOC than White individuals, and scholarship around the MOGAI community showcases a very White worldview. Ashburn (2019) further argues that the gender binary in Canada is a product of colonialism. In order to instil the colonial system of European heteropatriarchy, a gender binary, which presumed a patriarchal power structure, was imposed onto the Indigenous peoples in Canada (Ashburn, 2019). Thus, decolonization must be a part of TGNBGN2S-inclusion in schools, because the colonial history of gender norms in Canada must be considered when teachers support Two Spirit youth.

In Hawai'i, Matzner's (2001) interviews with Hawai'ian *mahus*, for example, shows similar results, and details the importance of different cultures defining themselves rather

than having the cisheteronormative, colonial society make them use Western labels such as man, woman, straight, gay, etc. As Kaua'i Iki describes it:

> As far as *mahus* in the culture, I don't associate with being gay. I associate with being *mahu*. For me, the difference between being gay and *mahu* is that there is a place for me in my culture, in my society. There was a role which we once played and still play. So I believe in my culture; I'm an accepted and integral part of my culture. That's why I don't feel anything. Because I know I'm an integral part of my culture. It's necessary for me to be here. [...] I'd rather be called *mahu* straight to my face. Being called gay is degrading to me. Because I've been called *mahu* my whole life. I don't feel part of the group which is labeled "gay"... (Matzner, 2001, p. 42)

Kaua'i Iki describes being called gay as degrading, rather than another term such as inaccurate, which does have a tinge of homophobia to the comment. However, Kaua'i Iki may be saying that the label gay feels degrading due to viewing the word gay as a White, Western concept. Similarly, Paige discusses how the term transgender feels foreign to them:

> Transgender... I don't like to identify myself as a transgender because I don't know *what* is that word. I can identify with *mahu* because it's a Hawaiian word for us – transgenders. Growing up, that's the word people used. Reading about Hawaiian history, I've noticed that there were *mahus* in the [Hawaiian] monarchy; they had a place. So I could really identify myself as a *mahu* in a positive way, not a negative way. (Matzner, 2001, p. 148)

Kaua'i Iki discussed the ostracization they felt when they left Kaua'i for Honolulu to attend school (Matzner, 2001). On Kaua'i, as a *mahu*, the interviewee was an integral part of the culture, a knowledge keeper, and a hula dancer; in the bigger city, they were frequently called slurs and shunned from hula competitions (Matzner, 2001). Similarly, Zongrone et al. (2022)

found that in American First Nations many transgender and non-binary students faced the

most gender-based harassment in schools.

However, Black and Latinx TGNBGN2S students may have experiences shaped by

racism more than transphobia (Zongrone et al., 2022). Graham's (2014) interviews with ten

Black transgender women in Detroit, Michigan, found that the police blamed the victims'

gender nonconformity for the hate crimes committed against them, rather than the

perpetrators of the hate crimes. While not an exhaustive discussion of how race and gender

intertwine, or how those at these intersections are subject to compounding discrimination, the

lived experiences of Indigenous, Mahu, and Black TGNBGN2S individuals in the research

shows how intersectionality produces different lived experiences. Therefore, training that

enlightens teachers on the impacts of intersecting gender-based and race-based discrimination

is needed for teachers in order for them to support students placed at the intersections of these

identities, and to introduce them to concepts of intersectionality and its importance. In short,

intersectionality must be considered within the module and within teacher training as a

whole.

Calls for Action

Many researchers and teachers have called for changes within education systems.

Bowskill (2017) calls for teachers to challenge negative systems within schools; for

administration to provide more practical tools for teachers to use in order to facilitate their

support for transgender students; for proactive rather than reactive approaches; for

individualised approaches for each transgender student; for teachers to admit when mistakes

are made; and for appropriate interactions between transgender students and teachers. Ways

to incorporate these suggestions into a school include:

> having unisex toilets, avoidance of reinforcing gender boundaries, gender-free
>
> uniform policies, staff training, diversity explored throughout the curriculum, clear

policies and a school ethos that encourages openness, exploration, acceptance and

diversity within the school. (p. 104)

Meyer and Leonardi (2017) helpfully found that teachers desire more "(1) exposure to

transgender and gender nonconforming people and (2) conversation about gender diversity"

for students (p. 452). Lewis and Sembiante (2019) call for more training for teachers about

how to include these topics in the classroom, training on extant policies, mandatory training

to intervene and provide support for transgender students, and awareness of the changes to

legislation in regards to transgender individuals. Similarly, Gutierrez's (2013) interviews with

transgender BIPOC students found that they called for the curriculum in schools to shift

towards how to build community, more communication support, how to process and theorise

about daily life, and gender-studies-specific courses.

Additionally, Potvin's Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies research work

(2017) calls for several means to improve the education system for MOGAI students. These

include: improved training for teachers, more whole-school approaches, ally leadership

encouragement, fewer assumptions made about MOGAI individuals, and challenging and

contesting straight and cisgender privilege. They argue for the use of the term "aspiring ally"

rather than "ally" (p. 153), as allyship is a role that is active and continues to change. Potvin

(2017) further cautions against the objectification of transgender students in schools as the

next novel group to ally with because schools may then inevitably move onto the next 'hot-

topic' group, and not continue to work to create a safe space for transgender students. Based

on the need for more allyship, alongside studies that show teachers do not feel confident in

their training, more teacher training is required, which could be achieved through my module.

While some would argue that allyship is self-serving and surface-level - Feminista Jones

(Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/Radio Canada, 2018), for example, advocates for the

term "co-conspirator" over ally (para. 4) - the idea of allyship, or aspiring ally, is an

important part of the current dominant discourse that provides support for TGNBGN2S youth in public education.

Literature Review Conclusion

Through analysis of the literature, which included discussion of the surveillance of TGNBGN2S students and the production of hegemony through the enforcement of cisheteronormativity within schools, transgender youths' mental health, the role of media, teacher's experiences, calls to action from educators and researchers, and current teacher training on TGNBGN2S-specific topics in Ontario, it is clear that teacher training is currently insufficient. To rectify the lack of teacher training, my module, based on evidence of need, resources in the literature, and with an eye to the small sample of survey respondents, can help mitigate insufficient training. The themes and resources explored in the literature review will be shared with teachers to help them facilitate teaching all students, and their support of TGNBGN2S students within their classrooms, saving teachers' time.

Methodology

The point of my module and, subsequently, the surveys which inform the module, is to centre voices that exist on the margins. Specifically, I centre TGNBGN2S voices which typically only exist on the margins of cisheteronormative society. Hesse-Biber (2012), building on Marx and Hegel, elaborates on how marginalized people must often understand both their own lives and the lives of those holding power in a society as a means of survival, while those living in the centre of society have no incentive to learn about those on the margins (p. 10). We cannot assume that every education worker in Ontario is cisgender. In fact, many studies have found some teachers do identify as transgender. Taylor et al.'s (2016) study found 3% of Canadian teachers identify as transgender, and Callaghan's (2018) book mentions Job, a transgender Canadian teacher fired from a Catholic school for being transgender (p. 177). While neither of these cases are confirmed to be in Ontario, assuming every teacher in Ontario is cisgender erases the reality that some teachers will be gender variant in some way. Nonetheless, the Literature Review illustrates that the Ontario educational system perpetuates a cisheteronormative hegemony, indicating a need to centre the voices of those who exist on the margins. Centering marginalized voices ensures that teachers who may not have the incentive to learn about the experience of being TGNBGN2S will learn about these students' experiences.

To ensure TGNBGN2S voices are centred in my research and the creation of the module, I used both my own experience as a TGNBGN2S youth who went through the Ontario secular school system and a survey for TGNBGN2S individuals who recently graduated from an Ontario secondary school. As Nancy Hartsock (1983; as cited in Hesse-Biber, 2012) argues, women, due to their oppression, have better insight into women's lives when doing research. Myself, having been a transgender and non-binary student in the Ontario secular schooling system, have unique insights into the experiences of TGNBGN2S

students and their experiences. However, some critics argue that Hartsock's view is too Eurocentric and would not encompass the variety of lived experiences TGNBGN2S individuals may face (Hesse-Biber, 2012). For example, while I, as a transmasculine individual, might be able to give insight into *a* TGNBGN2S experience going through the Ontario secondary school system, I cannot rely solely on my experience because it would erase the experiences of transfeminine individuals who also went through the Ontario secondary school system and other transmasculine individuals who had different experiences than mine. One solution to avoid relying on one voice is to bring in more voices, hence a survey was implemented. The survey allowed others to bring in their voices to broaden the sample size.

SurveyMonkey was used to disseminate the questions. My questions for the survey were open-ended. See Appendix A for a copy of the questions. Leaving the questions open-ended allows the participants to elaborate on whatever they see is important. I make no assumptions as to what their teachers did or did not do. I also do not press for the participants to share whatever they would or would not like to share. My intention is to learn whatever the participants feel is most important. What participants elaborated on was then considered in the creation of the module, although given the small sample size, the responses were not the only determining data in module creation: the literature review also contributed significantly.

The main benefit of the survey I conducted was the anonymity the platform could provide. An interview would have me and the individual meet face-to-face in a room to discuss their schooling experience. An online survey, especially one through SurveyMonkey which does not send any identifying characteristics, such as an email, to me, ensures that participants' identities remain anonymous. Likewise, surveys also ensure that participants' words are transcribed exactly as the participants want them to be transcribed, ensuring that nothing is lost.

The survey provided data for content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis aims to uncover the politics of, in my case, gender identity, and examine text, images, and context which produces the gender labels prevalent in contemporary times (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2012). Silences and omissions that happen frequently in literature are attractive to content and discourse analysis (Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2012). The silence in schools around proper support for TGNBGN2S students is what prompted the need for my surveys and module. Discourse analysis is defined by Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (2004) as analysing the language people use, putting the language into context, and illuminating discourse through the contextual analysis. The feedback from the surveys was analysed by identifying trends in the different words participants used, and putting those within their context, examined in the Analysis section, below.

Resources for Module

Resources for the module came from a variety of sources, largely from research conducted for the Literature Review. Many of the references for the Literature Review mentioned resources and were themselves resources that would be beneficial for educators to know. A list of the resources collected, both through research and from reading research materials which mentioned them, which I then sought out and explored myself, are provided here.

It Gets Better (Callaghan, 2018), an initiative to remind queer youth that life gets better after high school to mitigate suicide, and *AFFIRM* (Budge et al., 2018), a CBT-based therapy group specifically focused on the MOGAI community, are both resources teachers should be aware of and have ready to provide should a TGNBGN2S student need support with their mental health. *Schools in Transition* is an incredible resource that provides ways to support TGNBGN2S students in schools, such as a Gender Support Plan (Orr & Baum, n.d., pp. 52-55), which can be used to facilitate a student's social transition in a school, and what

to say to parents should they have questions or concerns (Orr & Baum, n.d., pp. 23, 31-32). Skolnik (2013) provides a list of privileges held by cisgender individuals, which would allow cisgender teachers who take the module to understand their unearned privilege. Miller (2016) gives a variety of lessons focused on transgender representation, such as a primary/junior-level lessons focused on the book *I Am Jazz* (2014) by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings; an ESL-focused lesson which involves art-based activities focused around *Michael's Diary* (2013) by Michael Brant; and a full unit plan based on a Queer Literacy Framework and two novels: *Some Assembly Required: The Not-So-Secret Life of a Transgender Teen* by Arin Andrews (2014, as cited in Miller, 2016) and *Rethinking Normal: A Memoir in Transition* by Katie Rain Hill (2014, as cited in Miller, 2016).

The Queer Literacy Framework proposed by Miller (2016) is a way to support MOGAI, especially TGNBGN2S, students in the classroom, and includes principles such as not making assumptions about a student's gender, acknowledging the flexibility of gender, and creating spaces for students to define their own (a)gender and (a)pronouns (p. 36). Ashburn (2019) provides two workshops for teachers, the first on the harm done when someone is misgendered, and the second on gender roles. Many resources have also provided lists of ways for ally teachers to support TGNBGN2S students in their classrooms. Potvin (2017) recommends that teachers ask students about their goals, allow criticism, and engage in constant self-reflection (p. 154). Likewise, Lewis and Sembiante (2019) provide a similar list of ways to provide a TGNBGN2S-safe classroom, which encourages teachers to ask for everyone's pronouns and preferred name, have transgender guest speakers, and hang affirming posters (p. 8). Gender identity workbooks, such as those by Leikam (2021) and Lorenz (2020), will be included as additional resources to give to students, with a note for Leikam's book that some questions may need to be omitted based on the student's age, as some explore the student's sexuality in detail.

The section of the module focusing on TGNBGN2S students of colour underwent extensive editing. Initially, many of the suggestions were very broad, rather than specific, and needed more resources for teachers to practically use. I added several resources including *Speak Up At School: How To Respond to Everyday Prejudice, Bigotry and Stereotypes* from Learning for Justice (2022), *Radical Antiracism and Anti-Queerphobia in Politicised Education Environments Through Critical Race Theory and Queer Theory* by Mina Aubrey Weeks (2024), and *Safe and Caring Schools for Two Spirit Youth* by Safe and Caring Schools & Communities (2011). These resources were chosen specifically because they provide classroom-specific recommendations, such as Weeks (2024) providing lessons that focus on Critical Race Theory, Learning for Justice (2022) providing recommendations for how to prepare students and classrooms in the event bigotry occurs, and Caring Schools & Communities (2011) providing a list of books that can be used in schools that focus on Two Spirit stories (pp. 28-29). Providing these resources allows teachers to have effective suggestions they can access as needed, rather than having broad suggestions.

Trans Activism in Canada: A Reader edited by Dan Irving and Rupert Raj (2014) allows a variety of voices to provide pieces of the story of how TGNBGN2S activism has evolved through Canadian history. As with many resources given, a note will follow *Trans Activism in Canada: A Reader* (2014) reminding educators to review sections of the book prior to showing the sections to students. Other resources, such as the University of Winnipeg's *Two Spirit Archives*, the University of Victoria's *Transgender Archives*, and the Canadian Museum of History's *2SLGBTQIA+ History and Identities in Canada* were also chosen for the module. These resources provided a variety of archival information teachers can pull on for lessons and to provide for students. First-hand accounts were prioritized for TGNBGN2S Canadian history resources, which the archives house. Lastly, the Canadian Museum of History's *2SLGBTQIA+ History and Identities in Canada* also have an activities

section, which teachers can use or generate ideas from. While the resources for TGNBGN2S

Canadian history were scarce, these four will hopefully give teachers the resources they need

to include TGNBGN2S voices in the history classroom.

The media chosen for the module was broken up into a variety of sections, such as a

list linked in the section for supporting TGNBGN2S students of colour, TGNBGN2S

students who practice a religion, and a list of books to use in a classroom broken up by grade.

The resources were either read or watched by me, and thus have a note attached to them using

my judgement on anything teachers need to know prior to using the resource, or come from a

list that has been vetted by another reputable source. Priority was given to books to read in

class and movies to show in class for ease of use. Additionally, I chose to give a list of gender

identity workbooks teachers could refer students to, if students ask them for support. At the

end, I gave a list of several resources I found throughout my research which I thought may be

useful. Topics such as transmisogyny and transmedicalism, which may show up in media

featuring TGNBGN2S characters, are defined and explored in the module. A message at the

beginning of each section with media recommendations reminds teachers to go through the

media prior to showing the media to the students.

Data Analysis

The survey was answered by four individuals; Appendix B gives a transcript of the survey results. Although only four respondents cannot be used to extrapolate broad trends, it is worth noting where their responses coincide with the findings in extant evidence. However, providing TGNBGN2S people the opportunity to provide their feedback was important for the creation of the module, and so even four voices is valuable. Of the four, one had a positive review of their schooling experience, commenting "[m]y high school teachers used the preferred name for me when I was out" and filled out "N/A" (or Not Applicable) for the other sections of the survey, while the other three provided feedback with varying degrees of recommendations and support given throughout their schooling. Some commented on a desire for teachers to "[a]ctually talk about trans bodies and [people] in history / health class" and to create groups in class using methods unrelated to gender. The variation in the survey results, ranging from having no desire to comment on any recommendations to providing both some benefits and suggestions to their schooling, while limited in scope due to only receiving four responses, does highlight the need not to homogenize TGNBGN2S students' experiences.

All four of the participants mentioned their preferred names being respected in their schools. One participant mentioned their teacher providing a form with their preferred name:

Respondent 4: One of my teachers in high school gave students a form at the start of class with a bunch of revelant [sic] information (like Parent/Guardian name, emergency contact, allergies, things like that). One of the things on that form was "preferred name", so if you used a different name than your legal one, she would call you that instead. I didn't realize I was trans at the time, but I thought it was really useful, because it felt anonymous; you just had to write your name on a piece of paper, and not directly ask the teacher aloud.

One teacher standing out as having a form including preferred names leads one to wonder if other teachers included a preferred name section on any forms handed out at the start of the year, if other teachers handed out forms at all. Whether a form was standard practice or not is unclear, especially whether the form had a preferred name section or not. The fact Respondent 4's teacher stood out suggests that not every teacher requested Respondent 4's preferred name. The lack of any administration being mentioned in Respondent 4's comment also raises concerns, as only a teacher is mentioned. The only other respondent to mention who used their preferred name is Respondent 1: "My high school teachers used the preferred name for me when I was out." None of the four participants mentioned administration requesting their preferred name; those who specified (Respondent 1 and Respondent 4) only mentioned teachers. While individual teachers requesting preferred names is still important, as students may use different names in different contexts, the lack of any mention of administration having procedures for students changing their preferred names across the school's database is a point of weakness for TGNBGN2S student inclusion. Omercajic and Martino (2020) found that, in Ontario, the onus to create a safe space falls on teachers rather than on school administration, making TGNBGN2S students safe on a class-by-class basis. However, the administration also has an important role to play.

Participants also mentioned other ways in which teachers and the school system supported them as TGNBGN2S students:

> Respondent 1: My high school teachers used the preferred name for me when I was out.

> Respondent 2: Asking and respecting pronouns. Asking and respecting preferred name.

> Respondent 3: GSA, Flag raising, offered gender netural [sic] bathrooms, respected name/ pronouns

All of these are beneficial ways to support TGNBGN2S students in the classroom, with some limitations. The GSA mentioned could be a Gay-Straight Alliance or a Gender-Sexuality Alliance. None of the participants mentioned a TGNBGN2S-specific group. As mentioned in the Literature Review, such as in Griffin et al. (2004), GSAs have limitations for certain groups of students, such as students of colour, out students, and students seeking counselling. Thompson (2012) further adds that GSAs have limitations for MOGAI students who practice different faiths, as they often feel shunned. Having additional groups from a GSA may benefit students further, such as a TGNBGN2S-focused group. Respondent 3 mentioned flag raising, presumably the Pride Flag or Progress Flag being raised in the school. Respondent 3 did not mention whether the flag was raised only during the month of June or during the entire year. Having Pride-focused iconography all year signals to students that the school is a safe space beyond the month of June, an important signal teachers and schools need to make explicit, that will be explored further in this section.

The respondents further mentioned the need for teachers to change certain pedagogies in the classroom, which will be added to the module. One participant commented on a desire for teachers to create "[m]ixed groups instead of splitting girls and boys". The module now has a dedicated section on alternative ways to break up students rather than into boys and girls, which inevitably leaves some non-binary students unsure where to go, some gender-nonconforming students uncomfortable, and some students questioning which side to go to earlier than they may be ready to reveal. Alternatives include groups by birthdate, or whether students like one thing over another (such as cats or dogs for younger grades, or tea or coffee for older grades). Another participant commented on the need for teachers to "[a]ctually talk about trans bodies and [people] in history / health class". While the module does focus heavily on health class and educating students on their rights to gender-affirming healthcare, TGNBTN2S Canadian history is also important. The module now includes resources on

TGNBGN2S and MOGAI Canadian history, with a specific focus on TGNBGN2S Canadian history. The focus on TGNBGN2S rather than MOGAI Canadian history is intended to bring the focus of TGNBGN2S individuals from the margins of society to the centre for my module. However, TGNBGN2S Canadian history resources are limited, and MOGAI Canadian history resources are also consulted when appropriate. Broad resources that house many documents and focused on the TGNBGN2S communities were chosen as a means to bring TGNBGN2S voices from the margins.

One participant made a comment unrelated to them being TGNBGN2S. However, I quote them in full in order to highlight the importance of a safe space:

Respondent 4: I had another teacher who was very uninvolved with my classmates. He only cared about teaching Physics, and didn't really care about anything else. I was bullied really heavily in that class (not for being trans but for other things), and I didn't tell *him* about it because he seemed so hostile. I wasn't sure how he'd react because there was no precedence [sic] for how he *would* react (if that makes sense).

In the following question, Respondent 4 wondered how the teacher may have made the classroom safer for them to come forward about being bullied.

Respondent 4: One solution is that he could have said, at the start of the semester, that anyone could come to him with their problems and he wouldn't judge them for it. I don't know if it'd be worded like that, but something to convey that message. I think that would have made him approachable even *if* he continued being cold and unattached.

Respondent 4 desired for the teacher to clearly state they would not judge students' problems and was safe to talk to; they desired that the teacher explicitly show that the classroom was a safe space. Whether intentional or not, the lack of anything overtly saying the classroom was safe in itself made the classroom unsafe, as Respondent 4 felt they could not come forward

about being bullied. Respondent 4's response is a reminder of the need to make classrooms proactively and overtly safe, whether through words or iconography. While Respondent 4 does not mention being unsafe due to being TGNBGN2S, many TGNBGN2S students could benefit from having more proactive overt safe spaces. Teachers saying overtly that the classroom is safe, and having TGNBGN2S-supportive iconography will not only signal, but create, those safe spaces.

While Respondent 4 does provide a reminder of how explicitly stating a space is safe can be desirable for students, to the point of being the deciding factor in making the space safe, Potvin (2017) calls for a move away from only putting up safe space posters. Seeing safe space posters and iconography as superficial, Potvin (2017) suggests improved training for teachers, more whole-school approaches, and challenging and contesting straight and cisgender privilege. As such, I use Respondent 4's comment as a reminder that, while overt iconography that the space is safe is important, it cannot be all teachers do to support TGNBGN2S students.

Lastly, Participant 3 states clearly the desire for more TGNBGN2S-focused training for teachers in general: "I was asked alot [sic] of weird invasive questions and it could have been avoided if people had a basic education on what trans ment [sic]". No elaboration is given on what kind of invasive questions were asked. The Literature Review showcased some common misconceptions for TGNBGN2S individuals which cisgender, heterosexual individuals hold, such as confusing gender identity with sexuality (Bazzul & Sykes, 2010), or that Muslim students are at odds with MOGAI acceptance (Potvin, 2017). My module will not provide all the education required to meet that basic educational requirement Participant 3 is most likely desiring. However, my module will be a part of that requirement, and will provide teachers with some of the knowledge needed to avoid invasive questions.

Conclusion

The creation of my module will hopefully inform future teachers on how to better support TGNBGN2S students. Although only an exploratory project, the use of my own along with four other TGNBGN2S students' experiences helped shape a training module. Through giving teachers access to definitions, calls to action in research, a variety of resources, and suggestions for how to handle bigotry, it is my hope that teachers will be better equipped for the work of being a TGNBGN2S ally or co-conspirator. The module I have created with is intended to make Ontario classrooms more welcoming to all students, especially those who may identify as TGNBGN2S.

References

2SLGBTQIA+ history and identities in Canada. (n.d.). Canadian Museum of History. https://www.historymuseum.ca/teachers-zone/2slgbtqia-history-and-identities-in-canada/

Airton, L., DesRochers, J., Kirkup, K., & Herriot, L. (2022, October 16). Toby goes to Catholic school: Gender expression human rights, and Ontario Catholic school board policy. *Canadian Journal of Education, 45*(3), 586-618. https://doi.org/10.53967/cje-rce.v45i3.5443

Alfonseca, K. (2025, January 23). *Trump's definition of 'male,' 'female' criticized by medical and legal experts.* American Broadcasting Company News. https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trumps-definition-male-female-criticized-medical-legal-experts/story?id=117975718

Ashburn, J. (2019). *Towards a trans pedagogy of solidarity: Creating trauma-informed, anti-oppressive learning environments to support gender diverse learners*. [Portfolio, Lakehead University]. University Library.

Austin, A., Craig, S. L., D'Souza, S., & McInroy, L. B. (2022). Suicidality among transgender youth: Elucidating the role of interpersonal risk factors. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 37*(5-6), NP2696-NP2718. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520915554

Bazzul, J., & Sykes, H. (2010, October 28). The secret identity of a biology textbook: Straight and naturally sexed. *Cultural Studies of Science Education, 6*(2), 265-286. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11422-010-9297-z

Benchetrit, J. (2023a, September 23). *Where did the term 'parental rights' come from?* Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/parental-rights-movement-in-canada-1.6976230

Benchetrit, J. (2023b, April 8). *How the parental rights movement resurged in response to trans inclusivity in classrooms*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/parental-rights-movement-us-canada-1.6796070

Bilgen, A., Nasir, A., & Schöneberg, J. (2021). Why positionalities matter: Reflections on power, hierarchy, and knowledges in "development" research. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies, 42*(4), 519-536. https://doi.org/10.1080/02255189.2021.1871593

Bill 13: Accepting Schools Act (An Act to Amend the Education Act With Respect to Bullying and Other Matters). (2012). S.O. 2012, c. 5 - Bill 13. 1st Session, 40th Parliament. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s12005

Bill 33: Toby's Act (Right to be Free From Discrimination and Harassment Because of Gender Identity or Gender Expression). (2012). S.O. 2012, c. 7 - Bill 33. 1st Session, 40th Parliament. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s12007

Bill C-16: An Act to Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code. (2016). 1st Session, 42nd Parliament (assented to 19 June 2017). Parliament of Canada. https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/c-16/royal-assent

Bowskill, T. (2017). How educational professionals can improve the outcomes for transgender children and young people. *Educational & Child Psychology, 34*(3), 96-108. https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsecp.2017.34.3.96

Budge, S. L., Belcourt, S., Conniff, J., Parks, R., Pantalone, D. W., & Katz-Wise, S. L. (2018, June 21). A grounded theory study of the development of trans youths' awareness of coping with gender identity. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 27*(9), 3048-3061. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-018-1136-y

Burke, M. (2025, February 14). *References to transgender and queer removed from Stonewall National Monument's web page.* National Broadcasting Company Inc. https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/references-transgender-queer-removed-stonewall-monuments-webpage-rcna192204

Callaghan, T. (2005/2006). When God teaches sex ed: Applying Michael Foucault's concept of surveillance and Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony. *International Journal of Diversity in Organizations, Communities, & Nations, 5*(6), 67-74. https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9532/CGP/v05i06/39149

Callaghan, T. D. (2018). *Homophobia in the hallways: Heterosexism and transphobia in Canadian Catholic schools*. University of Toronto Press.

Campbell, C., Peter, T., & Taylor, C. (2021, December 14). Educators' reasons for not practising 2SLGBTQ+-inclusive education. *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue Canadienne de l'éducation, 44*(4), 964-991. https://doi.org/10.53967/cje-rce.v44i4.4665

Cheese, T. (2023, March 5). *Parents angry over 'safe spaces' for LGBTQ students disrupt York Catholic Board meeting*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ycdsb-meeting-safe-space-stickers-1.6765341

Cumming-Potvin, W., & Martino, W. (2018). The policyscape of transgender equality and gender diversity in the Western Australian education system: a case study. *Gender and Education, 30*(6), 715-735. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2018.1483491

Cuthard, S. (2021, August 30). *Introducing yourself as a 'settler' creates division*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/calling-yourself-a-settler-pov-1.6151582

Dimopoulos, G. (2021). Rethinking Re Kelvin: A children's rights perspective on the
'greatest advancement in transgender rights' for Australian children. *UNSW Law
Journal, 44*(2), 637-672. https://doi.org/10.53637/JJXO2236

Do better: 2SLGBTQ+ youth recommendations for change in Ontario. (n.d.). LGBT
Youthline. http://dobetter.youthline.ca/

Ferfolja, T., & Ullman, J. (2021, April 19). Inclusive pedagogies for transgender and
gender diverse children: Parents' perspectives on the limits of discourses of
bullying and risk in schools. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society, 29*(5), 793-810.
https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2021.1912158

The Fifth Estate. (2025). *The war on books that's dividing a small town | The Fifth Estate*
[Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRDL9Fm1ZLA

Frohard-Dourlent, H. (2015, April 21). 'I don't care what's under your clothes': The
discursive positioning of educators working with trans and gender-nonconforming
students. *Sex Education, 16*(1), 63-76.
https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2015.1022819

Gegenfurtner, A. (2021). Pre-service teachers' attitudes toward transgender students:
Associations with social contact, religiosity, political preference, sexual orientation,
and teacher gender. *International Journal of Education Research, 110*.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101887

Genovese, M., Rousell, D., & The Two Spirit Circle of Edmonton Society. (2011). *Safe
and caring schools for Two Spirit youth: A guide for teachers and students*. Society
for Safe and Caring Schools & Communities.

Georgakopoulou, A., & Goutsos, D. (2004). *Discourse analysis: An introduction*. Oxford
Academic.

Graham, L. F. (2014, February 11). Navigating community institutions: Black transgender

women's experiences in schools, the criminal justice system, and churches.

Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 11(4), 274-287.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-014-0144-y

Greytak, E. A., Kosciw, J. G., & Diaz, E. M. (2009). *Harsh realities: The experiences of

transgender youth in our nation's schools*. Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education

Network.

Griffin, G. (2013). Writing about research methods in the arts and humanities. In Griffin,

G., *Research methods for English studies* (pp. 91-104). Edinburgh University Press.

Griffin, P., Lee, C., Waugh, J., & Beyer, C. (2004). Describing roles that gay-straight

alliances play in schools: From individual support to school change. *Journal of Gay

& Lesbian Issues in Education, 1*(3), 7-22. https://doi.org/10.1300/J367v01n03_03

Gutierrez, N. (2013). Visions of community for GLBT youth: Resisting fragmentation,

living whole: Four female transgender students of color speak about school. In

Ferber, A. L., Holcomb, K., & Wentling, T. (Eds.), *Sex, gender, and sexuality: The

new basics (2nd ed.)* (pp. 359-365). Oxford University Press.

Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2012). Feminist research: Exploring, interrogating, and transforming

the interconnections of epistemology, methodology, and method. In Hesse-Biber,

S. N., *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (2nd ed.) (pp. 2-26).

Sage Publications, Inc.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Piatelli, D. (2012). The feminist practice of holistic reflexivity. In

Hesse-Biber, S. N., *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis* (2nd ed)

(pp. 557-582). Sage Publications, Inc.

Hidalgo, M. A., & Chen, D. (2019). Experiences of gender minority stress in cisgender

parents of transgender/gender-expansive prepubertal children: A qualitative study.

Journal of Family Issues, 40(7), 865-886.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X19829502

Irving, D., & Raj, R. (Eds.). *Trans activism in Canada: A reader*. (2014). Canadian

Scholars' Press Inc.

Johns, M. M., Zamantakis, A., Andrzejewski, J., Boyce, L., Rasberry, C. N., & Jayne, P. E.

(2021, September 17). Minority stress, coping, and transgender youth in schools—

Results from the resilience and transgender youth study. *Journal of School Health,*

91(11), 883-893. https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13086

Josephson, T. (2018, July 27). Teaching 'Trump feminists'. *Radical Teacher, 111*, 82–87.

https://doi.org/10.5195/rt.2018.473

Feminista Jones doesn't think you're an ally. (2018, October 26). Canadian Broadcasting

Corporation/Radio Canada. https://www.cbc.ca/radio/outintheopen/allies-

1.4850186/feminista-jones-doesn-t-think-you-re-an-ally-1.4850215

Lefevor, G. T., Boyd-Rogers, C. C., Sprague, B. M., & Janis, R. A. (2019). Health

disparities between genderqueer, transgender, and cisgender individuals: An

extension of minority stress theory. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 66*(4), 385-

395. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000339

Leikam, K. (2021). *Gender identity journal: Prompts and practises for exploration and*

self-discovery. Rockridge Press.

Lewis, R. K., & Sembiante, S. F. (2019). Research and practice in transition: Improving

support and advocacy of transgender middle school students. *Middle Grades*

Review, 5(1).

Lorenz, T. N. (2020). *The trans self-care workbook*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Lugg, C. A. (2006, January). Thinking about sodomy: Public schools, legal panopticons, and queers. *Educational Policy, 20*(1), 35-58. https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904805285374

Mangin, M. M. (2022, July 1). Teachers' strategies for supporting transgender and/or gender-expansive elementary school students. *Educational Researcher, 51*(5), 324-335. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X221084666

Martino, W., Kassen, J., & Omercajic, K. (2022, October 19). Supporting transgender students in schools: Beyond an individualist approach to trans inclusion in the education system. *Education Review, 74*(4), 753-772. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2020.1829559

Martino, W., Omercajic, K., & Kassen, J. (2022). "We have no 'visibly' trans students in our school": Educators' perspectives on transgender-affirmative policies in schools. *Teacher College Record, 124*(8), 66-97. https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681221121522

Matzner, A. (2001). *'O au no keia: Voices from Hawai'i's mahu and transgender communities*. Xlibris Corporation.

Meyer, E. J., & Leonardi, B. (2017). Teachers' professional learning to affirm transgender, non-binary, and gender-creative youth: Experiences and recommendations from the field. *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning, 18*(4), 449-463. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2017.1411254

Miceli, M. (2010). In the trenches: LGBT students struggle with school and sexual identity. In Stombler, M., Baunach, D. M., Burgess, E. O., Donnelly, D., Simonds, W., & Windsor, E. J. (Eds.), *Sex matters: The sexuality & society reader (3rd ed.)* (pp. 185-193). Karen Hanson.

Miller, sj. (2016). *Teaching, affirming, and recognizing trans* and gender creative youth: A queer literacy framework.* Springer Nature.

Mocarski, R., King, R., Butler, S., Holt, N. R., Huit, T. Z., Hope, D. A., Meyer, H. M., & Woodruff, N. (2019, October 2). The rise of transgender and gender diverse representation in the media: Impacts on the population. *Communication, Culture, & Critique, 12*(3), 416-433. https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcz031

Morrison, T. (2024, August 2). *FACT CHECK: Olympic boxer Imane Khelif, participation and eligibility in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games*. The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. https://glaad.org/fact-check-participation-and-eligibility-of-paris-2024-olympic-boxers-imane-khelif-and-lin-yu-ting/

Niblett, B., & Oraa, C. (2014). Gay-straight alliances as activist education. In Walton, G., *The gay agenda: Claiming space, identity, and justice* (pp. 53-69). Peter Lang Inc.

Notice to trans people: Avoid non-essential travel to the United States. (2025, January 22). Celeste. https://celeste.lgbt/en/2025/01/notice-to-trans-people-avoid-non-essential-travel-to-the-united-states/

Omercajic, K., & Martino, W. (2020, April 22). Supporting transgender inclusion and gender diversity in schools: A critical policy analysis. *Frontiers in Sociology*, *5*(27). https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2020.00027

Ontario Human Rights Code and gender identity/gender expression. (2025). Ontario Women's Justice Network. https://owjn.org/2013/09/30/ontario-human-rights-code-and-gender-identity-gender-expression/

Orr, A., & Baum, J. (n.d.). *Schools in transition: A guide for supporting transgender students in K-12 schools.* HRC Foundation.

Owis, Y. (2022). *Queering and trans-gressing care: Towards a queer ethic of care in QTBIPOC education*. [Thesis, University of Toronto]. TSpace.

Paceley, M. S., Goffnett, J., Diaz, A. L., Kattari, S. K., Navarro, J., & Greenwood, E. (2021, December 20). "I didn't come here to make trouble": Resistance strategies utilized by transgender and gender diverse youth in the Midwestern U.S. *Youth, 1*(1), 29-46. https://doi.org/10.3390/youth1010005

Potvin, L. (2017). *More than pink shirts and posters: Beyond the limits of anti-homophobia education* [Thesis, Lakehead University]. University Library.

Preciado, P. B. (2013). *Testo junkie: Sex, drugs, and biopolitics in the pharmacopornographic era*. Feminist Press.

Priest, M. (2019, February 20). Transgender children and the right to transition: Medical ethics when parents mean well but cause harm. *The American Journal of Bioethics, 19*(2), 45-59. https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2018.1557276

Safe and caring schools for Two Spirit youth. (2011). Safe and Caring Schools & Communities.

Scheim, A., Bauer, G., & Pyne, J. (2014). Avoidance of public spaces by trans Ontarians: The impact of transphobia on daily life. *Trans Pulse*, *4*(1), 1-3.

Serano, J. (2007). *Whipping girl: A transsexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*. Seal Press.

Shahzad, R. (2017, July 15). *What is the significance of acknowledging the Indigenous land we stand on?* Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/territorial-acknowledgements-indigenous-1.4175136

Skolnik, A. (2013). Privileges held by non-trans people. In Ferber, A. L., Holcomb, K., & Wentling, T. (Eds.), *Sex, gender, and sexuality: The new basics (2nd ed.)* (pp. 400-401). Oxford University Press. 400-401.

Speak up at school: How to respond to everyday prejudice, bigotry and stereotypes.

(2022). Learning for Justice.

Taylor, C., Peter, T., Campbell, C., Meyer, E., Ristock, J., & Short, D. (2016). *The every teacher project on LGBTQ-inclusive education in Canada's K-12 schools: Final report*. The Manitoba Teachers' Society.

Thompson, N. (2012). Queer, Christian, and no place to go: The limitations of the Gay-Straight Alliance. *Antistasis, 2*(1), 49-51.

Transgender archives. (n.d.). University of Victoria.

https://www.uvic.ca/transgenderarchives/

Treaty 7 and land acknowledgment for settlers: Part 1. (2021, June 21). University of Calgary. https://ucalgary.ca/news/treaty-7-and-land-acknowledgements-settlers-part-1

The Trevor Project: 2022 national survey on LGBTQ youth mental health. (2022). The Trevor Project. https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/

Two Spirit archives. (n.d.). The University of Winnipeg. https://archives.uwinnipeg.ca/our-collections/two-spirit-archives.html

Ubelacker, S. (2015, April 6). *Transgender community wants more human rights protection*. Global News. https://globalnews.ca/news/1942348/transgender-community-wants-more-human-rights-protection/

Weeks, M. A. (2024). *Radical antiracism and anti-queerphobia in politicised education environments through Critical Race Theory and Queer theory*. [Thesis, Utah State University]. University Libraries.

We're here: 2SLGBTQ+ youth across Ontario assert needs and experiences: A summary report. (2020). Youthline.

Yonas, A. M., & van Hover, S. (2024). Misleading mandates: The null curriculum of

genocide education. *Journal of Social Studies Research, 48*(4), 243-260.

https://www.doi.org/10.1177/23522798241238463

Yousif, N. (2025, February 7). *Trudeau says Trump threat to annex Canada 'is a real

thing'.* British Broadcasting Corporation News.

https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czx82j5wd8vo

Zongrone, A. D., Truong, N. L., & Clark, C. M. (2022). Transgender and nonbinary

youths' experiences with gender-based and race-based school harassment. *Teachers

College Record, 124*(8), 121-144. https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681221121531

Appendix A: Survey Questions

Question 1: As a transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, and/or two-spirit student, what did your elementary and or high school teachers do that you found supportive (e.g.: inclusive, identity-affirming, helping to create a safe space for you)?

Question 2: What could they have done in the classroom to support you better, if anything (e.g.: did you experience transphobia in the classroom? did they fail to create a safe space for you? If so how? Or any other small way that you feel they could have supported you better)?

Question 3: Based on your answer to question #2, please explain why you would have felt better supported if the teacher had done what you suggest (e.g.: how would changing what happened have made you feel more included in the classroom; or helped to affirm your identity?).

Appendix B: Survey Responses

Question 1 Responses

Response 1: My high school teachers used the preferred name for me when I was out.

Response 2: Asking and respecting pronouns. Asking and respecting preferred name.

Response 3: GSA, Flag raising, offered gender netural bathrooms, respected name/ pronouns

Response 4: One of my teachers in high school gave students a form at the start of class with a bunch of revelant information (like Parent/Guardian name, emergency contact, allergies, things like that). One of the things on that form was "preferred name", so if you used a different name than your legal one, she would call you that instead. I didn't realize I was trans at the time, but I thought it was really useful, because it felt anonymous; you just had to write your name on a piece of paper, and not directly ask the teacher aloud.

Question 2 Responses

Response 1: N/A

Response 2: Mixed groups instead of splitting girls and boys

Response 3: Actually talk about trans bodies and ppl in history / health class

Response 4: I had another teacher who was very uninvolved with my classmates. He only cared about teaching Physics, and didn't really care about anything else. I was bullied really heavily in that class (not for being trans but for other things), and I didn't tell *him* about it because he seemed so hostile. I wasn't sure how he'd react because there was no precedence for how he *would* react (if that makes sense).

Question 3 Responses

Response 1: N/A

Response 2: As a non-binary person it feels invalidated to pick a binary side

Response 3: I was asked alot of weird invasive questions and it could have been avoided if people had a basic education on what trans ment

Response 4: I don't know. One solution is that he could have said, at the start of the semester, that anyone could come to him with their problems and he wouldn't judge them for it. I don't know if it'd be worded like that, but something to convey that message. I think that would have made him approachable even *if* he continued being cold and unattached.

Appendix C: Letter of Information & Consent for Potential Participants Supporting

Transgender, Non-binary, Gender-nonconforming, and Two Spirit (TGNBGN2S)

Students in the Classroom

Dear potential participant,

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. I am a Master's of Education student focusing on supporting transgender, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, and two spirit (TGNBGN2S) students. Dr. Jenny Roth is my supervisor. I am reaching out to GSA leaders for feedback on how schools are supporting, and potentially could better support, TGNBGN2S students. Participation is voluntary. Please read this letter carefully to understand what is involved. If you have any questions, please email me at vaclayto@lakeheadu.ca

Purpose My goal is to learn how your TGNBGN2S students were supported well, and if there were ways they could have been better supported. Your information will help me develop an online training module for teachers.

Information Collected The anonymous online survey consists of two questions, which ask what your school does well to support TGNBGN2S students, and ways to enhance support for TGNBGN2S students. None of your answers can be traced directly back to you.

Participant Expectations The online survey should take 15 minutes to 1 hour to complete, depending on how long you want to spend on the question.

Participant Rights Participation is voluntary. You may withdraw without penalty by exiting SurveyMonkey before submitting. You will be unable to withdraw after you submit the survey. You can provide as much detail as you wish, and you can choose not to answer

any part of the questions. Submitting the survey indicates you consent to the collection of your information.

Risks & Benefits Your reflection as a GSA leader will be beneficially used to create a teacher training module that could help support TGNBGN2S students. There is no foreseeable risk in participating in the study.

Confidentiality Please note that the online survey tool used in the study, SurveyMonkey, is hosted by a server located in the USA. The US Patriot Act permits U.S. law enforcement officials, for the purpose of anti-terrorism investigation, to seek a court order that allows access to the personal records of any person without the person's knowledge. In view of this we cannot absolutely guarantee the full confidentiality and anonymity of your data. With your consent to participate in this study, you acknowledge this. To protect confidentiality, do not provide your name when you answer the survey question, and when you submit, your email is not linked to the survey, so you are anonymous to the researchers. Data is therefore anonymized from the outset.

Data Use The data will be used to complete an MEd. Results will be used to create an online teacher training module, and may also be shared in conferences, publications, or speaker series. Please email me if you would like a short summary of the results.

Researcher Contact Information

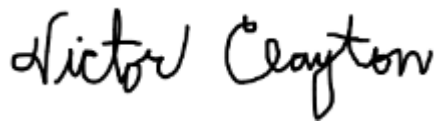Principal Investigator: Dr. Jenny Roth jroth@lakeheadu.ca

Student Researcher: Victor Clayton vaclayto@lakeheadu.ca

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research & would like to speak to someone outside

of the research team, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8010 ext. 8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.

Your support as a participant will be a valued component to my research and will support me in furthering my understanding of how TGNBGN2S students experience schooling in Ontario. Your participation will help me with the creation of my training module for teachers. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Victor Clayton

Faculty of Education

Lakehead University

Appendix D: Consent Form for Potential Participants

MY CONSENT:

I agree to the following:

- I have read and understand the information contained in the Information Letter

- I agree to participate

- I understand that my consent to use the information I provide in the survey will be given when I choose to finish and submit the survey on SurveyMonkey, not answering any questions that I do not wish to answer

- I understand the risks and benefits to the study

- That I am a volunteer and can withdraw from the study at any point prior to the submission of the survey and may choose not to answer any question

- That the data will be securely stored at Lakehead University for a minimum period of 7 years following completion of the research project

- I understand that the research findings will be made available to me upon request via email

- I will remain anonymous

- All of my questions have been answered

By consenting to participate, I have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

I have read and agree to the above information and by completing and submitting the survey, agree to participate.