

LGBTQIA+ *Pride* Month

A framework for history, belonging
and academic connection



Fayette County
Public Schools

History

LGBTQIA+ Pride Month is celebrated annually in June to honor the history of the modern LGBTQIA+ civil rights movement and commemorate a critical catalyst: the Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan, New York. In the late 1960s, homosexuality was heavily criminalized across the United States, and police raids on bars catering to queer patrons were routine. Under New York penal codes at the time, people could be legally arrested merely for wearing "gender-inappropriate" clothing or gathering in spaces serving alcohol to gay individuals.

In the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village. Instead of dispersing, the patrons and local neighborhood residents stood their ground and fought back against police harassment. Led largely by trans women of color and gender-nonconforming advocates—including prominent figures like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera—the uprising lasted for six days, fundamentally shifting the public discourse from underground survival to an open demand for systemic liberation.

On June 28, 1970, the one-year anniversary of the uprising, activists organized the first official march to mark the event, originally named Christopher Street Liberation Day. Activist Craig Schoonmaker suggested the term "Pride" for the weekend's events, noting that while marginalized individuals had very little political power at the time, **anyone could choose to have pride in themselves**, which would fuel a movement for structural change. What began as a single day of demonstration grew over the decades into a month-long national and international celebration of identity, resilience, and civil rights.

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Symbols and Progression

The Rainbow Flag: Originally designed in 1978 by veteran and activist Gilbert Baker for San Francisco Pride, the multi-colored stripes symbolize the diverse spectrum of the human community, with individual colors representing concepts like life, healing, nature, and art.



The Progress Pride Flag: Created in 2018 by Daniel Quasar, this updated design features a chevron on the left edge incorporating black and brown stripes to explicitly center queer people of color, alongside light blue, pink, and white stripes representing the Transgender Pride flag.



The Acronym: The community umbrella has evolved academically and socially over time. LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual, with the "+" representing additional diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

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Barriers To Belonging

Invisible Barriers

- **Binary Defaults:** School curriculum layouts, standard textbook examples, forms, and administrative systems routinely default to the assumption that every student is heterosexual and identifies with their gender assigned at birth (cisgender). This lack of representation creates an invisible barrier, forcing LGBTQIA+ youth to constantly assess whether a space is safe for them to exist authentically.
- **The Safety Assessment Burden:** LGBTQIA+ students carry an immense cognitive load, continually scanning their classrooms, hallways, and peer groups to evaluate who is safe to talk to or tell the truth about their lives, families, or identities, which pulls focus away from their academic potential.
- **Exclusionary Facilities and Records:** For transgender and nonbinary students, navigating school buildings without gender-neutral restrooms, or facing resistance from staff regarding their affirmed names and pronouns, presents a severe structural obstacle to physical comfort and emotional dignity.

Common Misconceptions

- **"Being LGBTQIA+ is a modern social trend or a choice":** This ignores a vast, documented history of human variance across diverse cultures and centuries. Framing a student's fundamental identity as a phase or lifestyle choice minimizes their biological reality and psychological well-being.
- **"Discussing Pride in schools is inherently inappropriate for children":** This misconception conflates human sexual orientation and gender identity strictly with adult concepts. Celebrating Pride in K-12 spaces is centered on human civil rights, diverse family structures, self-acceptance, bullying prevention, and safety.
- **"All queer people experience identity the same way":** A student's experience is deeply shaped by their race, cultural background, economic status, and geographic region. There is no singular "queer community experience".

Common Microaggressions

- **"That's so gay" or "No homo":** Using terms associated with the LGBTQIA+ community as casual punchlines or synonyms for something weird, uncool, or undesirable pathologizes queer identities and reinforces social shame.
- **"Who is the mom and who is the dad in your family?":** Asking children of same-sex parents to map traditional, heteronormative gender roles onto their caretakers invalidates their actual family structure.
- **Deadnaming or intentional misgendering:** Continuously calling a transgender or nonbinary student by their birth name (deadname) or incorrect pronouns after being corrected signals to the student and their peers that their humanity and autonomy are optional.

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Education Connections

Alignment with FCPS Portrait of a Graduate

- **Critical Thinker:** Analyzing the historical and political factors that lead to language loss and the suppression of indigenous mother tongues trains students to evaluate societal power dynamics, examine colonial legacies, and question standard definitions of institutional dominance.
- **Effective Communicator:** Exploring the deep structural differences across world languages (such as variations in syntax, idioms, or untranslatable words) expands students' cognitive flexibility, teaching them how culture fundamentally shapes thought and human communication.
- **Empowered Learner:** Validating a student's mother tongue as an academic asset encourages them to utilize their full linguistic repertoire (translanguaging) to process complex texts, solve problems, and connect school learning to their lived experiences at home.
- **Creative Problem Solver:** Designing collaborative, multilingual resources—such as dual-language books, community translation guides, or digital audio glossaries—challenges students to build innovative, universally accessible tools that solve real-world isolation.
- **Collaborative Team Member:** Engaging in cross-cultural, multi-accented collaborative environments fosters deep global empathy, patience, and the high-level cultural competency required to work effectively in an increasingly interconnected international workforce.

KY Standards Alignment

Universal Social Studies Inquiry Standards

- **Using Evidence:** Gathering relevant evidence from credible sources; in Grades 6-12, determining accuracy, context, bias, and intended use.
- **Communicating Conclusions:** Constructing explanations and/or arguments using reasoning and information; in Grades 6-12, using claims and evidence from multiple sources while acknowledging counterclaims, strengths, and limitations of the arguments.
- 1.C.CV.1: Describe basic democratic principles.
- 1.G.HI.1: Describe how culture and experience influence the cultural landscape of places and regions within their communities and state.
- 2.C.CV.1: Evaluate how civic virtues guide governments, societies, and communities.
- 5.C.CV.1; 8.C.CV.1: Describe the democratic principles of equality before the law, inalienable rights, and consent of the governed...
- HS.C.CV.3: Analyze the impact of the efforts of individuals and reform movements on the expansion of civil rights and liberties locally, nationally and internationally.
- HS.C.PR.2: Explain how active citizens can affect the lawmaking process

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How to Connect with Families and Communities

Building Authentic Partnerships with Families

Start with Inclusion, Dignity, & Belonging

- Recognize disability as a natural part of human diversity rather than something to “fix” or “overcome.”
- Understand that disabilities may be visible, invisible, temporary, chronic, physical, sensory, cognitive, psychiatric, or neurodivergent.
- Partner with families as experts on their child’s strengths, needs, communication styles, and support systems.
- Move beyond compliance-based thinking and focus on creating environments where every student genuinely belongs.

Primary (K–5)

Focus Areas

Varied Strengths, Emotional Literacy, & Universal Belonging

Family Connection Strategies

- Invite families to share strategies, strengths, interests, or tools that help their child feel successful and included at school.
- Create classroom conversations that normalize differences in learning, communication, movement, and sensory experiences.
- Host inclusive family events with sensory-friendly options, visual schedules, quiet spaces, and accessible activities.
- Encourage family storytelling projects that celebrate students’ identities, talents, and lived experiences.

Recommended Resources

- Just Ask! Be Different, Be Brave, Be You by Sonia Sotomayor
- Resources from The Sensory Trust
- Picture books featuring disabled characters engaged in everyday life and problem-solving
- GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network): [glsen.org](https://www.glsen.org)
- The Trevor Project: [thetrevorproject.org](https://www.thetrevorproject.org)

Classroom & School Inclusion Tips

- Use flexible seating, visual supports, movement breaks, and multiple ways for students to participate.
- Ensure classroom visuals include children with disabilities in authentic and empowering ways.
- Avoid disability simulations (such as blindfold activities) that frame disability through pity or limitation.
- Teach students that accommodations help create fairness and access—not special treatment.

Family Event Ideas

- Inclusive Family Game Night
- Sensory-Friendly Literacy Celebration
- Universal Design STEM Night
- “Different Ways to Learn” Family Showcase