

Montgomery Township School District



Professional Development: HiTOPS

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What NJ Legislation say about LGBTQ+ inclusivity?

- CHAPTER 32: AN ACT concerning diversity and inclusion instruction in school districts and supplementing chapter 35 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.
 - The instruction shall:
 - (1) highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance;
 - (2) examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and
 - (3) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs

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What NJ Legislation say about LGBTQ+ inclusivity?

- Section 18A:35-4.35 - History of disabled and LGBTQ+ persons included in **middle and high** school curriculum
 - A board of education shall include instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, in an appropriate place in the curriculum of middle school and high school students as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

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How a Professional Development Provider is Selected

- A need is identified (based on law/curricular changes).
- Research is conducted (who offers this type of PD?).
- Prospective vendors are contacted.
- NJ Purchasing Laws are followed - depending on cost, comparative quotes or a request for proposal is needed.
- We identified two vendors and selected HiTOPS based on their ability to meet our needs.

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Professional Development Price Comparison

- IDE Corp \$2,480.00
- GOMO Educational Services \$7,500.00
- HiTOPS \$3,000.00
- Inclusive Practices \$1,600.00
- NJCIE \$2,000.00



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What has HiTOPS done for MTSD (SY 22-23)?

- Professional Development to meet the requirements of:
 - LGBTQ+ and People with Disabilities Education Act (January 2019)
 - Chapter 32 – DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) Act (March 2021)
- Professional Development on Sexual-Orientation and Gender-Identity and Expression (SOGIE) to assist in creating a safe and affirming work and learning environment for all.
- Supporting MTSD health teachers in understanding the H/PE NJSLS.
- Provided “Affirming Schools” training to our schools’ trauma informed teams.
 - An Affirming School is a place where people are accepted for the person they share that they are.

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Contract for School Year 23-24 (Professional Development):

- Peer Leader Instructors: Will provide Professional Development sessions on how to lead the designing of age-appropriate activities for the peer leaders (students) to help create an understanding of “affirming environments” for all.
- Will be providing training to School Counselors on how to best support LGBTQ+ students.
- Will be providing PD on the History of LGBTQ+ in order to meet NJ Legislation.

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What HiTOPS has never done for MTSD:

- They have never done any student-facing work.
- They did not consult or write the health curriculum.
- They have not written any curriculum for the district.

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What are the Benefits of Working with HiTOPS?

- Affirming language is used in our health classes when teaching content established by the NJSLs.
- Affirming language was presented to staff during the 22-23 staff Professional Development days. Affirming language is choosing words that are inclusive of people's truth. This might include "Sex assigned at birth", "People who identify as", or "Preferred Pronouns".

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How do we assess the work completed with HiTOPS?

- When asked “What was your favorite PD session of the day?” 35% of the faculty identified HiTOPS/SOGIE training as the BEST part of the PD day in an open-ended answer:
 - SOGIE training - it was the most relevant to my role and the presenter was phenomenal
 - SOGIE - gained a lot of knowledge and made me feel more comfortable that it's okay that I don't know everything
 - SOGIE- most pertinent to students right now
 - SOGIE - because it gave me insight to a topic that may be touching some of my students and how to respect them.
 - HiTops - presenter was knowledgeable and open. Great facts and information presented to help change the way we think about gender. WE NEED MORE OF THIS!

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Are all (health) instructional materials medically accurate?

- H/PE NJSLs 2020
 - All individuals should feel welcome and included regardless of their gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation.
 - 2.1.5.SSH.1: Describe gender-role stereotypes and their potential impact on self and others.
 - 2.1.5.SSH.2: Differentiate between sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - 2.1.5.SSH.3: Demonstrate ways to promote dignity and respect for all people (e.g. sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, differing ability, immigration status, family configuration).
 - Inclusive schools and communities are accepting of all people and make them feel welcome and included.
 - 2.1.8.SSH.1: Differentiate between gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.
 - 2.1.8.SSH.2: Develop a plan for the school to promote dignity and respect for people of all genders, gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations in the school community.

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Which part of the law requires us to spiral sexual content into the curriculum outside the Health class?

None.

- MTSD used the NJSLS in Health to guide the selection of other curricular materials that might be used outside of health classes.
 - Prior to grade 4, nothing about romantic or partner relationships is discussed.
 - Grade 5 Health defines Gender Identity, Transgender, Gender Expression, & Sexual Orientation.
 - Within the middle and high school curriculum these terms may be used to discuss political, economic, and social contributions of specific individuals.