

Proposal: GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance)

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What is a GSA?

A GSA club is a student-led group that provides peer support, leadership development, and community organizing and advocacy opportunities. Currently, there are over 4,000 GSA clubs in over 40 states.

These clubs fall into three different categories:

- ❖ Social (meet, connect, and build relationships with others)
- ❖ Support (discuss issues facing LGBTQIA+ youth/community, offer support to others)
- ❖ Advocacy (students take leadership roles in promoting awareness and change)

Why should Stanley-Boyd High School have a GSA?

The Trevor Project Information and Statistics:

- ❖ LGBTQIA+ youth are at greater risk (5x greater) for low self-esteem and suicide ideation
- ❖ Over 42% of LGBTQIA+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year (including more than half of transgender or nonbinary students)
- ❖ Only 1 in 3 LGBTQIA+ youth consider their home to be “affirming” or supporting
- ❖ LGBTQIA+ students who come from unsupportive families are over 8x more likely to attempt suicide as compared to LGBTQIA+ youth from families who show some level of support
- ❖ 48% of LGBTQIA+ youth reported wanting mental health counseling but being unable to receive it (for various reasons)

Additional Supporting Information:

- ❖ According to UCLA’s Williams Institute, approximately 9.2% of the United States’ youth population (ages 13-17) identifies as LGBTQIA+
- ❖ According to [a 2012 study](#), the presence of GSAs in schools is linked to “fewer homophobic comments from peers, less victimization related to sexual orientation and gender expression, greater school safety and school connectedness, and more instances of teacher intervention in homophobic harassment.”
- ❖ In other words, the presence of a club alone (and not necessarily involvement in it) creates a safer and more positive school experience for *all* students--not just LGBTQIA+ students

What would a SBHS GSA look like?

Specifics:

- Monthly meetings and activities supervised by an advisor and held during resource time
 - Games, team-building, researching, sharing stories/materials, outreach, projects, etc.
- Adherence to membership rules as set out by the student handbook
- This club will **not** do any fundraising or handle any funds
- This club will **not** be school sponsored
- Club advisor(s) will **not** be compensated for advising this club

The Trevor Project’s 2021 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2021/>

UCLA Williams Institute 2020 Youth Population in the United States: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Youth-US-Pop-Sep-2020.pdf>

GSA General Information: <https://gsanetwork.org/>

High School Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) and Young Adult Well-Being: An Examination of GSA Presence, Participation, and Perceived Effectiveness: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3217265/>