



News

Online high school caters to LGBTQ youth

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An online high school for students who are lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning their sexual orientation will be launched in fall 2009. The virtual high school, called, appropriately enough, GLBTQ Online High School, is meant to allow students to excel academically without concern about the negative climate many LGBTQ students face in a regular high school.

According to a survey released by The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network 86.2 percent of LGBT students were verbally harassed at school because of their orientation, and the average grade point average of harassed students was almost half a grade lower than students who were less often harassed.

"The need exists because many schools are unwilling, unaware or unable to deal with the challenges LGBT kids face in regular schools," said David Glick, one of the founders of the virtual school. "I think this is going to be a right choice for a lot of



kids."

Virtual high schools have been around since 1996, with the first ones based in Massachusetts and Florida. Glick has been setting up virtual schools for five years, including one for Native American kids and ones for kids in rural areas who may not have access to a nearby school. "This is the first one in the world catered to [the LGBT] community," Glick said.

The school promises a high quality, comprehensive, college-preparatory curriculum for students in grades 9-12 within and outside the United States, through direct contact with teachers using the best technology and techniques of distance education available, including interactive chat rooms and telephone. It will also provide online social opportunities for students, and if there are clusters of students in specific areas, the school will help them get in contact.

"This will support their academic process and let them know there are other kids like them," Glick said.

Glick said they plan to cap admission at 500 for the first year and that they do not yet know how much tuition will be, but there will be scholarships available. Right now they are seeking corporate and financial sponsors to support their project and provide financial assistance to students and families who might not be able to afford this opportunity.

For more information on GLBTQ Online High School visit gltqonlinehighschool.com.



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