

Subject: Why do GLBTQ Online High School?

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Conversation: Why do GLBTQ Online High School?

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Why create GLBTQ Online High School?

Whose choice is it?

The enthusiasm for GLBTQ Online High School continues to be widespread and extraordinary! We are grateful for all the support and interest we have received in the two months since we announced our plans.

There are a few people - okay, maybe more than a few - that are somewhat skeptical. Each in their own way, they ask, "Why do we need such a school? Doesn't that segregate kids?" Some are less kind: "Shouldn't these kids get used to getting teased? That's the way of the world." There are many ways to answer these questions. These discussions recently played out in Chicago in a way that resulted in the cancellation of the GLBT high school that had been planned.

Let's look at that situation. Some - but not all - of the GLBT community felt that GLBT kids would benefit from a separate school. Kids and families described the challenges of being GLBT in a "regular" school. Others described a reasonable comfort level in their schools and the desire not to be segregated. No one should be surprised that the GLBT community, like any other community, has multiple perspectives on an issue such as this. But whose choice should it be?

In Chicago, it became the choice of the bureaucracy of Chicago Public Schools. What happened to those kids who wanted or needed a safer place to go to school? Those who are harassed on a daily basis? Those who

First Advisory Board meeting!

We have assembled a truly extraordinary Advisory Board for this school! Check out the list on our website!

The Board is assembling for the first time on February 6. Many will be together in Bloomington, MN, and others will participate electronically. We are a virtual school, after all!

We'll be discussing policies, marketing, student enrollment, curriculum and all those other aspects of starting a school. The next newsletter will most likely be just after that meeting.

We are on our way!

where they knew they would be safe? They didn't get it. They never even got the option. That's exactly why GLBTQ Online High School is critical.

GLBTQ Online High School puts the choice in the hands of the families - not the community and not the bureaucracy of a public school system. When we're up and running next fall, kids won't need to wait for years for safe schools while their communities debate the issues.

We strongly support the efforts of GLSEN, Safe Schools Coalition and others who work hard to make "regular" schools more accepting places for GLBT youth. We believe that such work doesn't compete with our approach, but complements it.

We look forward to the day when our school can close its virtual doors because all schools, urban, suburban and rural, understand the needs of GLBT kids and thoroughly support them during the difficult time of adolescence.

Until that time, GLBTQ Online High School will exist to provide that safe, affirming place for kids everywhere looking for a high quality education in a safe community. No student deserves any less.

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