Gay Agenda in Schools – A Christian Worldview Perspective

Kerby Anderson summarizes the efforts currently underway to implement a gay agenda in our public schools, identifying some of the negative consequences. Looking at this initiative from a biblical worldview perspective, he suggests actions that Christians should take in response to these actions.

Advancing the Gay Agenda in Schools

Since the early 1990s gay activists and various homosexual groups have been using strategies that provide them with greater access to public schools. Usually the focus is upon making the schools a safer place for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and transsexual students, thereby justifying the introduction of topics and speakers on the subject of homosexuality. And the establishment of homosexual clubs on campus provides an ongoing program to continue to introduce homosexuality to students on campus.



Two key organizations are the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). Both have been helpful in establishing a foothold for homosexual speakers, programs, and curricula.

Perhaps the most effective wedge used by gay activists to open the door to the public schools has been concern over student safety. Kevin Jennings. Executive Director for GLSEN, explained in a speech how the "safety" issue was a most effective strategy:

> *In Massachusetts, the effective reframing of this issue was the key to the success of the Governor's Commission on Gay*

> *and Lesbian Youth. We immediately seized upon the opponent's calling card—safety—and explained how homophobia represents a threat to students' safety by creating a climate where violence, name-calling, health problems, and suicide are common. Titling our report "Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth," we automatically threw our opponents onto the defensive and stole their best line of attack. This framing short-circuited their arguments and left them back-pedaling from day one.{1}*

The strategy has obviously been successful because no one would want to be against making the schools a safer environment. It almost doesn't matter whether the allegations are true. Once you raise the concern of safety, most administrators, teachers, and parents quickly fall in line.

There is an irony in all of this. Many of the behaviors that are taught and affirmed in these school programs and clubs are unsafe in term of public health. For example, *Pediatrics* (Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics) reported on a Harvard study that found more than thirty risks positively associated with self-reported gay-lesbian-bisexual (GLB) orientation.{2} So it is indeed ironic that the idea of "safety" is often used as means to introduce teaching and discussion of behaviors that have been proven to be quite "unsafe."

The Goals of GLSEN

The mission statement of GLSEN is straightforward: "The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression."{3} It is a growing, well-funded homosexual organization that promotes homosexual identity and behavior on campus. It has been very successful in gaining

access on campus by working with such influential groups as the National Education Association.

Anyone who takes the time to read some of the materials recommended by GLSEN will quickly find that it condones sexual themes and information that would be disturbing to most parents. One researcher who has taken the time to review these materials and investigate various school programs came to the following seven conclusions:{4}

1. GLSEN believes the early sexualization of children can be beneficial. This means that virtually any sexual activity as well as exposure to graphic sexual images and material, is not just permissible but good for children, as part of the process of discovering their sexuality.

2. “Coming out” (calling oneself or believing oneself to be homosexual) and even beginning homosexual sex practices at a young age, is a normal and positive experience for youth which should be encouraged by teachers and parents, according to GLSEN.

3. Bisexuality, “fluid” sexuality and sexual experimentation is encouraged by GLSEN as a right for all students.

4. Meeting other “gay” and “questioning” youth, sometimes without parental knowledge, is a frequent theme in GLSEN materials. At these meetings, minors will come into contact with college-age people and adults practicing homosexuality.

5. In GLSEN material, the “cool” adults—parents, teachers and counselors—are those who encourage students to embrace homosexuality and cross-dressing. They also allow adult-level freedoms and let children associate with questionable teens or adults.

6. GLSEN resources contain many hostile, one-sided anti-Christian vignettes and opinions, as well as false information about Christianity and the Bible’s position on homosexuality.

This encourages antagonism against biblical morality and increases the risk that youth will experiment with high-risk behavior.

7. The spirituality presented positively in GLSEN resources is heavily laced with occult themes and nightmarish images.

Goals of PFLAG and Gay Clubs

PFLAG is a national organization of parents, families, and friends that "promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons."{5} It has been an active organization at the local level to promote its views of human sexuality into schools, churches, and various youth organizations. Although there is a strong emphasis on rights and tolerance, their message about sexuality would be disturbing to most parents.

One researcher who has taken the time to review their brochures and other materials came to the following five conclusions:{6}

1. PFLAG believes in total sexual license for people of all ages. For children, this means that virtually any sexual activity, as well as exposure to graphic sexual images and material, is not just permissible but good for children as part of the process of discovering their sexuality.

2. "Coming out" (calling oneself homosexual or cross-dressing) at a very young age, and even beginning early homosexual sex practices, is a desirable goal in the world according to PFLAG.

3. Bisexuality, fluid sexuality, and sexual experimentation is encouraged by PFLAG. The group believes it's important for all students to learn about these options.

4. Meeting with other "gay" and "questioning" youth, usually

without parental knowledge, is a frequent theme in PFLAG materials. At these community meetings, thirteen-year-olds will come into contact with college-age youth and adults practicing homosexuality.

5. PFLAG spreads false information about the Bible, religious faith, and restoration of heterosexuality through faith. This misinformation closes the door of change for many young people, and stirs up anti-Christian and anti-Jewish bias and hostility.

Another way the gay agenda is promoted in the public schools is through Gay-Straight Alliance clubs. In the mid-1990s, there were a few dozen Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs in U.S. high schools. Today there are 3,200 GSA clubs registered.{7}

These student-run clubs provides a meeting place for student talk about homosexuality and homosexual behaviors. It is also provides a platform for outside speakers to address various topics and for students to organize a "Pride Week" on campus. Once a year, many of the students in these clubs also participate in "The Day of Silence." This is a day when students will remain silent all day as a way of acknowledging the silence induced by those who oppose homosexuality.

Legal Liability

Is there any legal liability when schools permit and even promote the teaching of homosexual education the campus? One group (Citizens for Community Values) believes there is a potential liability. The group has published a manual documenting the potential liability that schools, administrators, and teachers might face. The following is a brief summary of much more information that can be found in the document "The Legal Liability Associated with Homosexual Education in Public Schools."{8}

Life expectancy—The *International Journal of Epidemiology* found that gay and bisexual men involved in homosexual behavior cut off years from their lives. One study showed that "life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men." They therefore concluded that if "the same pattern of mortality were to continue, we estimate that nearly half of gay and bisexual men currently aged 20 years will not reach their 65th birthday."{9}

Sexually transmitted diseases—The danger of various STDs, including HIV infection in homosexual relationships, has been well documented through many studies. The Medical Institute for Sexual Health says that "Homosexual men are at significantly increased risk of HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, anal cancer, gonorrhea and gastrointestinal infections as a result of their sexual practices. Women who have sex with women are at significantly increased risk of bacterial vaginosis, breast cancer and ovarian cancer than are heterosexual women."{10}

Other health risk behaviors—A study by Harvard University of over four thousand ninth- to twelfth-grade students found that gay-lesbian-bisexual "youth report disproportionate risk for a variety of health risk and problem behaviors" and they found that they "engage in twice the mean number of risk behaviors as did the overall population."{11}

Mental health—A study published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* found those engaging in homosexual behavior have a much higher incidence of mental health problems. "The findings support the assumption that people with same-sex sexual behavior are at greater risk for psychiatric disorders."{12}

Permitting and promoting homosexual activity through on-campus programs and clubs will certainly increase homosexual behavior among students. Administrators, teachers, and parents should reconsider the impact these programs, and the subsequent behavior, will have on the student body.

Biblical Response

When we talk about the issue of homosexuality, it is important to keep two biblical principles in tension. On the one hand we must stay true to our biblical convictions, and on the other hand we should reach out with biblical compassion. Essentially this is the balance between truth and love.

On the one hand, it is crucial for us to understand how the homosexual agenda threatens to normalize and even promote homosexuality within the schools. Moreover, gay activists are pushing an agenda in the courts, the legislature, the schools, and the court of public opinion that will ultimately threaten biblical authority and many of our personal and religious freedoms. Christians, therefore, must stand for truth.

I have provided a brief overview of the groups and programs that are promoting the gay agenda in the public schools. I encourage you to find out what is happening in your community. We have also documented the potential legal liability associated with many of the behaviors that are encouraged by these programs. Often administrators and teachers are unaware of the potential dangers associated with homosexual education in the schools. Take time to share this information with them.

On the other hand, it is also important for us to reach out to those caught in the midst of homosexuality and offer God’s grace and redemption. We cannot let the hardened rhetoric of gay activists keep us from having Christ’s heart toward homosexuals. As individuals and as the church, we should reach out to those caught in the sin of homosexuality and offer them hope and point them to Jesus Christ so that they will find freedom from the sexual sin that binds their lives.

It is important to remember that many in the homosexual lifestyle are there because of some emotional brokenness in their families. They may be trying to meet their emotional needs in ungodly ways. Youth in the public schools may be

experimenting sexually and find themselves caught up in the homosexual lifestyle.

It is also important to remember that change is possible. The testimony of hundreds of former homosexuals is proof that someone can change their sexual behavior. So are the various studies that document these same behavioral changes. And, most importantly, the Bible teaches that change in possible. Paul, writing to former homosexuals in the Corinthian church, noted that "such were some of you" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

In addressing the issue of the gay agenda in public schools, it is crucial to stay true to our biblical convictions (and stand for truth) while we also reach out with biblical compassion.

Notes

1. "'Governor's Commission for Gay Youth' Retreats to 'Safety' and 'Suicide'," *The Massachusetts News*, December 2000.
2. Robert Garofalo, et. al., "The Association Between Health Risk Behaviors and Sexual Orientation Among a School-based Sample of Adolescents," *Pediatrics*, 101 (5), May 1998, 895-902.
3. GLSEN website, www.glsen.org.
4. Linda Harvey, "Children at Risk: GLSEN, Corruption and Crime," Mission America, 2003, http://www.missionamerica.com/oldagenda26.php.
5. PFLAG website, www.pflag.org.
6. Linda Harvey, "The World According to PFLAG," Mission America, 2003, http://www.missionamerica.com/stoppflag2.php.
7. Marilyn Elias, "Gay teens coming out earlier to peers and family," *USA Today*, 8 February 2007, 1A.
8. "The Legal Liability Associated with Homosexual Education in Public Schools," Citizens for Community Values, www.ccv.org/Legal_Liability_of_Homosexuality_Education.htm.
9. R. S. Hogg, et. al., "Modeling the impact of HIV disease on mortality in gay and bisexual men," *International Journal of*

Epidemiology, 26 (1997), 657-661.
10. “Health Implications Associated with Homosexuality,” Monograph published by *The Medical Institute for Sexual Health*, 1999.
11. Robert Garofalo, *Pediatrics*, 1998.
12. Theo G.M Sandfort, et. al., “Same-Sex Sexual Behavior and Psychiatric Disorders,” *Archives of General Psychiatry*, Vol. 58 (1) January 2001, 85-91.

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