



NJDOE News

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New Jersey Ranked #1 in Supporting Safe School Laws for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Students and Educators

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) ranked New Jersey first in its inaugural 2004 State of the States Report. This report analyzes and measures statewide policies that ensure safety of all students, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. New Jersey received a score of 95 and is one of only two "A" grades on a list that saw 42 states receive failing grades.

"This ranking is a testament to our commitment to provide a thorough and efficient education for New Jersey's students in a safe environment regardless of race, creed, gender or sexual orientation," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "Through the provision of guidelines for local districts in terms of school violence and intervention and referral services, the department has taken affirmative steps in this regard and will continue to work towards zero tolerance."

All 50 states and the District of Columbia were given letter grades based on points granted in six categories, including the existence of statewide safe schools laws, statewide non-discrimination laws, support for education on sexual health and sexuality, local safe schools policies, general education issues (e.g. student/teacher ratios, graduation rates) and the existence of laws that stigmatize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people (LGBT).

New Jersey was also one of only eight states and the District of Columbia to have statewide legal protection for students based on sexual orientation and one of three states that have protection based on gender identity or expression.

GLSEN's 2004 State of the States report summarizes the laws affecting students, particularly LGBT students, in K-12 schools nationally. The report continues the organization's comprehensive collection of data and information related to education issues impacting LGBT students, teachers and staff.

GLSEN, established nationally in 1995, is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students.

For more information on this report, please access the organization's website at:

www.glsen.org

For more information about the department's efforts, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.