



How to Start a GSA

Frequently Asked
Questions



Q: Where do I find information about starting a GSA at my school?


A: You can download the PDF [here](#)

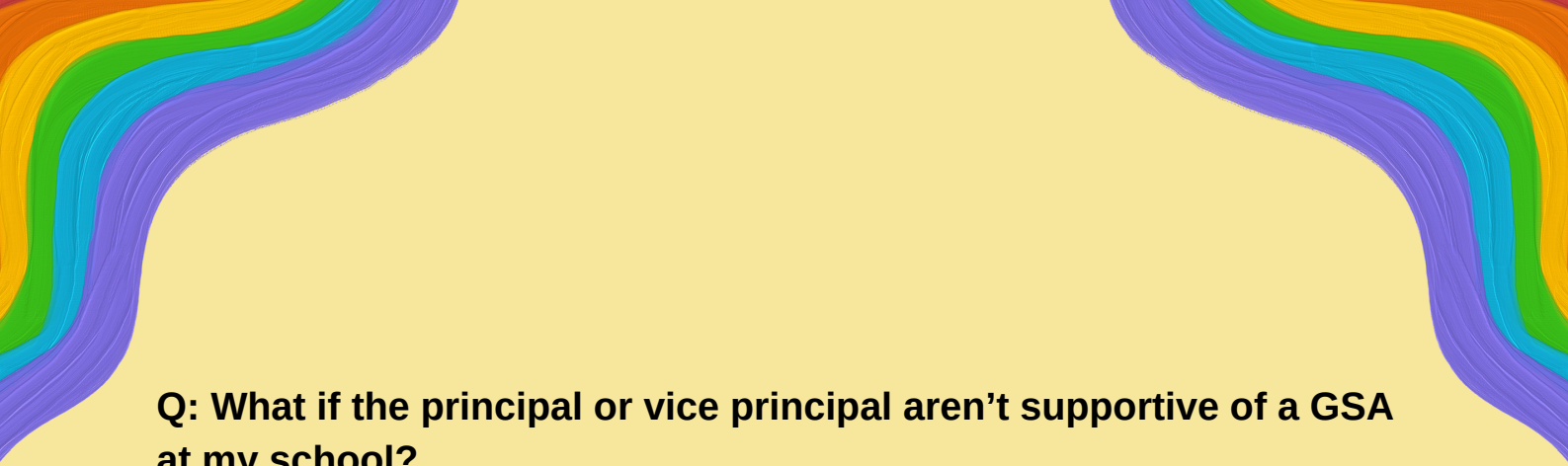
Q: Do I/we need to fill out a form to start a GSA?

A: Yes. The google form can be found [here](#).

Q: What does GSA mean?

A: GSA is an abbreviation for a type of affinity group or club called Genders and Sexualities Alliance. There are other names for groups that serve the same function. Some of those name include: Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA), Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA), and Queer Student Alliance (QSA). Of course, your group can come up with a name and fun acronym that better encapsulates your personality, needs, and/or mission.





Q: What if the principal or vice principal aren't supportive of a GSA at my school?

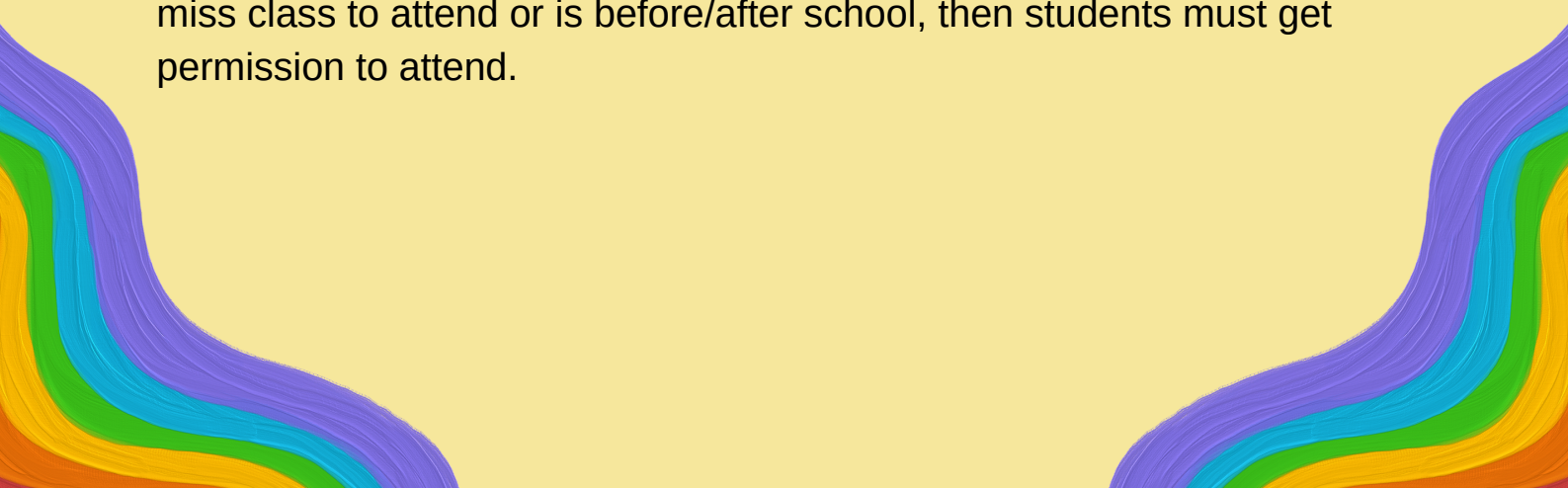
A: There is an [Administrative Directive, 4.40.050-AD](#) Student Clubs, that outlines how student clubs operate. Contact the LGBTQ2SIA+ Program Manager with information on this web page.

Q: What do I say if a school employee discourages starting a GSA?

A: If you feel comfortable, you can start a conversation with them about the many reasons why such a space is necessary. Forming/providing a GSA space is protected under the [Federal Access Act](#). All GSA clubs must be treated just like every other school club on campus.

Q: Is a GSA a club that parents, guardians, or family members have to opt-in or opt-out of?

A: No. As long as a club meets during non-instructional time during the school day, parents, guardians, and family members do not have to opt-in or opt-out. Students get to decide how they spend their recess and lunch time. If the group meets at a time when students would have to miss class to attend or is before/after school, then students must get permission to attend.



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Q: What is an affinity group?

A: An affinity group is a designated safer space where everyone in the group shares a particular aspect of identity. Affinity groups can be groups based on race, ethnicity, physical or mental ability, language, class, religion, etc. Only people with the shared identity are able to join an affinity group. GSAs are an affinity group for students with non-dominant systemic sexual orientations and gender identities. So for GSAs, only students with non-dominant systemic sexual orientations and gender identities or students who are questioning can join.

For more questions about affinity groups, [read this FAQ](#) from Children's Day School in San Francisco. We encourage schools to create a student group, in addition to their GSA, where allies and LGBTQ2SIA+ students can be in community together.

Q: What is a non-dominant systemic identity?

A: In the US, there are groups of people who have dominant and/or non-dominant identities. Dominant identity groups have historically and systemically had power over non-dominant identity groups which continues today. This means that the non-dominant identity groups have historically and systemically not had power which results in many inequities and exclusion. For example, heterosexual or straight people are the dominant systemic identity group and queer and trans people are the non-dominant systemic identity group.