Tennessee

OVERALL STATE POLICY SCORE

-2/7

Tennessee has adopted discriminatory policies that disaffirm or exclude LGBTQ+ youth

GLSEN's school climate research has surfaced four core supports that schools can use to promote young people's ability to thrive and reach their full potential: comprehensive policies that prohibit victimization, supportive educators and other adult allies, inclusive curriculum, and access to GSAs (Gender and Sexuality Alliances or Gay-Straight Alliances). When these **Four Supports** are in place, LGBTQ+ students, particularly those who are transgender, nonbinary, Black, Indigenous, people of color, and people with disabilities, experience less harassment and discrimination, report better academic achievement via indicators such as GPA, report better mental health and emotional well-being, and experience more positive and welcoming school climates overall. For information about the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in Tennessee, refer to this **state research snapshot**, which contains Tennessee data from the 2019 National School Climate Survey.

GLSEN advocates for **public policies** that establish the four core supports in schools. This scorecard shows how this state's policies compare with many of GLSEN's policy recommendations to cultivate affirming and inclusive schools.

GLSEN calculated the state's overall score based on the following policies with the highest possible score being 7 and the lowest possible being -6. Note that with the exception of Puerto Rico, the U.S. territories do not have Every Student Succeeds Act state reporting requirements to measure, so those jurisdictions have 5 points as a maximum possible score. States' and territories' scores will be evaluated biennially.

REMOVING BARRIERS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Total Score: Athletics policies	-1
(+) Friendly state athletic association guidance	0
(-) Unfriendly state athletic association guidance	0
(-) Anti-trans athletics law and/or executive order	-1
Total Score: Enumerated anti-bullying and harassment laws	0
(+) Enumerated LGBTQ+ law or regulation	0
(-) Prohibits LGBTQ+ protections from bullying and harassment	0
Total Score: Student nondiscrimination policies	0
(+) LGBTQ+ nondiscrimination law or regulation	0
(+) Additional State Education Agency guidance	0
(-) Prohibits SOGI protections from discrimination	0

(+) For each policy that supports LGBTQ+ students, the state receives one point (1)

(-) For each discriminatory policy, the state receives a negative point (-1)

For each instance where a state has no policy, the state receives zero points (0)

AFFIRMING YOUTH

Total Score: Inclusive curricular standards	-1
(+) LGBTQ+ inclusive curricular standards laws	0
(-) “No promo homo” laws	0
(-) Laws censor teaching race/gender/LGBTQ+	-1

ADVANCING EQUITY

Total Score: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	0
(+) ESSA state plan or guidance describes actions to advance LGBTQ+ equity (recommended action: include LGBTQ+ students in state accountability system)	0
(+) ESSA state plan or guidance communicates laws, regulations, or commitments that advance LGBTQ+ equity	0

Moving Toward Adopting Affirming and Inclusive Policies

A school that is safer and more inclusive for a Black transgender girl is safer and more inclusive for all young people. An intersectional equity policy lens that affirms all facets of a young person’s identity and lived experience is necessary to create learning communities where LGBTQ+ students can flourish. GLSEN’s Public Policy Office and Chapter volunteers are available to answer questions and provide assistance on adopting and implementing these public policy recommendations. For additional questions on this scorecard and for technical assistance contact us at policy@glsen.org.

Additional Public Policy Resources

Model State Anti-Bullying and Harassment Legislation
Inclusive Curricular Standards Issue Brief
Gender Affirming and Inclusive Athletics Issue Brief
States’ Use of ESSA to Advance LGBTQ+ Equity Report