

Policy for Gender Equity

Theological foundation / purpose

As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:27-28

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, into which many who serve in Lutheran schools are baptised, God calls members of the Lutheran education community equally in shared vocation. As a community of equals we are inclusive in our practices. Equal and respectful relationships and opportunities for meaningful participation are supported for all people regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, disability or age. Lutheran Education is committed to a safe and just community where all people are included and valued.

We value the dignity of each individual person in the Lutheran schools because all are created in the image of God.

Lutheran schools are 'communities that recognise that God has intentionally created each person and that each person is uniquely gifted to live in relationship with God and others. (*Growing deep*, p 7) Therefore members of the Lutheran education community value the unique nature of every person and the gifts they bring.

Relevant to

This policy applies to all those involved in Lutheran education. It applies to the recruitment and retention of staff in Lutheran schools, the appointment of senior leaders and the composition of governing councils.

Objectives

Lutheran Education Australia (LEA) values and promotes a diverse workforce in order to achieve inclusive and sustainable education communities. LEA protects and promotes the dignity of all people who serve and study in Lutheran schools by providing accessible workplaces free from discrimination. It also supports the identification and removal of barriers that restrict the full and equal participation of women and men in the workforce.

Policy statement

Lutheran education is committed to promoting a culture that embraces gender equity at all stages of the employment cycle, including recruitment and selection, staff retention, remuneration, professional learning, health and safety.

Lutheran education is also committed to good governance policies and procedures which adopt inclusive language and participative, caring structures in all schools and systems.

Procedural principles

The effective application of this policy will:

Recognise the right of women and men to be equally valued.

Promote proportional participation of women and men in governance, school leadership and decision making.

Provide equal consideration to both women and men with appropriate skills and experience in the appointment of chairs of governing councils.

Widely advertise opportunities for leadership in ways that are easily accessed by staff members on leave.

Require principals, senior school leaders and members of governing bodies to be trained in equal employment opportunity and diversity, promotion, and termination policies and procedures.

Ensure that succession planning is aligned with gender equity strategies.

Support and encourage initiatives to increase the representation of men in teaching to improve the gender balance between women and men.

Responsibility

LEA is responsible for the regular review of this policy as well as the gathering and distribution of relevant data on an annual basis.

Regional offices are responsible for the promotion of this policy amongst their schools as well as the application of the policy in the recruitment process for principals and other relevant key leaders.

Principals are responsible for the application of this policy in the recruitment, retention and professional learning of all their employees.

Governing bodies are responsible for the application of this policy in maintaining gender balance on their boards, training in and implementation of, equal employment principles and anti-discrimination practices.

What does this mean for Lutheran schools?

Actions that schools may undertake in support of this policy may include (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- Support the retention of staff by providing a 'keep in touch' program for staff members on parenting leave.
- Monitor and analyse by gender and equity the reasons for employees staying or leaving employment in Lutheran schools.
- Promote the use of LEA governance resources on the LEA website.
- Implement mentoring and leadership development programs for both women

and men.

- Promote family friendly practices for women and men.
- Ensure all school policies concerned with gender equity meet the legislative requirements of Commonwealth and state legislation.

Definitions

School: includes all early childhood services, kindergartens, primary, secondary and F-12 schools and colleges.

Governing bodies: refers to school boards, school councils or management committees.

Principal: refers to those who have the chief executive function at a school. This may be a principal, a director, a head of college, etc.

Relevant documents

Racial discrimination Act 1975

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Age Discrimination Act 2004

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999

Relevant state based legislation

Enterprise agreements for each region

LCA Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools

LCA Standards of Ethical Behaviour

Growing deep