



The Safe Schools Coalition
2124 Fourth Ave., Seattle, WA 98121
www.safeschoolscoalition.org

American Friends Service Committee
Bainbridge Island School District's Multicultural Advisory
Council

Benton/Franklin Council for Children and Youth
Bremerton-Kitsap County Health District
Camp Ten Trees

Center for Human Services
Central Pacific Conference, United Church of Christ
Charles Wright Academy
COLAGE: Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere
Committee for Children

Dai Wai Association
Equality Washington
Families Like Ours

First Fridays
Friends of Project 10

Gay Lesbian PTSA of Greater Puget Sound
Gay Lesbian or Whatever (G.L.O.W.) at Lakeside School
GLSEN: The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network
Greater Seattle Business Association

Heart Sparkle Players
King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
Lake Washington Education Association
Lake Washington Technical Academy/ Lake Washington
Technical College

Lambert House
Lifelong AIDS Alliance
Lifespan Education Services
Mountain View High School GSA
Multifaith Alliance of Reconciling Communities
Nathan Hale /SummitTeen Health Center
National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC)

Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity
Northwest Proud
OASIS/Pierce County AIDS Foundation
Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation Social
Concerns Committee

Oregon Safe Schools and Community Coalition
OSPI: The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
of Washington State

Out Front Labor Coalition – Pride at Work, AFL/CIO
Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) --
nine local chapters:
Bainbridge/Bremerton/Kitsap County,
Eugene/Springfield, Kittitas County, North
Olympic Peninsula/Port Townsend, Seattle,
South King County, Vancouver/SW Washington,
Wenatchee, Yakima/Yakima Valley

Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Western Washington and
the Inland Northwest

Pride Foundation
Public Health - Seattle & King County
Puget Sound Community School
Rainbow Center
Ravenna United Methodist Church
RESYST: Resources for Youth, Students and Trainers

Ruth Dykeman Children's Center
Safe Schools of Wyoming
School Nurse Organization of Washington
Seattle Academy of Arts and Sciences
Seattle Commission for Sexual Minorities
Seattle Counseling Service for Sexual Minorities
Seattle LGBT Community Center
Seattle Office for Civil Rights
Seattle Public Schools' Comprehensive Health Education
Program

Snohomish County GLOBE Youth Program
Spokane Public Schools' Equity Education Office
Stonewall Youth

Teen Line
TEN: The Eastside Network

Turning Institute
Washington Association of School Social Workers
Washington Education Association and its Gay, Lesbian,
Bisexual and Allies' and Women's Caucuses
Washington State University's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and
Allies Program
Western Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation
Youth Guardian Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 16, 2003

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**SAFE SCHOOLS COALITION THANKS TEACHER FOR OBJECTING TO
GAY SLUR ... IT SHOULD NEVER BE DONE WITH A COUNTER-SLUR**

SEATTLE – It is appropriate for a teacher to intervene when a student uses a homophobic, sexist or racist remark – but it should never, ever be done with a counter-slug.

On behalf of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community, we want to commend first-year teacher Brian Emanuels for trying to take steps to correct the pejorative use of the term "gay" that so many adults choose to ignore. We need to say, too, however, that the WAY in which Mr. Emanuels intervened was inappropriate. It is NOT the wish of the LGBT community to have its allies use counter-punches when a student steps over the line and expresses a prejudice. Using a racial epithet as a means of empathy-building doesn't work and is frankly wrong.

We would like to see the Seattle Public Schools provide training for every employee regarding appropriate, healthy, productive ways to uphold its anti-harassment policy. We think it would be extremely unfortunate if this teacher's hurtful way of correcting a student – and its community-wide and administrative repercussions -- led other teachers to fear intervening at all. There are absolutely ways to explain how wrong something is without using another slur as an analogy. Let's make sure every educator has had a chance to see them modeled and to practice them.

We appreciate Mr. Emanuels' trying to do something in the face of a student's expression of prejudice. And we stand with the NAACP and others in expressing our tremendous distress at his choice of words.

-- 30 --

supplementary info:
<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/IfTheseWereRacialSlurs.PDF>

*Helping schools - at home and all over the world - become safe places
where every family can belong, where every educator can teach,
and where every child can learn,
regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation*