



Media Release

Youth Pride Inc.

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Youth Pride Inc. Opposes Mount Saint Charles Academy Policy on Transgender Students

Providence, Rhode Island (March 5th, 2016) Youth Pride Inc., a Rhode Island non-profit organization dedicated to the needs of LGBTQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning) youth, strongly opposes Mount Saint Charles Academy's policy banning transgender students from the school.

Statements released on Friday from Mount Saint Charles Academy indicate that school officials believe that their facilities "do not presently provide the school with the ability to accommodate transgender students" and that it "has been exploring ways in which it might provide reasonable accommodations for transgender students and fulfill its mission."

Youth Pride Inc. has reached out to the school to offer information and professional development on best practices for supporting transgender students, and believes that excluding students is not an acceptable solution to being unprepared to provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

"I am encouraged by the passionate allies, including hundreds of MSC alumni, who are asking the school to reconsider the policy and work together towards a solution that supports students while respecting the school's mission," said Executive Director Kerri Kanelos, "It is clear that people care deeply about the Mount Saint Charles community and want to ensure that their school is inclusive and supportive."

According to the 2013 National School Climate Survey by Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), 75.1% of transgender students felt unsafe at school because of their gender expression. "Schools play a vital role in the development of LGBTQQ youth," said Kanelos, "A positive school climate has been associated with decreased depression, absenteeism, suicidal feelings, and substance abuse."

Youth Pride Inc.'s mission is to meet the unique and ongoing needs of youth and young adults impacted by sexual orientation and gender identity/expression through advocacy, support and empowerment to bring about social change.