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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Safe Schools Condemns Florida's Expansion of "Don't Say Gay" Law as a Direct Attack on Queer Youth

Miami, Florida, April 19, 2023 - Safe Schools, a leading advocacy organization for LGBTQ+ youth, condemns the recent expansion of Florida's controversial "Don't Say Gay" law as a direct attack on the rights and well-being of queer youth. The organization has been warning of the potential consequences of such an expansion since the law was first introduced in 2022.

On April 19, 2023, the Florida Board of Education approved a ban on classroom instruction about sexual orientation and gender identity in all grades, expanding the law that previously banned these lessons up to grade 3. This expansion comes at the request of Governor Ron DeSantis, who is gearing up for an expected presidential run.

The new rule would ban lessons on sexual orientation and gender identity from grades 4-12, unless required by existing state standards or as part of reproductive health instruction that students can opt-out of. Critics argue that the expansion further marginalizes LGBTQ+ students and encourages self-censorship among educators.

In addition to the "Don't Say Gay" expansion, the Florida House recently passed bills on gender-transition treatments, bathroom use, and keeping children out of drag shows. These moves are seen as part of Governor DeSantis's aggressive conservative agenda, which has drawn criticism from LGBTQ+ advocates and President Joe Biden, who called the "Don't Say Gay" law "hateful."

Safe Schools believes that these legislative actions politicize children and young adults by ignoring scientific and psychological facts in favor of a singular religious view being passed for pseudo-science. The organization calls on supporters and allies to stand with LGBTQ+ youth in Florida and to continue advocating for their right to be seen, heard, and valued in educational spaces.

Safe Schools is committed to fighting for the rights of LGBTQ+ students in Florida and across the nation. We will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that all students can learn and grow in environments that are safe, inclusive, and affirming of their identities.

For more information about Safe Schools and our ongoing efforts to protect LGBTQ+ youth, visit our website at [www.safeschoolssouthflorida.org](http://www.safeschoolssouthflorida.org).

## About Safe Schools

Safe Schools is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating safe and inclusive learning environments for LGBTQ+ youth. We work with schools, educators, students, and families to ensure that all students have the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Our programs and resources aim to educate, empower, and support LGBTQ+ students and their allies in the ongoing fight for equality and acceptance in schools across the country.

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