



PUTTING LGBTQ HISTORY IN ITS
RIGHTFUL PLACE—THE CLASSROOM

Family Engagement Strategy

*A guide for schools and districts on **why** family engagement matters when adopting the History UnErased curriculum and **how** to stand up a family leader cohort at your school.*

About History UnErased



Putting LGBTQ history in its rightful place - the classroom.

Our Background

Founded in 2015, History UnErased is a nonprofit organization dedicated to integrating LGBTQ-inclusive history into K-12 education. What began as a single classroom initiative has expanded to impact approximately 3,000,000 students annually across nearly 3,000 schools in 18 states.

What We Do

- Deliver the only K-12 LGBTQ-inclusive US history, civics, and social studies curriculum aligned with state standards
- Inspire educators with best practices rooted in real world scenarios
- **Facilitate caregiver sessions to foster meaningful school partnerships**



MASTERPIECE CAKESHOP V.
COLORADO (2018)

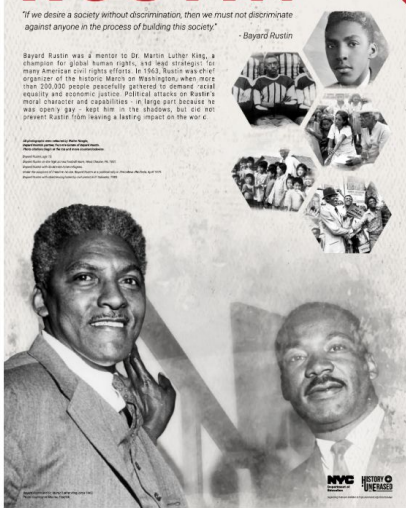
ABRIDGED WITH NARRATOR

The following abridged version of the oral arguments in the 2018 Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission Supreme Court case is designed to develop a deeper understanding of the Supreme Court's efforts to reconcile the question of the authority of the State to protect the rights of same-sex couples who face discrimination when they seek goods or services and the right of all persons to exercise fundamental freedoms under the First Amendment.

Other than the narrator's part, no words have been added to the transcript.



BAYARD
RUSTIN



2018
MASTERPIECE
CAKESHOP V. COLORADO
CIVIL RIGHTS
COMMISSION (2018)
DRAMATIC READING

This dramatic reading of an abridged version of the oral arguments highlights the complexities the Supreme Court faces as it attempts to reconcile the authority of the State to protect the rights of same-sex couples who face

discrimination when they seek goods or services and the right of all persons to exercise fundamental freedoms

The History UnErased and Connections curriculum engages students in standards-aligned, LGBTQ-inclusive content spanning Colonial America to the 21st Century.

1963 – 1964
BAYARD RUSTIN: MARCH
ON WASHINGTON

Did the civil rights leaders' defense of Rustin's characters and capabilities against Strom Thurmond's attack in 1963 inadvertently create an opportunity for Congress to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964?



1890 – 1930
THE CHANGING WORLD
OF MAGNUS
HIRSCHFELD

How did social and political conditions in Germany impact Magnus Hirschfeld's scientific work?



1629
THOMAS/THOMASINE
HALL

Why was the determination of the gender identity of Thomas / Thomasine Hall important to the community of Warrosquyacke in colonial Virginia?

Our Impact



87.5%

of teachers responded that their students' knowledge of history and civics improved with LGBTQ-inclusive content

25%

of teachers responded that student attendance improved with LGBTQ-inclusive classroom instruction

18%

of teachers responded that their students' ability to contextualize history improved with LGBTQ-inclusive content

Results based on Fall 2024 survey of teachers integrating the History UnErased curriculum within their mainstream courses.



Common Misconceptions

We recognize that parents and caregivers may have misconceptions about the History UnErased curriculum. **Strong family-school partnerships** help give families a clear, accurate picture of what their children will be learning.

Below are examples of real questions that caregivers have asked about the History UnErased curriculum.

“Why does it [LGBTQ-inclusive history] need to be taught to such young children?”

Our Response: We have consulted with experts in elementary education and use developmentally aligned language. Our K-3 curriculum allows students to see and engage with intersectionality without LGBTQ-specific language.

Why is this a concern when we still have not integrated black history lessons correctly?”

Our Response: From Colonial America to the 21st Century, students engage with a richer history that is LGBTQ-inclusive and intersectional, whether it is race, gender, ethnicity, and/or nationality.

“I feel as a parent, that I should have an option as to what my children are exposed to. This to me equates to sex education where I can opt in or opt out.”

Our Response: We don't focus on sexual health education. Our curriculum is primary source-based and it is connected to concepts in state frameworks, including early colonial America, the Civil War, WWII, civil rights, and more.



Why Family Engagement Matters



At History UnErased, we believe that all families should feel informed, empowered, and included in their children's education. Research shows that family engagement is consistently linked to better outcomes for students, educators, and families. By adopting a family engagement model as students engage with the History UnErased curriculum, schools will build trust with caregivers and equip families to support student learning.

What is family engagement?

A full, equal, and equitable partnership among families, educators, and community partners to promote children's learning and development.

- **Full:** All partners work together to promote children's learning and development
- **Equal:** All partners bring valuable knowledge to the table
- **Equitable:** All partners are empowered to work with one another to remove barriers that perpetuate inequities and injustice

Definition adopted from the Connecticut State Department of Education (2018), who co-created a common definition of family engagement with community partners.

Family Leader Cohort Model

In our collaboration with schools and districts, we have seen that strong family-school partnerships are needed to address the misconceptions that exist when adopting our LGBTQ-inclusive US history, civics, and social studies curriculum. This is why we recommend that when a school adopts our curriculum, they form a **Family Leader Cohort**, or a group of caregivers that develops the knowledge, skill, will, and capacity to champion inclusive curriculum in their school community.

By adopting this model, you will...

- Build trust by proactively helping families learn about the curriculum
- Reduce misinformation and address concerns early
- Empower caregivers with the knowledge and tools to support their children
- Equip educators to engage with families in inclusive, strengths-based ways
- Foster a shared understanding across caregivers and educators for why inclusive history matters for all students



Theory of Change

A theory of change describes the logical sequence of actions that will lead to a desired change. Below is the theory of change for adopting a family leader cohort model when using our curriculum. This is grounded in the [Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family School Partnerships](#), a research-based framework for designing family engagement strategies, policies, and programs.

If...	Then...	As a result...
<p>Educators create open spaces to engage with families on knowledge-building & advocacy for LGBTQ inclusive academics</p> <p>Families participate in learning sessions to build their understanding of LGBTQ inclusive educational practices</p>	<p>Educators will support families in addressing misconceptions and engage families as partners in student learning</p> <p>Families will learn what the curriculum is (and isn't), understand the importance of an LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, and build skill in engaging with their child's academic content</p>	<p>Educators & families will develop their capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build relational trust between families and schools • Support student learning inside and outside of the classroom • Advocate for inclusive education for all



Building a Family Leader Cohort

Based on research on effective family engagement practices and our experience with family-school partnerships, we recommend the following steps when designing your family leader cohort.

1. Build relational trust

For families to engage openly, start by building relationships that are grounded in mutual trust. Listen without judgment, follow through on next steps, and respect each family's cultural perspective.

2. Link to learning

Focus on what students are learning and the role families can play to support, sharing sample lessons and at-home discussion prompts so that caregivers can reinforce learning at home.

3. Incentivize participation

Respect families' time and effort and ensure they feel that their engagement is valued. Based on school policies, offer child-care, meals, or stipends.

4. Ensure accessibility

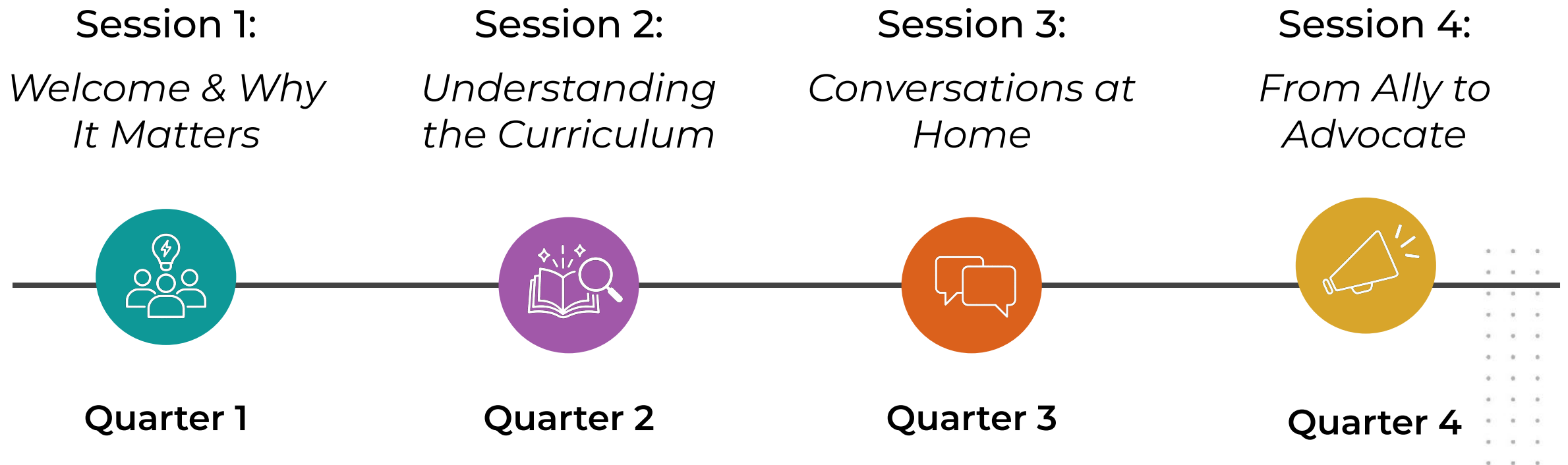
Hold sessions at varied times, provide interpretation and translation, offer virtual options, and tailor content to the entry point of participants so that every caregiver can participate.



Family Engagement Scope & Sequence



We recommend that your family leader cohort participates in quarterly learning sessions to build their knowledge, skill, will, and capacity to champion inclusive curriculum. Below is an example scope & sequence for these meetings.





Session 1: Welcome & Why It Matters



Purpose

- Begin to build **relational trust** with families by listening to their experiences.
- Discuss the **role and importance of family engagement** in education.



Activity

- **Family Storytelling & Identity Reflection:** Invite families to share their personal experiences with education. Create and share identity maps so families can reflect on how their identity influences their view of the education system.
- **Addressing Misconceptions:** Conduct a pre-meeting survey to collect questions and concerns held by participants. Create space to acknowledge, discuss, and address any misconceptions about LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum.



Session 2: Understanding the Curriculum



Purpose

- **Deepen parent knowledge and skill** in engaging with the curriculum and its key components.
- Provide an **overview of the curriculum**, highlighting how it empowers students to think critically, respect diversity, and engage with inclusive history.



Activity

- **Curriculum Walkthrough:** Provide families with an overview of the curriculum scope & sequence, giving the opportunity to ask questions about the content.
- **Mini-Lesson:** Deliver a mini-lesson that students will be learning from an upcoming unit. Provide families with student work samples and lesson materials so they can see how the curriculum is used.



Session 3: Conversations at Home



Purpose

- **Build family skill and capacity** to have open, respectful, and educational conversations at home.
- **Provide resources and language** for families to use to engage in their child's learning.



Activity

- **Learning at Home:** Using an upcoming lesson, provide families with sample questions they can use to discuss what their child is learning. As homework, families will use these prompts with their child, and share back how the conversation went.
- **Role Play Scenarios:** Practice conversations families may have with their children, such as *“What is LGBTQ history and why is it important?”* or *“Why have these stories been left out of our history books until now?”*



Session 3: Conversations at Home

Additional Tips

Why Conversations Matter

- Discuss the importance of continuing the dialogue on inclusive history outside of school.
- Explain how LGBTQ history and diverse narratives help children understand different perspectives and promote respect.

Creating Safe Spaces

- Foster a non-judgmental environment for children to explore sensitive topics about inclusion and history.
- Encourage open dialogue and active listening to promote understanding.

Show that you C.A.R.E.

C **Clarify:** Be clear about your intentions and the issue at hand.

A **Acknowledge:** Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

R **Request:** Make clear and respectful requests for what you need.

E **Empathize:** Show understanding and compassion for the other person's feelings.



Session 4: From Ally to Advocate



Purpose

- Build the will and the capacity of families to **move from allyship to active advocacy** for LGBTQ inclusivity in education and in their communities.



Activity

- **Reflection Circle:** Families reflect on the prompt, *“I used to think... now I think...”* to recognize how their mindsets have shifted through the cohort.
- **Community Panel:** Invite parents or community members with experience in LGBTQ advocacy to share stories and advice. Reflect on a video or reading if external participants are not available.
- **Action Planning:** Families identify one step they can take within the next quarter to advocate for LGBTQ inclusion in their community or school and select an accountability partner to help them follow through.



Session 4: From Ally to Advocate

Additional Tips

Advocacy means taking **action** to **support and defend** an LGBTQ-inclusive education.



How Families Can Advocate

- 1 Use Your Voice:** Speak up in school or board meetings in support of an LGBTQ-inclusive education.
- 2 Press for Policies:** Push to formalize LGBTQ-inclusive education in school policies.
- 3 Promote Awareness:** Share resources with other families and encourage others to get involved.
- 4 Lobby for Change:** Write to decision-makers, like school board members, superintendents, and policymakers urging support.



Measuring Impact

When you set up your family leader cohort, it is important to build data collection into the plan from day one. Below are the levels of evidence that you can use to understand the impact of this work on families and students.

Level 1: Session Satisfaction	Level 2: Family Learning	Level 3: Student Impact
<p>Key Questions:</p> <p>Did families value each session? Did they feel heard and respected?</p>	<p>Key Questions:</p> <p>Are families better informed, more confident, and stronger advocates?</p>	<p>Key Questions</p> <p>Are students benefiting from expanded family-school partnerships?</p>
<p>Data Source:</p> <p>Individual session exit ticket</p>	<p>Data Source:</p> <p>Pre & post-survey for the Family Leader Cohort</p>	<p>Data Source:</p> <p>Beginning of year, mid-year and end-of year student academic & culture data</p>

THANK YOU!



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