

Bisandi ([00:00](#)):

Welcome back to Gender School: Smash the System. This'll be our last episode, but it's going to be a good one. I'm your cohost Bisandi. And I'm passionate about smashing the system! In today's episode, you'll get to hear us talk about our data, our thoughts on the issues of inclusion in our schools and in our projects and what our action steps are going to be; what we're going to do after the project. The episode we'll finish with an interview with the other half of our team on their project. It's going to be fun. Enjoy the podcast y'all.

Bisandi ([00:42](#)):

All right. All right. Welcome back to our podcast. Y'all I'm your cohost Bisandi, and feel free to use whatever pronouns you want. We can start with introductions. To my cohosts, you can start with your name, pronouns, and school, if you feel comfortable sharing.

Tori ([01:02](#)):

Hi, it's so great to have another episode to talk on. These are always so fun. My name is Tori. You can use she and they pronouns for me. And I'm a senior at Eagan high school.

Bisandi ([01:14](#)):

I can go next go next. I'll just introduce myself. My name is Bisandi, any pronouns, and I go to Eastview high school in district 196.

Kai ([01:25](#)):

My name is Kai. I use he/they pronouns and I go to Brooklyn Center:steam.

Bisandi ([01:33](#)):

Cool, amazing! Gender inclusion guys. It's important. It's our project, but it's also something that we're all collectively passionate about. And I said this before, I'll repeat myself. I want this to be more of an open conversation and less about numbers and statistics, because I think we've been doing a lot of that in previous episodes, which by the way, shameless plug, go check out our other episodes. They're so awesome. I think Tori did an episode. I don't think, I know, Tori did an episode where she did an interview with a district leader in St. Paul. I think they were, were they a district coordinator or?

Tori ([02:17](#)):

Yeah, the, um, Equity Coordinator at south St. Paul public schools. And we talked all about education, ways teachers can be better, and how gender inclusion policies directly affect LGBTQ students in schools.

Bisandi ([02:30](#)):

Yes, it was so good. The conversation was amazing and I think there's a lot to learn from it. And Kai, do you want to explain your episode a little bit?

Kai ([02:40](#)):

My episode is episode number two and it is about, well we're really talking about, um, statistics and what teachers can do to better help their students feel more included in the classroom.

Bisandi ([03:14](#)):

Yes, it's going to be great. It's going to be awesome. Take a couple of minutes, like 30 maybe to listen, cause it's going to be good. So I will open up with a question to my cohosts: Is there anything that you want to share about your experiences in your own schools in terms of gender inclusion, sexuality, et cetera, et cetera.

Tori ([03:50](#)):

In my own personal experiences with, um, gender inclusion at Eagan high school, um, I feel like gender inclusion isn't really talked about, um, and people don't really notice it. Unless someone specifically brings up an instance, like teachers will talk about how they feel like they're creating a very inclusive and all welcoming classroom. But then you go into a gym class and the teacher might say, oh, we need two teams. Let's just do girls and boys. And then suddenly all of that flies out the window. And for trans and gender nonconforming students, or maybe even people that just don't want to be grouped in with either gender, that, that just kind of throws all of that. Like teachers are so welcoming and creating that classroom. It just blows that out of the window. So.

Bisandi ([04:38](#)):

A hundred percent, I agree. I don't, I don't think gender inclusion is talked about at all in our schools. Like, I've, I've never once seen any kind of like, and not that this really means anything, but teachers have never really talked about it. There's no like, you know, signs in their classroom indicating that they're welcoming and a safe place for students to be. And I think, you know, that stuff's important. And also just the use of, as you said, like gendered terms in the classroom, like girls and boys separate, like, oh, the boys will sit here and the girls will sit here. That's so toxic. And so just not a step in the right direction.

Tori ([05:26](#)):

Yeah. And you talked about teachers putting up signs for like a safe space. Sometimes I'll actually see a lot of those signs for like, this is a safe space in Eagan high school classrooms. But what I, what I wonder is what do the teachers think that those little stickers or signs are really doing? I wonder if they're putting up those stickers that say this is a safe space for everyone. I wonder what, what do you mean by that? What do you do every single day that makes the classroom a safe space? And I think some teachers might be like, well, it's a safe space. And then we might be asking, well, what makes it that way? And teachers don't really reach out to their students for feedback. Like, "Hey, am I doing a good job making this a safe space?" Because they're just like, I'm inclusive. I did the best I could do. And then they move on. But gender inclusion is definitely kind of a buried issue beneath some of the more pressing issues in, in education.

Kai ([06:26](#)):

Yeah. And in my school, um, like I know I have teachers who will put their pronouns and their Zoom name, but then still start class by saying ladies and gentlemen. And they'll have little stickers up on their door or whatever. And so, you know, it's kind of a thing where it's kind of like a mixed message, you know, like what are you...You know, you may do these things, but like, are you really, are you really doing the most you can for your students besides what's just expected of you? But my school is working to be a bit more inclusive recently. I had a conversation with the principal and we're hoping to get some more inclusive bathroom signs up. So that is helpful.

Tori (07:09):

When when it comes to bathroom signs, something I've seen like in public spaces, like, like transit space, um, like public transportation spaces, have been like these signs that have like unicorns or aliens on them, or they'll say stuff like whatever, just wash your hands. And personally, I just want to put it out there, I find those signs very offensive because they just make it like girls, boys, and then whatever. And it's like this weird other species, like sure you get a bathroom, just wash your hands. And I don't know, that just seems really stupid. I don't know if you've all ever seen those like aliens or unicorn is on and it's just like, whatever. I find that really offensive because it's like, non-binary people have been here like forever and they're not weird and they're not some strange alien creature, just put up a sign that says, Hey, we're inclusive, or, any gender or, bathroom. Like, I don't know that bugs me.

Bisandi (08:11):

Yeah. A hundred percent. That's so weird. I think that just like promotes like this idea that as you said, like, non-binary people are like weird or this like weird alien species that's so different from the rest of us. And I think it promotes like, again, a sense of like isolation from your peers and being that you're like so different from everyone else. You're not normal.

Tori (08:37):

Yeah, exactly. Like with the mythical creatures, it's like, this isn't normal, but here's a space to pee. Like I see the effort, but.

Bisandi (08:47):

I've never seen that in a bathroom in my school.

Tori (08:51):

You haven't?

Bisandi (08:51):

But if I did,

Tori (08:53):

I've seen them in airports. I've seen them in public transportation. I have not seen them at a school, but I haven't really seen a gender neutral bathroom at a school,

Bisandi (09:02):

True. Ours is a nurse's bathroom. What is that?

Tori (09:09):

What do you all think about having a gender neutral bathroom in the nurse's office or in the counselors administrative office?

Kai (09:16):

Think that's kind of isolating that like, because for the most part you'd probably have to like, you know, interact with the nurse and it's kinda just like out of the way kind of thing to deal with, you know? And

like, you'd have to kind of probably interact with some other people. Like my nurse's office at my school is like in the main office and stuff, so there'd be like a lot of people, you know, you'd have to interact with and stuff. But, my school has a gender neutral bathroom was actually supposed to be built to be a gender neutral bathroom, but there's only a handicap sign, on the outside, which is great that it is accessible, but it was not originally intended to be built that way. The construction workers messed it up. They messed up like the whole design of the bathroom. It was supposed to be multiple stalls inside of there, floor to ceiling walls, but they messed it up. So yeah.

Tori ([10:07](#)):

And then again, like when you have to go through the nurses office or the administrative office, every time you walk in there, I mean, no one's going to say this, but like in your head, I'd imagine you walk into that bathroom and you'd thinking that they were thinking, oh, there's the trans kid using the bathroom again, you know? And like every time you have to use the bathroom, you have to pass those people. Especially like for safety reasons, if you're not out every time you have to walk past them and be like, yes, it's me again, using the one facility that doesn't have a gender on it.

Bisandi ([10:38](#)):

Also, I think having the nurses room be like the only gender neutral bathroom is such a cop-out because like, unless a school has a facility to have two separate bathrooms for girls and boys and the nurses room, which most often they don't, then like, of course it has to be gender neutral because there's usually most of the time, only one bathroom in the nurses room anyways. So it's like, you're not making an effort to put a gender neutral bathroom in the school. That's literally your only option. So you're just saying, oh, the nurse's bathroom, you know, like that's--Yeah. Anyways. So my next question, what do you think can be done to minimize the stigma around breaking the gender binary and promoting inclusion?

Tori ([11:28](#)):

I wish my school at least had like trainings that either teachers or all faculty or students had to attend, like just a huge assembly. In our gym, we can fit the entire faculty and staff. We have like these huge bleachers. I wish like at the beginning of the school year, they just did like an assembly of like resources, like making their, like maybe a resource fair, or some kind of training for faculty. Just something about like how to be inclusive and like that, that training with everyone could like cover so many things, but gender inclusion could be covered in there. I think that would, that would be amazing for the school, especially since everything moves so slowly, like, our GSA, like introduced the idea of having a gender neutral restroom other than the nurses office. And then our admin, the administration would be like, okay, we'll have to look into that and get back to you within like a couple of weeks. And then we'll have to look at our budget and then we'll have to talk to this school board. And it just like takes so long while trans kids still don't have a space to pee when they're in person. But yeah, I wish there was some kind of training, um, that was taught. Maybe they'd get speakers in maybe from Outfront to teach about like how to be gender inclusive in classrooms.

Kai ([12:48](#)):

Yeah. I definitely agree that trainings are definitely necessary. My school is planning on getting someone from Outfront to come in and do a training. I'm not sure if it's going to be mandatory though, because all of the, all of the professional developments are technically done for this year, but hopefully some teachers will attend. And, also I think it's really important that teachers like also include trans people

in the curriculum and in the classroom, like this week is trans week of visibility. And it would mean a lot to me if a teacher would mention it. And like on trans day of remembrance, I wish a teacher would have talked about that. It was a pretty hard day for me and stuff to think about all the trans people who had died in this past year. And I wish a teacher would have acknowledged that, or maybe talked a little bit about that.

Tori ([13:38](#)):

That sucks that that training wasn't mandatory, especially cause like whenever you bring in a knowledgeable person from like OutFront Minnesota or any LGBTQ organization, like one, we should be paying them and they should get all the attention, because we need to highlight trans and voices, especially in education. But like when you bring those people in and then it's not mandatory, it's kind of acting like they're not as important. Like here's a training that we feel like we need to do cause we feel pressure to do it come if you want. And so then the people that need that training the most are not going to come. So if you're going to have a crucial training that will stimulate, inclusion in classrooms, then you need to make it mandatory.

Bisandi ([14:27](#)):

To anyone's recollection, if you can like think of the data that we did, but is there any, anything in our data, in the data that we collected that was particularly surprising? Were there any expectations going in and have they changed?

Kai ([14:49](#)):

Well, I feel like across different districts, we kind of got different results. I feel like you know, for St Paul public school district, from our last episode that we were talking about I think that, it was kind of a little bit on brand for what we were thinking that because they do have a gender inclusion policy. And so the results that we got back were showing that their school is for the most part pretty inclusive. So I think that lines up kind of what we were thinking, because they do have a gender inclusion policy,

Tori ([15:35](#)):

Something that kind of surprised me, is from our data. The question do you feel comfortable expressing your gender identity in school? For district 11, the majority of the people that we surveyed said, yes, they do feel comfortable expressing their gender identity in school. And that surprised me because district 11 does not have a gender inclusion policy. But when you look at the responses of like, if you could change anything about your school to make it more gender inclusive, what would you change? When we look at those responses, nearly every response is either having a gender neutral bathroom in our school or changing the curriculum to be more gender inclusive, which have been kind of what we've been talking about. And that's, those are the things that make classrooms accessible, inclusive, and just gender inclusive as a whole.

Bisandi ([16:32](#)):

I agree with that point, That surprised me too, actually how much, um, like students from Anoka Hennepin, you know, said that they were satisfied with the gender inclusion efforts in that school, especially because I don't know if you've read up on the news in that school, but that school has a lot of cases against it.

Tori ([17:01](#)):

Kai also also reminded me, really quickly in a chat, that the majority of people that we surveyed from district 11 identified as cis-gender. So, we have to keep, like, we have to think about that when we're looking at our data as well, because while we do have, well, we do have responses from, from trans and non-binary youth in these different districts, there tends to be a majority of cisgender people answering the questions, which isn't exactly the data we were looking for. But when thinking about like, Hey, you're cisgender, do you feel comfortable expressing your gender identity in school? Oh, you do? Yeah, that makes sense. So I, I guess that affects that a lot.

Bisandi ([17:42](#)):

Not our target demographic, I'm going to have to say um, yeah.

Tori ([17:48](#)):

That's kind of something we can think about. Like the majority of people that answered that were cis said, yes, they felt comfortable expressing their gender identity. That makes a lot of sense. If you're a cisgender, it is easy, easier for you to present and express your gender in schools. So people in order to make school environments more gender inclusive and easier for people to express their gender--

Bisandi ([18:10](#)):

Let me give you a hypothetical situation here. 10, 20 years- we're members of the school board or whatever other place makes a gender inclusion policy, what would be content of an ideal gender inclusion policy look like?

Tori ([18:30](#)):

Dang, that's a good question. Sorry. That just like blew my mind a little bit.

Bisandi ([18:38](#)):

laughs Dream as big as you want.

Tori ([18:40](#)):

Kind of, kind of thinking back to what Leah said in our first episode. We talked a little bit about, um, we talked a little bit about how having the ability to change your name in a school system without having to get parents' approval or, you know, some legal document that is so important. Also in my dream gender inclusive district, we would definitely not have like dress codes. Like obviously you have to be wearing something that is appropriate to school, but there wouldn't be stupid dress codes about like what's appropriate for girls versus boys to wear. Especially because people aren't even included in that dress code. So dress codes gone, you know, besides what's appropriate. And obviously we'd have gender neutral bathrooms. I'm just going on and on. I'm just, I'm gonna keep brainstorming. What do you think Kai?,

Bisandi ([19:39](#)):

I hope you know, that I was nodding my head furiously to all of that because yes to all of that.

Tori ([19:44](#)):

Hell Yeah!

Kai ([19:46](#)):

And I love that, you know, the dress code, they're like boys and girls. So like, you know, non-binary people just do whatever you want, you know, they can get away with whatever.

Tori ([19:54](#)):

Who's staring at my shoulders and why? Like avert your eyeballs, I don't want anyone staring!

Kai ([20:01](#)):

Asking the important questions now. Yeah. So I feel like- wow, what would I do for, my dream, my dream, gender inclusion policy: I would definitely make sure gender inclusive bathrooms, students are able to change their names, be able to put their pronouns, like, you know, next to their name, like in the school system. Yeah, I'm, I'm trying, I'm trying to think of all the other things that need improvements. Yeah Definitely gender neutral bathrooms, gender neutral changing spaces, like Tori said, um,

Tori ([20:33](#)):

Gender neutral sports!

Kai ([20:35](#)):

Yeah, yeah, exactly. Gender neutral sports. That would be, that would definitely, definitely would be there.

Tori ([20:43](#)):

Everyone loves the high school football teams. Right. But like, I just think it's weird that like the biggest sport basically kind of in all American high schools and all American colleges, I think is football, which is, I think only a male dominated sport. Like I would be like, you know what, anyone of any gender, if you want to try out for this team, go for it, show me what you got.

Kai ([21:06](#)):

Yeah. I would essentially strip gender down from everything, you know, make, make the whole school as gender neutral as possible. Yeah, I would just, you know, get rid of all those kinds of oppressive things that are, you know, kind of like oppressed trans and people. And I would also, you know, like maybe, definitely have some inclusive training for teachers and staff and stuff like that. And maybe some sort of repercussions, you know, if students or staff are being transphobic or homophobic, queerphobic, definitely something like that. Definitely lots of education, you know, queer and trans people embedded in the curriculum, just as much as any other people.

Tori ([21:49](#)):

Let's get some Black trans women to speak to these students. I have never had, throughout my time at Eagan high school, one, I don't think I've ever had a speaker of color. Always old white men. So two, I also don't think I've ever had an LGBTQ speaker come to the school. And three, even if they were LGBTQ, cause you can't always know, I definitely don't think they've ever hired a trans person to come and speak to our school. So I would definitely get some Black trans women to come and speak to schools about just ways to be inclusive about fighting and justice, about liberation, about how you should go about educating your students, like to the teachers. And just bringing light to some issues that people, as we talked about, like to sweep under the rug, these voices need to be highlighted.

Bisandi ([22:42](#)):

Yes.

Kai ([22:42](#)):

Yeah, definitely. I think, definitely having very diverse representation and stuff because intersectionality is very important and also like my school is a very small school and so there's, you know, not many trans people. So I feel like and you know, my school, we, you know, get even less representation cause you know, we only, our school is small and so we only make up a very tiny portion of our school. So I feel like we can easily be overlooked.

Bisandi ([23:14](#)):

Yes. Especially to the, Black trans educators and speakers, start with the people that pioneered the gay liberation movement, start with those people because they'll have amazing things to say. But yeah, I'd say, I think with the first thing that we should start with is teacher education, staff education, educate people to be more inclusive in the classroom to make ensure that students are coming to safe and welcoming classrooms. Um, you know, ensure that kids aren't throwing like snide remarks at, um, our trans youth or nonbinary youth or LGBT youth. And if they do make sure that, you know, there's repercussions,

Tori ([24:06](#)):

Can I share like a quick little thing I just thought of, um, okay. I just, I just thought of this and I think about it almost every day. Last summer I was, uh, our school had a district 196 call-out, started by some, um, Black women and Black black non-binary students that were alumni of Eagan high school. They started this district 196 call-out to kind of talk about all the racism and injustice that district 196 had caused these students. They started this 196 call-out and I remember there was this protest being held at Eagan high school to talk about their demands for a better, more diverse and equal education in district 196. And this teacher walked by and she was like, you're never gonna, you're never gonna make any change by just standing out here and demanding stuff on the property.

Tori ([25:01](#)):

And so then one of the, one of the leaders of the protest basically said, well, why aren't you doing anything? And then I think I remember the teacher basically saying, well, I don't really know anything. I don't really know anything about what's happening. I don't really know how to help. And then, the person that was leading the protest said, so you don't know anything about what's happening in your own school? You don't know anything about the racial injustice is happening. You don't know anything. Why are you a teacher? And I just think about it all the time. Like, wow. Like the teacher was like, oh, I don't know anything. Okay. Don't record me. Um, she was like, I don't know anything. And I'm just thinking on my end that the leader of the protest was saying, if you don't know anything, why are you a teacher.

Kai ([25:55](#)):

Yeah, exactly. That is such a good comeback because honestly, you know, these teachers, they could be educating themselves. They could be, you know, reaching out to students and being like, Hey, what can I do? You know, it's not that hard just to reach out to students or, you know, to Google, like, you know, how can I be more inclusive, Google history of different people to talk about and stuff. It's not that hard

to be more inclusive, you just have to try. And so I feel like that was a really good comeback because, you know, they definitely could be doing something and if they really wanted to, they would.

Tori ([26:27](#)):

Yeah. They could just be like, oh, I don't, I don't know anything about that. I don't know how to help. I don't know how to-- why are you teaching others? If you don't know?

Bisandi ([26:35](#)):

Kai we need to get that pinned: It's not that hard-Just do it. Okay. I'm trying to look out for time, because we've been talking for a while now, I'm gonna move us ahead. So what can we do as students to help bring attention to the issues of inclusion in schools and possibly move towards a policy, possibly move towards introducing a policy?

Tori ([27:10](#)):

I would say, just get on your email and start emailing people, what you, what you want and get your friends or your clubs to start emailing people about what you want. Our school recently sent out these graduation surveys for the graduating seniors that were like, what color gown do you want? And it was like, green is for boy and blue is for girls. What color gown do you want? So I sent an email to the person that was coordinating that. And I was like, Hey, um, can you make an option that's like not girls and boys and they can just pick their gown color? And I didn't think I'd get a response, but then I got a response and it, and the coordinator was like, oh sure, thanks for asking that. I totally didn't even think of that. I just added those, the other option. And you can pick your gown color. And I was like, dang. It was that easy. All I had to do was send an email and boom, there's the option.

Kai ([27:59](#)):

Yeah emailing people and reaching out to people is really a good way to be able to get some change. You know, if you have like a trusted teacher, you know, it's really good to try to like find if you have a trusted teacher at your school, a trusted GSA leader and, you know, try to get as many students behind you as possible. You know, even if they aren't clear themselves, you know, try to get as many allies as you possibly can to be behind you because there definitely is power in the number of people, you know, if they don't listen to you right away, you know, like have some of your friends email them, you know, get as many people as you can, you know, get some administration that, you know, you know, a supportive to help reach out, you know, that's really important. And hopefully that we'll be able to create some change.

Tori ([28:42](#)):

Yeah. I think people don't know what's possible until they start looking into it until they start emailing. And then they're like, oh, dang. These people just didn't think of it. And all I had to do was ask, so all you gotta do is ask sometimes.

Bisandi ([28:55](#)):

Yeah It's that simple. I'd agree to all of that. I'd say organizing is a big thing. There is power in numbers, try and get as many people to get behind you and support what you're doing. And like you said, just send an email, send an email to the higher ups, um, get a teacher to help you. It's it's really that easy. It's not very hard.

Kai ([29:22](#)):

Yeah. And I would like to challenge the people who are listening to this to think about, think about your school, think about what could change. You know, if you're a teacher, if you're staff, if you're a student, if you're a parent, think about your school, think about what needs to change. If you're a, if you're an ally, if you're a teacher and you're an ally, ask your students, have a conversation with them and say, Hey, what needs to change? Because I want to help you. And you know, most likely, you know, there is something that the students do want to be changed at the school. And, you know, if you're, if you are an ally, if you're a student listening and you're an ally, ask your friends, ask your friends if you know, any queer people, any trans people ask them what they would possibly, you know, think that the school could be doing better and try to work towards that. Um, so just reach out to people and, you know, figure out what, if, you know, if you're an ally, reach out to people and figure out how you can best help them get change in their school and best assist them with that.

Tori ([30:17](#)):

Well said Kai, it starts with you listeners.

Bisandi ([30:22](#)):

It does. And I will have to wrap this conversation up because in a few minutes we are going to be interviewing the zine team so exciting. Um, yeah, get ready for that.

Bisandi ([30:52](#)):

Okay. It's about that time y'all, time to give a warm welcome to the other half of our team. We've been working really hard on our separate projects and they're here to tell you a little bit more about there's so y'all can go ahead and introduce yourself. We'll just keep it simple. Just say your name and your pronouns. Take it away.

Will ([31:19](#)):

I can go first. Um, my name's Will, my pronouns are he and they, and I'm on the Zine team.

Yasmin ([31:29](#)):

Hi, my name is Yasmin. My pronouns are she/her/hers and I'm on the Zine team as well.

Elliot ([31:38](#)):

I'm Elliot I use he/him and they/them pronouns and I'm also on the zine team.

Bisandi ([31:44](#)):

Awesome. So, okay. So we've all, we're all, we all know that you guys did a Zine, but for those who don't know, would you mind explaining a little bit more about what a zine is? Yeah. So a zine can really be anything that the creator wants it to be. That's one thing we learned while we were making it, it's totally subjective to the different creative processes of the people who are on your team. I think that a zine can be informational, it can be creative, it can be, paper, print, a lot of different things can come together to make a zine. But I feel like like standard zine is, very similar to a magazine. There's, it's very visual. There's a lot of content, and it's generally something that you're learning from.

Tori ([32:45](#)):

Do zine's have to be a physical paper copy?

Will ([32:50](#)):

Good question, Tori! Sometimes zine's are like online and that's super cool. Like they can come in like very different formats, mind blown, man.

Tori ([33:04](#)):

I love to hear it.

Will ([33:05](#)):

And like Yasmin was saying, I, I agree that like zines can be anything you want them to be. We don't like we, we were talking before Tori, we were like, I don't even know how to say it. And I think it's just like a personal preference and that's kind of what, um, the zine is. And I really like that about it.

Kai ([33:29](#)):

Yes. I love that we are breaking the boxes like for gender and we're breaking the box of what a zine is!

Bisandi ([33:39](#)):

Break those boxes break all of the boxes. Okay. So can you tell us a little bit more about the content of the zine? How does it stay true to our data? How does it amplify student voices? You can answer either of those questions first.

Yasmin ([34:02](#)):

Yeah. So just a quick rundown of what we're covering in the zine. Our table of contents, I guess, and just the, the general zine as possible is like a yearbook, like school, newspaper theme, to kind of stay true to the focus group of high school students that we're working with. And that's a major part of our data. We go through like a welcome page to sort of introduce the research and the project. We dive into school life and environment, safe spaces and clubs, sports facilities, a staff lounge section that dives into teacher and parent perspective. And then it sort of ends off with going back to student voices and current events that kind of ties the whole zine together. And that's sort of the main components of the zine.

Elliot ([34:58](#)):

Um, but we tried to incorporate data and graphs and images and like quotes from interviews just to keep the whole zine true to the data we collected and also interesting and engaging.

Will ([35:18](#)):

Yeah. Like looking at how different each one of our sections are. I think Yasmine focuses a lot about on like the data side of it. And then I'm more, I include more quotes and that's kind of how I stayed true to student voices by literally putting what they say in the zine.

Kai ([35:43](#)):

Yeah. I love that you guys had different roles. You guys are each adding something special. That's great.

Bisandi ([35:51](#)):

I agree. I'm excited to see it all come together. If anyone--what would you say you would want someone who was reading your zine to take away from your work?

Will ([36:08](#)):

We definitely focused a lot on the educational piece of the zine and like, we want to educate peers and students and teachers and district staff about like the inequities within, that like gender nonconforming, transgender, and non-binary students space within high school. But then we also were talking about how we want kind of like, there to be a call of action, of like, they read it, and they get inspired by it and they actually want to like do something to promote gender inclusion policy within their schools.

Tori ([36:58](#)):

Would you say the goal would be someone could read your zine and then throw it down and jump up and action?

Will ([37:06](#)):

Right. That's going to be the campaign quote man, meant to be.

Bisandi ([37:12](#)):

What are the goals for the resource? What are your goals for your zine?

Elliot ([37:19](#)):

So with the zine, we wanted the data, not only to be in an audio format like it is in this podcast, but in a visual format for people who that might work better for, or, be more, just the way they learn and gather information best. So we want to just try to, I I'm bad at talking. We wanted to try and cover the visuals as well as like in contrast to the audio.

Yasmin ([37:59](#)):

Yeah. And I think kind of connecting to a call to action, I think the goal of design is also to start conversations and get people talking about it. And just like gender inclusion in general. So if someone is reading it and they finish it, they can pass it off to a friend, have them read it and sort of have it circulate different groups of people. Like students can talk to their parents, talk to the teachers, oh, this is what I read about today in this cool zine. I wanna talk about it or just sort of create some buzz around the topic itself and make sure other are getting the message and it sort of spreads around too.

Bisandi ([38:38](#)):

Sparking conversation. We love to see it. That's a goal of both our projects. Um, hopefully we get as many people talking about it and trying to make a change, which is ultimate goal of the project in general.

Bisandi ([38:53](#)):

So, what do you want people to know about your zine?

Yasmin ([39:00](#)):

I think a big thing for people to know is that the people who created it are sort of immersed in the same atmosphere of the people who were surveyed. And like we collected data from, like, we're just high

schoolers who are trying to make a difference and like promote gender inclusion. So it's like coming from a place of like connection and like empathy and like sort of a, a place of like real collaboration and hopes to help uplift the voices of people who are like in the same demographic and have experienced similar things that we have.

Will ([39:43](#)):

Yeah. Just to go off of that, like early in our research, before we even researched what a gender inclusion policy is, we discussed that we wanted our, research to be done by the community for the community. And I think that's really important, um, because, like Yasmin said, we are, we experience it, we might experience it in our daily lives, you know? So yeah.

Tori ([40:18](#)):

That's such a great message Will: by the community for the community. I love that. Um, and that was so cool. What you said Yasmin about hoping it gets like passed on from person to person. Like I would love to maybe like, wouldn't it be cool, if like, if you were a parent and your kids came home and were like, mom, look, I've got this cool pamphlet on gender inclusion that I learned about in school today. That would be so dope.

Elliot ([40:45](#)):

If I can expand a little bit further, I also think that the fact that the zine is made by high school students and the research is done by high school students for high school, students will make the call to action even stronger. Because if students can see, hey, these are other students working on this and doing this, I can too.

Kai ([41:12](#)):

Yeah. And I liked that, you know, our project is done by high school youth. And you know, we were interviewing high school youth as well as some teachers and staff members and parents, but mainly high school youth. And then, you know, we're going to be distributed it to high school youth, as well as other people in our community. But I really like how those are all tied together.

Tori ([41:35](#)):

Yeah. I feel like sometimes, older people or people of other generations either have two sides. They either say like, you are the younger generation, you are the future. You have to be the one to change it. Or they're like, you guys don't know anything. Everything was better when it was my generation. And it's like, well, it's like, we can't ever, we can't ever be perfect because we're trying to make change, but then you don't listen to us. And then you say we can't do stuff and I don't know, it gets all so mixed up. So when youth like us, are trying to make change like, you, you guys are doing with you to zine, It's like, we need to highlight youth voices. Cause we actually are trying to do something.

Yasmin ([42:16](#)):

And I think like going off of that, when it comes to like how adults react to like youth doing things, I think it's like a matter of like, just taking things into their own hands. Cause reaction from adults can be like, so fogged and like so different that it's just like, you know, we don't want to listen to like them, like arguing or like going back and forth between things and like waiting for things to happen. It's more of us just like deciding like, okay, while they're doing that, we can actually like take things into our own hands and like do things ourselves while the conversations are happening and like, no action is happening.

Kai ([42:54](#)):

Yeah. And we had talked about this a little bit earlier in our podcast about how it's really important that teachers and allies are willing to listen to queer and trans students, you know, and are willing to want to help make change.

Tori ([43:11](#)):

I don't know if you've ever seen "The Good Place" and stay with me here, but there is that episode way at the end where Michael is trying to form this committee to actually change the good place system. And then he meets with the good place committee and they're like, you know what, we're going to fast track this. It's only going to take 4,000 years. And he's like, boy, a thousand years. That's not, that's not long enough. And they're like, oh, no, 4,000 years just to form the committee. And it's like, that's how I feel every day with adults, when ever I bring an issue to them when I'm trying to make some kind of change and they're just moving like that good place committee. And I'm like, let's step it up guys.

Will ([43:48](#)):

It's definitely frustrating that change happens so slow, but, it's really important that we're starting it. And like literally just starting the process, having conversations, talking to people about it, raising awareness to start that 4,000 year process Tori.

Tori ([44:12](#)):

Yeah, Maybe we can make it 2000 years. I don't know. Yeah.

Kai ([44:15](#)):

And just to remind you, it can feel like a really long process to be able to make change in your school though, but it's really important to get started and hopefully you'll be able to build a lot of community and people who are willing to help along the way, that'll help speed up the process and make it go well.

Tori ([44:30](#)):

You can be the Michael of your school.

Bisandi ([44:35](#)):

Yes to all of that. Just don't be afraid to get that ball rolling. Make the first move because you gain a lot of traction along the way. But to move on to the next question, uh, what was the process like in creating the zine and are you happy with how it's coming along now or with the product if you're done?

Yasmin ([45:01](#)):

Yeah. I think the process kind of started with us kind of figuring out what steps we wanted to take to create it and like the different things it would take, like the writing side of things, the creative side of things to come up with like design ideas and color palettes for like how we're going to compose this whole thing together. And I think we kind of played to our strengths and like what each person like wants to like take the head on and like contribute to and all things like that. So I think dividing and conquering was a really big piece of our process and like, okay, let's divide up a section here. Who's interested and wants to take this part. I think that was a big part of our process and just like sticking to what we think we're going to be good at writing about and like what we have connections to already with like the data and stuff like that. So pulling that together I think was really helpful and just like

making a plan for ourselves. And I think it's coming along great. I think we're moving towards like finalizing it and like inputting our writing into the zine, some like, composing things where we're like putting things together. But I think we're on a track to finish pretty soon. And I think we're going to be really happy with the product because it's like, so stimulating and visual, and like it's fun to see like our three different styles. So yeah, I think I'm going to be happy with the outcome.

Kai ([46:44](#)):

Yeah. I'm so excited to see it.

Bisandi ([46:45](#)):

Same!

Will ([46:50](#)):

Yeah. I agree with Yasmin. I do appreciate how it's definitely so different between all three of us. And like design wise, content wise, but that's the exciting thing about it is that, we all come from like different backgrounds and we all bring something to the table and I think that's just super cool how it all like collectively comes together, but in three separate ways.

Elliot ([47:20](#)):

Yeah. I definitely have to agree. I find it super cool that, well, we had this idea of this project that we were going to do collectively our own parts, it's still cohesive.

Bisandi ([47:32](#)):

Yay. We're so excited to see it. I can't wait till the finished product. But with that said, where can people find it?

Yasmin ([47:46](#)):

people will be able to access it through the Outfront website. And we'll also be printing some.

Elliot ([47:56](#)):

Yeah And I know that you've mentioned a couple of times that you're really excited to see the zine and I'm so excited to listen to this podcast.

Tori ([48:04](#)):

You said, put it on double-time speed so you can listen to it all in one sitting, do those dishes clean your room, make it fun. I dunno.

Bisandi ([48:14](#)):

They're both going to be so good for you. Ready? Thank you. Thank you.

Bisandi ([48:39](#)):

[inaudible].