

Sex Education Programs

In recognition of the fact that sexuality is fundamental to all life, the School Committee accepts the responsibility to provide information concerning sexuality as part of the educational program available to all students. Although public schools have a responsibility to provide information concerning sexuality, it is the family and faith communities that provide the specific value system through which students translate knowledge into decisions and actions.

In the District, the goals of instruction related to sexuality will be to:

- Ensure accurate knowledge about human reproduction, including conception, birth, prenatal care, with specific emphasis on the family unit and the responsibilities and consequences related to sexual activity;
- Adapt this information to the age and grade level of students;
- Promote, encourage, and increase communication between parents and children;
- Increase decision-making skills; and
- Enhance and develop the student's self-esteem.

Within the focus of these goals, and at appropriate age and grade levels, the information regarding human sexuality will include:

- Anatomy, physiology, and psychology of adolescence and sexual growth;
- Dating and dating situations, rape and acquaintance rape;
- Legal aspects of sexual conduct;
- Self-respect, self-control, and individual differences among people;
- Community resources;
- Conception, pregnancy, and childbirth; and
- Menstruation, HIV / AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, risk assessment.

The study of each of these topics will center on the influence of physical and mental health and well being and social, ethical, and legal consequences to these topics.

Personnel involved in instruction regarding human sexuality will conduct such instruction with maturity and discretion and in compliance with the spirit and intent of this policy. Personnel providing instruction in human sexuality shall have received in-service training based on the district's approved health-education curriculum.

At the beginning of the school year, the principal shall notify parents and guardians of students about specific units and/or lessons related to human sexual education or human sexuality that are available for their child. No student shall receive instruction on human sexual education or human sexuality unless the District has received a signed consent form from that student's parent or guardian indicating their consent to such instruction.

The principal will notify parents or guardians of the specific topics, lessons, or units of study related to human sexuality that will be taught at specific grade levels. Such notification shall explicitly identify the topics of abortion, birth control, and laws regarding minors' access to reproductive healthcare when

these topics are included in curricula or presentations involving human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

Curriculum materials will be available for review. Nothing in this policy should prevent the professional staff from having meetings with parents and guardians to explain the curriculum.

The School Committee shall conduct hearings and discussions on any changes in the curriculum.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:32A; *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, 145 S. Ct. 2332 (2025).

CROSS REFS.: IHAMA-1, Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education