

Reproductive Health Proposal FAQ
Updated February 18, 2020

1. Why this proposal and Why now?

Reproductive health has been taught at Dexter Community Schools since at least the early 1990's. The current materials for grades 7-12 were adopted around 2008 and are antiquated and outdated. The videos are dated, do not include the advent of social media and the internet, and are no longer aligned with National Standards. Parent survey data as early as 2011 indicated that the majority of DCS parents wanted DCS to include instruction on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in our reproductive health curriculum. In addition, a recent 2019 student survey indicated the students would like to know more about LGBTQ and Gender Identity. This is not included in the current curriculum.

2. What is proposed?

It is proposed to adopt the [3 R's Curriculum](#) to be taught in the 7th - 12th grade health courses. The 3R's curriculum meets national standards and includes a total of 4 lessons with direct instruction on gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. 3 other lessons include homework or activities specifically focusing on LGBTQ students. Not all lessons from the 3 R's Curriculum will be taught. Some information and assignments will also be modified to fit DCS Board Policy, State Law, and teacher discretion based on the needs and appropriateness for the students.

3. In what courses will these lessons be taught?

Currently, DCS teaches this content in 7th grade health courses and high school health. Both courses are elective courses and offer parents the opportunity to opt-out of any reproductive health lessons or all reproductive health lessons.

4. Is abstinence taught in the proposed curriculum?

Abstinence is the only 100% guaranteed way to prevent pregnancy and the spread of STD's. This message is taught in every lesson related to pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Even if the curriculum materials do not explicitly state that abstinence is taught, this is a theme explicitly expressed throughout the curriculum.

5. What was the process for selecting the 3 R's Curriculum and recommending it to the DCS Board of Education?

The District's Reproductive Health Advisory Committee meets nearly monthly, as charged by the DCS Board of Education, and has been meeting since the 1990's. The structure of the committee is outlined in DCS Board Policy (See below) and the committee regularly reports to the DCS Board of Education. Approximately three years ago, the committee reviewed and recommended an update to the materials used in K-6 Reproductive Health lessons because the materials were outdated and not aligned with national standards. Since then, the committee has been reviewing survey data, materials, state laws, local policies, and national standards in an effort to update our current 7-12 materials. Based on this extensive process, the committee is recommending this curriculum update for Board consideration. A public presentation was given to the DCS Board of Education on January 13, 2020. The first public hearing was held on February 10, 2020. A public opportunity to review the materials will be held on February 27, 2020. The second public hearing will be scheduled in March or April and subsequent public meetings will be held based on feedback provided at the February 27, 2020 meeting.

6. Can a parent opt their child out of any lesson or all reproductive health lessons?

DCS Board of Education Policy states, *"The District shall notify the parents, in advance of the instruction and about the content of the instruction, give the parents an opportunity, prior to instruction, to review the materials to be used (other than tests), as well as the opportunity to observe the instruction, and advise the parents of their right to have their child excused from the instruction."*

Furthermore, DCS Board of Education Policy states, "Such instruction shall be elective and not a requirement for graduation....A student shall not be enrolled in a class in which the subjects of family planning or reproductive health are discussed unless the student's parent or guardian is notified in advance of the course and the content of the course, is given a prior opportunity to review the materials to be used in the course and is notified in advance of his or her right to have the student excused from the class. The Michigan Board of Education shall determine the form and content of the notice required in this policy....Upon the written request of a student or the student's parent or legal guardian, the student shall be excused, without penalty or loss of academic credit, from attending a class described in this policy. If a parent or guardian submits a continuing written notice, the student will not be enrolled in a class described in this policy unless the parent or guardian submits a written authorization for that enrollment."

7. Will abortion be taught?

Board Policy 2418 Explicitly states, "Clinical abortion shall not be considered a method of family planning, nor shall abortion be taught as a method of reproductive health." Any lesson in the 3R Base Curriculum that mentions abortion is removed for DCS Classrooms, as required by law and DCS Board Policy.

8. What is DCS Board of Education Policy and Law regarding Reproductive Health and Sex Education?

2414 - REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

The Board of Education directs that instruction be provided on the principal modes by which dangerous communicable diseases, including HIV and AIDS, are spread and the best methods for the restriction and prevention of these diseases. The instruction shall stress that abstinence from sex is the only protection that is 100% effective against unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS, and that abstinence is a positive lifestyle for unmarried young people.

No person shall dispense or otherwise distribute in a District school or on District school property a family planning drug or device. Additionally, any school official, member of the Board, or employee of the Board who is not the parent or the legal guardian of the student involved is prohibited from referring a student for an abortion.

Each person who teaches K to 12 students about human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome shall have training in human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome education for young people. Licensed health care professionals who have received training on human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome are exempt from this requirement.

The District shall notify the parents, in advance of the instruction and about the content of the instruction, give the parents an opportunity, prior to instruction, to review the materials to be used (other than tests), as well as the opportunity to observe the instruction, and advise the parents of their right to have their child excused from the instruction.

Before any revisions to the curriculum on the subjects taught pursuant to M.C.L. 380.1169 are implemented, the Board shall hold at least two (2) public hearings on the proposed revisions. The hearings shall be held at least one (1) week apart and public notice of the hearings shall be given in the manner required for board meetings. A public

hearing held pursuant to this section may be held in conjunction with a public hearing held pursuant to M.C.L. 380.1507.

Revised 8/27/07

Revised 5/7/18

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Legal M.C.L. 380.1169, 380.1507, 388.1766

2418 - SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with Michigan statute, the Board of Education authorizes instruction in sex education. Such instruction may include family planning, human sexuality, and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic, and social aspects of family life. Instruction may also include the subjects of reproductive health and the recognition, prevention, and treatment of sexually transmitted disease.

The instruction described in this policy shall stress that abstinence from sex is a responsible and effective method of preventing unplanned or out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease and is a positive lifestyle for unmarried young people.

Such instruction shall be elective and not a requirement for graduation.

A student shall not be enrolled in a class in which the subjects of family planning or reproductive health are discussed unless the student's parent or guardian is notified in advance of the course and the content of the course, is given a prior opportunity to review the materials to be used in the course and is notified in advance of his or her right to have the student excused from the class. The Michigan Board of Education shall determine the form and content of the notice required in this policy.

Upon the written request of a student or the student's parent or legal guardian, the student shall be excused, without penalty or loss of academic credit, from attending a class described in this policy. If a parent or guardian submits a continuing written notice, the student will not be enrolled in a class described in this policy unless the parent or guardian submits a written authorization for that enrollment.

The District shall provide the instruction by teachers qualified to teach health education. The Board shall establish a sex education advisory board and shall determine terms of service for the sex education advisory board, the number of members to serve on the advisory board, and a membership selection process that reasonably reflects the District's population. The Board shall appoint two (2) co-chairs for the advisory board, at least one (1) of whom is a parent of a

child attending a District school. At least (one-half) 1/2 of the members of the sex education advisory board shall be parents who have a child attending a District school, and a majority of these parent members shall be individuals who are not employed by a District. The sex education advisory board shall include students of the District, educators, local clergy, and community health professionals. Written or electronic notice of a sex education advisory board meeting shall be sent to each member at least two (2) weeks before the date of the meeting.

The sex education advisory board shall:

Establish program goals and objectives for student knowledge and skills that are likely to reduce the rates of sex, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases. Additional program goals and objectives may be established by the sex education advisory board that are not contrary to Michigan law.

Review the materials and methods of instruction used and make recommendations to the Board for implementation. The advisory board shall take into consideration the District's needs, demographics, and trends, including, but not limited to, teenage pregnancy rates, sexually transmitted disease rates, and incidents of student sexual violence and harassment.

At least once every two (2) years, evaluate, measure, and report the attainment of program goals and objectives established by the advisory board. The Board shall make the resulting report available to parents in the District.

Before adopting any revisions in the materials or methods used in instruction under this policy, including, but not limited to, revisions to provide for the teaching of abstinence from sex as a method of preventing unplanned or out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease, the Board shall hold at least two (2) public hearings on the proposed revisions. The hearings shall be held at least one (1) week apart and public notice of the hearings shall be given in the manner required for Board meetings. A public hearing held pursuant to this section may be held in conjunction with a public hearing held pursuant to M.C.L. 380.1169.

Each person who provides instruction to K to 12 students in accordance with this policy shall receive training based on District approved standards and in accordance with training requirements of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

No person shall dispense or otherwise distribute in a District school or on District school property a family planning drug or device. Additionally, any school official, member of the Board, or employee of the Board who is not the parent or legal guardian of the student involved is prohibited from referring a student for an abortion or assisting a student in obtaining an abortion.

For purposes of this policy, "family planning" means the use of a range of methods of fertility regulation to help individuals or couples avoid unplanned pregnancies; bring about wanted

births; regulate the intervals between pregnancies; and plan the time at which births occur in relation to the age of parents. It may include the study of fetology. It may include marital and genetic information. Clinical abortion shall not be considered a method of family planning, nor shall abortion be taught as a method of reproductive health.

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M.C.L 380.1507. 380.1169. 388.1766