

August 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Prior to the start of each school year, Texas State Law requires school districts to inform, in writing, the parent/guardian of each student enrolled in the district of the intent to offer human sexuality instruction (HSI). As a part of the district's curriculum to address the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), students receive instruction related to human sexuality. In the 4th-grade and 5th-grade Health curriculum, students receive instruction related to human development and reproduction. The middle school and high school Health curriculum includes instruction in human sexuality.

#### **Permission Process**

Under Texas statute, parents must choose to "opt-in" for their student to attend the lesson(s). Permission letters, as well as a detailed schedule of curriculum, will be sent home a minimum of 14 days prior to the start of instruction. Students who do not opt-in will be provided alternative lessons and will not be subject to disciplinary or academic penalties.

#### **Curriculum Review**

Parents and guardians have the right to review all curriculum materials used in human sexuality instruction. In accordance with state law, a parent may review materials prior to the start of instruction.

#### **Texas State Law Regarding Human Sexuality Instruction (HSI)**

In accordance with Texas Education Code, Sec. 28.004, the district's (HSI) course materials and instruction will:

1. present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relationship to all sexual activity for unmarried persons of school age;
2. devote more attention to abstinence from sexual activity than to any other behavior;
3. emphasize that abstinence from sexual activity, if used consistently and correctly, is the only method that is 100 percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infection with human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity;
4. direct adolescents to a standard of behavior in which abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and infection with human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome; and
5. teach contraception and condom use in terms of "human use reality" rates instead of theoretical laboratory rates, if instruction on contraception and condoms is included in curriculum content.

## **Content Summary**

The district defines Human Sexuality instruction (HSI) as *content that develops and strengthens the ability/skills of students to make conscious, healthy, and respectful choices regarding dating/romantic relationships, personal safety, anatomy and physiology, puberty and adolescent development, pregnancy and reproduction, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV*. HSI Instruction will take place in the spring semester for 4<sup>th</sup> graders, 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 7<sup>th</sup> graders and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. For high school students, HSI instruction will take place during the last grading period of the one- semester Health course. Depending on the grade level, instruction on each of the above content might include:

- *Relationships*: characteristics of healthy and unhealthy dating/romantic relationships and the skills needed to navigate changing relationships among family members, classmates, and partners; treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- *Personal safety*: the prevention of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking; strategies for using social media safely, legally, and respectfully; the right to bodily autonomy and how to report inappropriate touching, including sexual abuse.
- *Anatomy and physiology*: medically accurate terms for reproductive systems and their functions in males and females;
- *Puberty and adolescent development*: how to manage the physical, social, and emotional changes during puberty.
- *Pregnancy and reproduction*: human reproduction, pregnancy prevention, prenatal care, and fetal basic development; up-to-date, medically accurate information on methods of contraception, including effectiveness and failure ("human use reality") rates; and the legal, financial, and emotional consequences associated with pregnancies.
- *STIs and HIV*: facts and figures about STIs; the impact of STIs on young adults and how to prevent and reduce the risk of STI transmission; and the importance of STI testing and treatment.

As required by state law, abstinence is stated as the 100 percent most effective way to prevent pregnancy and STIs. Sexual abstinence is defined as a conscious decision not to participate in sexual activity and the skills needed to support that decision. The content shall include information related to making decisions; setting, communicating, and respecting other people's boundaries; and refusal skills.

## **Opportunities for Parent Involvement**

The HSI curriculum is adopted by the Board of Trustees with the advice of the parent led School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). Information regarding the SHAC can be found on the CFISD website > Our District > Committees > School Health Advisory Council. Additionally, the district's Office of Curriculum and Instruction is also a resource for any parent seeking support in providing instruction directly to their child in the home.

Feel free to contact your child's campus or refer to FNG(LOCAL) for any additional information or questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Linda Macias  
Chief Academic Officer