

2025-2026 School Year

Dear Parents of a High School Student,

As required by the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Mandate for Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention Education, Health teachers will teach instruction in the areas of human growth and development, adolescent sex education, disease prevention, sexual abuse, assault, and exploitation prevention. The above curriculum will be appropriately developed for each grade level. The program will help students cope with the social and peer pressures they face today. It will help students develop skills they can use to say "no" to behaviors they don't want to engage in. If your student is receiving this instruction in a virtual environment, RCPS asks parents to take appropriate steps to ensure that younger students at home are being protected from lessons due to the sensitive nature of the topics being taught. Therefore, RCPS asks parents/guardians to speak with their students before each lesson in hopes of minimizing disruptions.

The growth and development of young people is important, and it is essential to give careful consideration when providing them with meaningful experiences. In our curriculum, all relevant concepts are presented logically, in sequence, starting from kindergarten. As of August 2018, Georgia's Sexual Assault Education and Prevention Mandate requires students enrolled in grades K-9 to receive age-appropriate sexual abuse education and assault and prevention knowledge annually. Kindergarteners are taught that creatures of the same species reproduce creatures of the same species, middle school students are introduced to correct anatomical terminology by identifying the physical and emotional differences between males and females, and high school students will receive instruction that will prepare them to be parents in the future.

The following is a summary of the objectives that will be studied in High School in the growth and development unit of the Health curriculum.

1. By introducing them to the correct terminology, students will be able to ask questions and discuss sexuality correctly.
2. Through group activities, students will be able to identify the physical and emotional changes that occur during adolescence.
3. Through discussions, students will identify differences between women and men.
4. Using lectures and class discussions students will study the reproductive biology of humans.
5. Through discussions students will learn appropriate behaviors for interacting with people of the opposite sex.
6. Students will understand some of the issues related to sexuality and how to effectively avoid them.
7. Students will evaluate the effect of media on personal and family health.
8. Students will study about HIV transmission, the effects of AIDS, and the causes/effects of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

Our high school Health courses use the *Choosing the Best Journey* curriculum. You can review the materials used in the unit before your child receives instruction. Information is also available online at [Parent Resources](#) [Choosing the Best](#). For more information, the Choosing the Best curriculum is aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards, which can be viewed at [GaDOE SuitCASE](#). Additional information on sex education and AIDS prevention instruction and exceptions for students can be found in Georgia Code 20-2-143.

Parents can trust that the information is presented in a prudent and tasteful manner. For details on our school system's sex education and AIDS prevention program, please contact Heather Toliver in Curriculum and Instruction at 770.483.4713 x 10271.

I ask for your support in meeting the needs of all our students. For your own student(s) I ask that you consent to their participation in the growth and development unit. Please indicate your preference for your student's participation in this class on the form below and return it to your child's teacher. If you choose not to consent to participate, contact your student's teacher to develop an alternative instructional plan that he/she can receive at school or at home.

Thank you for your interest in your child's education and for supporting Rockdale County Public Schools.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shirley Chesser". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Shirley Chesser
Superintendent

PARENT AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION CONSENT

I UNDERSTAND THAT MY STUDENT WILL RECEIVE IN-PERSON AND/OR VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION IN THE AREAS OF HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, AND SEXUAL ABUSE, ASSAULT, AND PREVENTION OF EXPLOITATION. BY SIGNING BELOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THESE LECTURES WILL CONTAIN TOPICS THAT ARE SENSITIVE IN NATURE, AND I AGREE RELEASE AND WAIVE ANY CLAIMS YOU MAY HAVE AGAINST THE ROCKDALE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, ROCKDALE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND THEIR EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, AND REPRESENTATIVES ("RELEASES") RELATED TO THE TEACHING OF THESE MATERIALS. I FURTHER AGREE TO INDEMNIFY, HOLD HARMLESS, AND REIMBURSE RELEASES FROM AND AGAINST ANY CLAIM THAT I, ANY OTHER PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN, ANY BROTHER, SISTER, STUDENT, OR ANY OTHER PERSON, COMPANY, OR CORPORATION MAY HAVE OR PURPORT TO HAVE, KNOWN OR UNKNOWN, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM ANY LOSS, DAMAGE, OR INJURY ARISING OUT OF, DURING, OR IN CONNECTION WITH STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN AN IN-PERSON AND/OR VIRTUAL LESSON.

_____ I **do** consent for my child to participate in the sex education and prevention unit of AIDS, including lessons from Real Essentials.

_____ I **do not** consent for my child to participate in the sex education and prevention unit of AIDS, including lessons from Real Essentials.

(Parent/Legal Guardian Signature)

(Date)

(Student's Name)

(Date)