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OP ED PIECE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 18, 2019

Fact Checker: Sexual Health Education

There have been some questions and comments in the community and on social media about sexual health education in our schools and classrooms. In our continued effort to share accurate information and address concerns, the following information is provided. For more information, you may go to <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/se/>.

The California Healthy Youth Act requires that comprehensive sexual health education and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention education be taught to students at least once in middle school and once in high school, beginning no later than 7th grade. Instruction and materials must be medically accurate, objective, age-appropriate and inclusive of all students, as defined by law. The law requires that instruction and materials must encourage students to communicate with parents, guardians or other trusted adults about human sexuality.

The purpose of this instruction is to:

- Provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect their sexual and reproductive health from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and from unintended pregnancy.
- Provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to develop healthy attitudes concerning adolescent growth and development, body image, gender, sexual orientation, relationships, marriage, and family.
- Promote understanding of sexuality as a normal part of human development.
- Ensure students receive integrated, comprehensive, accurate, and unbiased sexual health and HIV prevention instruction and provide educators with clear tools and guidance to accomplish that end.
- Provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to have healthy, positive, and safe relationships and behaviors.

Instruction is provided by our highly qualified science and health teachers. All instructional materials are available for review in the offices of our junior high schools and high schools. You may also request a copy of the California Healthy Youth Act (California *Education Code* sections 51930–51939).

If parents/guardians **do not** want their child to participate in comprehensive sexual health or HIV prevention education, they may provide a signed, written note to the school's principal or their child's science/health teacher. If parents/guardians have questions, they may contact their child's teacher or principal.

If members of the community have questions, they may contact Mr. Sean Snider, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, at (209) 257-5334.

As always, we thank you for your support!

Amy L. Slavensky, Ph.D., Superintendent
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