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Broward County Public Schools Family Life and Human Sexuality Policy

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA IS COMMITTED TO PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF ALL OF ITS STUDENTS BY PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION THAT PROMOTES HEALTHY ATTITUDES CONCERNING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, BODY IMAGE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY, DATING, RELATIONSHIPS, AND FAMILY. THE SCHOOL BOARD BELIEVES COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION PROVIDES OUR YOUTH WITH THE INFORMATION, SKILLS, AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO DEVELOP POSITIVE VALUES AND MAKE HEALTHY DECISIONS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT A UNIVERSAL COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH CURRICULUM THAT FOLLOWS THE *NATIONAL SEXUALITY EDUCATION STANDARDS* BE IN PLACE IN ORDER TO MAKE CERTAIN EVERY STUDENT RECEIVES THE SAME QUALITY INFORMATION NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THEIR EDUCATION AND LIVE A HEALTHY LIFE.

THIS POLICY IS INTENDED TO ENSURE THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, HEREIN REFERRED TO AS SBBC, OFFERS STUDENTS COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION. THIS POLICY REFLECTS SBBC'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE ALL STUDENTS FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE WITH SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION. IT IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE EVERY SCHOOL HAS STAFF THAT HAVE BEEN TRAINED AND ARE SUPPORTED IN THEIR SCHOOL'S EFFORT TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION THAT IS COMPREHENSIVE, AGE AND DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE, MEDICALLY ACCURATE, AND EVIDENCE-INFORMED. IN ACCORDANCE WITH SBBC POLICY 4001.1, THIS POLICY SUPPORTS AN "ENVIRONMENT FREE OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT BASED UPON AGE, RACE, COLOR, DISABILITY, GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER EXPRESSION, MARITAL STATUS, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION."

I.

Definitions

A.

"Comprehensive"

Sexual health education that is comprehensive provides students with knowledge about abstinence, human development, contraception, STI and HIV/AIDS prevention, healthy relationships, and responsible decision making.

B.

"Abstinence"

Defined as not engaging in sexual activity, informs youth that it is the only 100% effective method of preventing unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections. As mentioned in the definition of "Comprehensive," teaching abstinence is part of comprehensive sexual health education.

C.

"Age and Developmentally Appropriate"

Sexual health education that is age and developmentally appropriate is designed to teach concepts, information, and skills suitable to particular age, grade, and developmental levels, based on cognitive, emotional, social and experience level of most students at that age level.

D.

"Medically Accurate"

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Sexual health education that is medically accurate is supported by peer-reviewed research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods, and recognized as

accurate and objective by leading medical, psychological, psychiatric, and public health organizations and agencies, and, where relevant, published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Appropriate sources may include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Public Health, and the World Health Organization, for example.

E.

“Evidence-Informed”

Sexual health education that is evidence-informed uses the best available research and practice knowledge to guide program design and implementation. This informed practice allows for innovation while incorporating the lessons learned from the existing research literature, curricula, guidelines, and standards. Evidence-informed sexual health education follows the *National Sexuality Education Standards: Core Content and Skills, K-12*, which were developed by the American Association for Health Education, the American School Health Association, the National Education Association Health Information Network, and the Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education, in coordination with the Future of Sex Education (FoSE) Initiative.

II.

Sexual Health Education Curriculum

A. No later than the 2013-2014 school year, each school shall provide comprehensive, age and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, and evidence-informed sexual health education in grades K-12 to students that is consistent with the *National Sexuality Education Standards*.

1.

In grades K-4, the foundational comprehensive sexual health education instruction is comprised of lessons on the following four topic areas specific in the *National Sexuality Education Standards*: anatomy, physiology, reproduction, healthy relationships and personal safety. All lessons and content will reflect the age and development of students at each grade level.

2.

In grades 5-12, comprehensive instruction expands on the foundational lessons in mentioned above, by providing lessons on the following five topic areas specified in the *Nationals Sexuality Education Standards*: abstinence, healthy relationships (including informed decision-making, sexual orientation, gender identity and personal safety) contraceptives, transmission and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. All lessons and content will reflect the age and development of students at each grade level.

3.

In accordance with Florida State Statute 1003.42, Section 3, any student whose parent or guardian makes a written request to the school “shall be exempted from the teaching of reproductive health or any disease, including HIV/AIDS, its symptoms, development, and treatment.”

B. Sexual health education under subsection (A) shall:

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1.

Teach abstinence, defined as not engaging in sexual activity, as the only sure protection from risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;

2.

Provide age and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, and comprehensive information about human sexuality as a normal and healthy aspect of

human development;

3.

Teach the benefits of delaying sexual activity and stress the importance of effectively using contraception and barrier methods to prevent pregnancy and to protect against sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, in accordance with the *National Sexuality Education Standards*. All information taught about FDA-approved methods contraception must be medically accurate and adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. The instruction of contraception is subject to the age and developmentally appropriate guidelines set forth in the *National Sexuality Education Standards*.

4.

Help students develop the relationship and communication skills to form healthy relationships throughout their lives that are based on mutual respect and affection and are free from violence, coercion, and intimidation;

5.

Help young people gain knowledge about the physical, biological, and hormonal changes of adolescence and subsequent stages of human maturation;

6.

Help students develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and stress management in order to make healthy decisions about sexuality and relationships;

7.

Teach students how to discern and evaluate messages present in television, social media, advertising, music, movies, sexting, and other adult messages related to sexual behavior and violence;

8.

Encourage youth to communicate with their parents, guardians, health care and social service professionals, and other trusted adults about sexuality, sexual health, and intimate relations;

9.

Be taught at least once a year in every grade level from K-12, and will be preferably placed as part of the curriculum of core classes;

C.

SBBC's Student Support Initiatives Office may eliminate or modify components of instruction under subsection (B)(3) for reasons of age and developmental appropriateness.

D.

Sexual health education under subsection (A) shall not discriminate on the basis of "age, race, color, disability, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, sex or sexual orientation" (SBBC Policy 4001.1).

E.

Instructors may provide medically- accurate and evidence-informed answers to any question initiated by a student that is consistent with the material of the course.

III.

Stakeholder Responsibilities

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A.

Schools shall provide comprehensive, medically accurate, developmentally, grade, and age-appropriate sexual health education for all students in grades K-12 as part of their courses or programs.

1.

SBBC's Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department retains the discretion to meet this requirement using evidence-informed courses and programs that are best suited to meet the needs of their students, so long as the courses and programs comply with the curriculum requirements in Section II.

2.

SBBC's Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department shall promulgate rules to implement, administer, and ensure compliance of all schools with the provisions of this Policy.

3.

SBBC's Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department shall develop and maintain a current list of sexual health education curricula consistent with the requirements under Section II of this Policy and the *National Sexuality Education Standards*. SBBC shall make the curricula publically available.

4.

SBBC's Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department shall instruct each Principal to identify the number of students that have received comprehensive sexual health education, and shall report the results of this inquiry to the Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department annually.

5.

SBBC's Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department shall conduct evaluations to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the instruction being provided will be conducted at least every three years and shall include data-based outcomes.

6.

Schools may retain the services of an SBBC-approved outside consultant to implement the comprehensive, evidence-informed, medically accurate, developmentally, grade, and age-appropriate sexual health education program that complies with the policy requirements in Section II. Approval of outside consultants must follow procedures set forth in School Board Policy 6302, "Use of Consultants." Outside consultants wishing to provide sexual health education in schools must also be approved by SBBC's Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department to ensure that their delivery and curriculum is consistent with the requirements set forth in this policy.

7.

In accordance with Florida State Statute 1003.42, Section 3, any student whose parent or guardian makes a written request to the school "shall be exempted from the teaching of reproductive health or any disease, including HIV/AIDS, its symptoms, development, and treatment. A student so exempted may not be penalized by reason of that exemption." Any student who does not provide a written objection to participation in the comprehensive sexual health education program or course shall be required to participate. Each school shall set and inform parents of the deadlines for requesting that their student be exempted from the instruction.

B. Professional Development

1.

The Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department shall provide appropriate training for all staff members, including administrators, teachers,

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counselors, nurses, teachers' aides, visiting teachers, and any other instructors who are involved in program implementation.

2.

The training shall include education on all aspects of the curriculum requirements in Section II.

3.

The Diversity, Cultural Outreach & Prevention Department shall provide program training through the most cost-effective means available, using such resources as the medical community, city, county, or state governmental agencies, and other community organizations. The approval of these external resources is subject to School Board Policy 6302, "Use of Consultants."

4.

In-person trainings for new staff members, including, teachers, counselors, nurses, teachers' aides, visiting teachers, and any other instructors who are involved with the program implementation shall occur before they begin instruction of the comprehensive sexual health curriculum.

5.

All staff members who have already received in-person training will be required to complete a bi-annual online or in-person re-certification course as dictated by Broward County Public Schools.

C. Student and Parental Resource

1.

Students who are exempted shall not be punished or embarrassed in any manner for nonparticipation.

2.

Students will be encouraged to communicate with their parents, guardians, health care and social service professionals, and other trusted adults about sexuality and reproductive health.

3.

Broward County Public Schools will provide opportunities and encourage parents to participate in prevention efforts with their children in meaningful and relevant ways that address the academic, social, and health needs of their children. SBBC acknowledges parents and guardians are the primary source of information as it pertains to sexual health education and other related topics, and is committed to serving as a resource in providing sexual health education through school based instruction.

4.

SBBC will provide resources and support for parents by linking them with internal supports as well as referral to community-based resources as needed. Curricula and resources shall be posted on the SBBC website.

IV.

Effective Date

This Policy shall be effective at the beginning of the 2014-2015 academic school year for all students in Broward County Public Schools.