



Lake Washington School District  
Study Session of the Board of Directors

Date: February 5, 2018

Topic: **HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health Education Curriculum Review**

**Background Information and Current Practice**

**State Sexual Health Education Requirements**

In Washington State, the decision about whether to implement sexual health education is made at the district level. Districts that do offer sexual health education must meet the requirements of the 2007 Healthy Youth Act, assuring that it:

- Is medically and scientifically accurate
- Is age appropriate
- Is appropriate for students regardless of gender race, disability status, sexual orientation
- Includes information about abstinence and other methods of preventing unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases
- Is consistent with the Office of the Superintendent of Instruction (OSPI) Guidelines for Sexual Health and Disease Prevention
- Is adopted or developed in consultation with stakeholders (teachers, administrators, parents & community)

In addition, schools must:

- Provide at least one month's notice to parents before teaching sexual health education
- Allow parents/guardians to review the sexual health education curriculum/materials offered in his/her child's school upon written request
- Allow parents to excuse their child from sexual health education upon written request

**Current LWSD Curriculum**

We adopted sexual health curriculum for grades 4, 5, 6 8 and 11 in 2009. In Lake Washington School District, we adopt materials on a 10-year cycle. We evaluate our curriculum between adoption years when there are new state standards. We also review our curriculum when we become aware of content that is out-of-date or inaccurate. Such evaluations may result in recommendations for supplementation, modification, or replacement of some or all the curriculum before a scheduled adoption.

Last year, we convened elementary, middle and high school review teams consisting of teachers, administrators and community members. Team members were charged with reviewing our existing HIV/AIDS curriculum and making recommendations about next steps. The teams also considered our sexual health education curriculum during this process. Both were adopted in 2009. These teams recommended the replacement of our HIV/AIDS prevention education lessons to address inaccurate and

outdated content. The teams also recommended a continued review of the sexual health education curriculum during the 2017-18 school year to address outdated content and the new sexual health education standards.

The elementary and middle school review teams recommended the KNOW curriculum for our HIV/AIDS prevention instruction in grades 5-8. The KNOW curriculum was developed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) at the direction of the legislature. The high school review team recommended the 2015 HIV/AIDS prevention lessons from the updated Family Life and Sexual Health (FLASH) curriculum for grades 9-12. FLASH was developed by King County Public Health, has been reviewed by OSPI, and is in compliance with the AIDS Omnibus Act requirements. We adopted the KNOW curriculum for grades 5-8 and the FLASH HIV/AIDS prevention education lessons for grades 9-12 in June 2017 for implementation this school year. Both programs are available at no cost.

Our current sexual health curriculum that was adopted in 2009 to meet the requirements of the 2007 Healthy Youth Act (ESSB 5297) includes sexual health lessons in grades 4, 5, 6, 8 and 11.

**Table 1: Current Curriculum**

Level	HIV/AIDS Prevention Curriculum (Adopted 2017)	Sexual Health Curriculum (Adopted 2009)
Elementary	<p><u>KNOW</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> HIV Overview: Immune System and Abstinence and Refusal Skills (2 lessons)</li> </ul>	<p><u>The Great Body Shop</u></p> <p><b>4<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Hygiene (4 lessons)  <b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Growth and Development (4 lessons)</p>
Middle School	<p><u>KNOW</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> HIV Overview: Transmission and Abstinence and Refusal Skills (2 lesson)</li> <li><b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> HIV and Other STD's, Abstinence and Refusal Skills, and Risk Recognition (3 lessons)</li> <li><b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Review of HIV and other STD's, Abstinence and Refusal Skills, Condom Overview (3 lessons)</li> </ul>	<p><u>The Great Body Shop</u></p> <p><b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Reproductive System (4 lessons)  <u>Family Life and Sexual Health (FLASH)</u>  <b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Puberty, STDs, Reproduction, Birth Control – Decision Making (4 lesson)</p>
High School	<p><u>Family Life and Sexual Health (FLASH)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Grades 9-12:</b> Preventing HIV and Other STD's, Testing for HIV and Other STD's, Condoms to Prevent Pregnancy HIV and Other STDs, Communication and Decision Making, Abstinence (6 lessons)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Family Life and Sexual Health (FLASH)</u></p> <p><b>11<sup>th</sup> Grade:</b> Contraception, Individual and Society (1 lesson)</p>

**New Sexual Health Education Standards and Topics**

In 2016, Washington adopted new health and physical education standards. These include sexual health education standards for grades K-12. At the elementary level, the sexual health education standards include the following topics: Anatomy and Physiology; Growth and Development; Reproduction; HIV/AIDS Prevention; Self-Identity; and Healthy Relationships. At the secondary level, sexual health education topics include: Anatomy, Reproduction and Pregnancy; Puberty; Washington State Laws; Prevention; Self-Identity; and Healthy Relationships.

Adoption of the new standards did not change the fact that sexual health education is optional for districts in Washington State. While state law requires the teaching of three topics from the health and physical education standards (HIV prevention and instructions on performing CPR and using automated external defibrillators), each district can choose which, if any, of the other 33 topics, including those from the sexual health education standards, it wants to teach its students. Additionally, children may be excused from sections that parents or guardians deem inappropriate.

### **Committee Work to Date**

Because of the new health standards, questions from teachers and parents about the content and age of some of our curriculum, and the connections of sexual health to our updated HIV/AIDS lessons, we are reviewing our sexual health curriculum this year.

In October 2017, we convened a committee consisting of elementary, middle and high school teachers, administrators, nurses, and parents to review the new sexual health education standards and make recommendations for our curriculum. The committee is meeting throughout the year to determine the extent to which materials meet state requirements and guidelines, the new standards, are medically and scientifically accurate, and support effective instruction.

By spring 2018, the committee will recommend:

- Modified, updated or new sexual health curriculum for implementation in 2018-19
- Alignment of the sexual health curriculum to HIV/AIDS prevention curriculum
- A refined scope and sequence (what's taught and when) based on the standards
- Courses where lessons are to be delivered in middle and high school
- Training plans for teachers
- Family communication

### **Data and Research to Inform Direction**

As part of our curriculum review process, adoption committees review research and data to evaluate curriculum materials and inform a final recommendation. To date our sexual health committee has reviewed the following:

#### ***Effective Practice Research***

Our committee has reviewed research about sexual health instruction and made connections to the new Washington State Health Standards. During meetings, committee members read research-based instructional recommendations from the Center for Disease Control, Hanover Research, and from independent studies about effective sexual health instruction. These research-based recommendations will be used to determine standards alignment and possible curriculum adoption. Representatives from the committee attended a full-day training session on the new Health and Physical Education standards put on by OSPI staff in August 2017. The full committee also attended a presentation delivered by OSPI staff on recommended procedures and program elements for sexual health education. Key findings from the research indicated that effective programs:

- Incorporate behavioral goals, teaching methods, and materials that are appropriate to the age, sexual experience, and culture of the students

- Include components on skill-building, modeling, and practices that support healthy behaviors in school environments
- Are based on theoretical approaches that have been demonstrated to influence other health-related behavior and identify specific important risky behaviors to be targeted
- Are delivered by trained instructors who understand in the program they are implementing

**OSPI Guidance**

OSPI provides extensive resources districts to support implementation of the new standards, with a specific focus on sexual health. Resources include instructional tools and research data; frequently asked questions from parents and educators; and model procedures. They also provide a state-wide summary of Healthy Youth Survey data and general recommendations for sexual health education. While state law provides for each district to make decisions about which sexual health standards are taught (other than HIV/AIDS), these documents highlight the need for a comprehensive and thoughtful approach to teaching sexual health standards. In addition, Laurie Dils, Sexual Health Program Director at OSPI, and Ken Turner, Health and Physical Education Director at OSPI, met with our committee and shared guidance about the new sexual health standards and outcomes to support the health and safety of all students. Excerpts from this guidance include:

- “As youth become more sexually active, the need for comprehensive sexual health education increases, although the availability of this instruction decreases...”
- “...the more health risks students have, the more likely they will not succeed in school. Each health risk that can be removed has the potential to positively influence academic behaviors.”
- “About 18% of students identify as being (LGBQ). Students who identify as being LGBQ are significantly more likely to experience bullying, harassment, and abuse, compared to heterosexual students.”
- “School safety supports student learning by creating and promoting a physically, emotionally, socially, and academically secure climate for students, staff, and visitors.”

**Neighboring Districts**

Surrounding districts are also in the process of adopting and aligning to the new standards, using updated curriculum. Information from table 2 below was shared with the committee.

**Table 2: Sexual Health Standards and Curriculum in Neighboring Districts**

District	Adopted 2016 Grade Level Topics from Sexual Health Standards	Curriculum
Bellevue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All sexual health topics in grades 5 - 12</li> </ul>	FLASH
Issaquah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected topics, including gender identity in grades 5-12</li> </ul>	FLASH
Northshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender identity and sexual orientation topics grades K-2</li> <li>• Self-Identity topics grades 3-4</li> <li>• Select sexual health topics grade 5</li> <li>• All sexual health topics grades 6-12</li> </ul>	District-developed curriculum

### **Healthy Youth Survey Data**

The committee reviewed Healthy Youth Survey data from the 2016 test administration of the Healthy Youth Survey, which is given every other year at 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades and analyzed questions on sexual health and overall healthy behaviors. In the review of data, several data points directly related to sexual health and student safety were of interest and are included in the table on the next page.

**Table 3: 2016 LWSD Healthy Youth Survey Responses**

<b>Questions from 2016 HYS Survey</b>	<b>Grade 8 (n=810)</b>	<b>Grade 10 (n=610)</b>	<b>Grade 12 (n=430)</b>
Which of the following best describes you? (Gender identity and gender expression are not answer options on this survey)	2% gay or lesbian 6.3% bisexual 11.4% not sure	3.2% gay or lesbian 8.3% bisexual 8.1% not sure	3.4% gay or lesbian 8.2% bisexual 5.5% not sure
Have you ever had sexual intercourse?	4.7% yes	15% yes	34.8% yes
The last time you had sexual intercourse, did you or your partner use a condom?	2.8% no	5.3% no	14.2% no
During the past 12 months, did someone you were dating or going out with ever limit your activities, threaten you, or make you feel unsafe in any other way?	3.6% yes	4.9% yes	10.6% yes
Have you ever been in a situation where someone made you engage in kissing, sexual touch, or intercourse when you did not want to?	8.4% yes	13.5% yes	21.1 % yes
During the past 30 days, have you received a text or an email with a revealing or sexual photo of someone?	8.9% yes	17.7% yes	17.9% yes

Our current sexual health curriculum does not include materials that educate students on vocabulary or definitions of gender identity or sexual orientation. The committee noted that students do not currently have access to accurate information about a significant percentage of our own population. Research indicates that the lack of information can lead to negative learning environments, bullying, harassment or intimidation and that in systems where education around these terms exists, negative incidents toward students who identify as LGBT are lower. Further, the committee noted items that potentially reflect unsafe behaviors and/or situations with our students.

### **Information Gathered from Student Groups**

Students from the International Community School and from Lake Washington High School were invited to present to our committee as part of school-related projects in which they were participating. The ICS students gathered and presented qualitative and quantitative data to our group. They cited national research about the impact of students knowing terms related to gender identity on students' self-esteem and positive school environment.

The students also shared personal stories about the impact of not having this information, including the significant depression they felt in middle school from feeling "different and wrong" before learning terms that helped them understand that they were gay or bisexual.

- "It is important to be educated about all types of sex and gender for the safety of everyone."

- “Adding LGBTQ content would encourage everyone at a young age demographic to be respectful, informed, and supportive of others in their community.”
- “Health curriculum is supposed to allow its students to lead healthy lives and it’s not appropriate to only provide the resources or education for heterosexual or cisgender kids.”

Lake Washington and ICS students participated as a panel for a discussion with our committee about the student perspective on sexual health education. Key take-aways from this presentation were that students felt strongly that expanded information about gender identity and sexual orientation were essential for supporting a more positive learning environment, the healthy development of individuals, and the overall experience and safety of all students.

### **Next Steps**

The sexual health curriculum committee is scheduled to meet regularly through the end of April. Based on research to date, guidance from OSPI, and our review of neighboring districts, the committee is initially considering two programs based on quality, alignment to standards and accessibility that have already been evaluated and approved by OSPI in the Sexual Health Education Instructional Materials Review: 2017 Joint Report. Both include materials for grades 4-12 and are free to districts/schools/educators. These are:

- The FLASH curriculum materials published by Public Health – Seattle & King County. Many trainings and resources are provided by OSPI and is the most commonly used curriculum for new adoptions/alignments in our area.
- The curriculum, *Rights, Respect, Responsibility*, published by Advocates for Youth. This curriculum has extensive resources for online learning and training.

During the upcoming meetings, the team will recommend standards, topics and outcomes by grade level. They will use these to identify lessons from each program that address the standards. During this process, they will also use the “Sexual Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool” provided by OSPI to evaluate lessons. This tool includes sections for curriculum design, content accuracy, and overall acceptability.

Following this process, the committee will use the evaluation results, along with the research and information collected to date, to make initial recommendations for topics and sexual health curriculum and lessons by grade level. These topics and lessons will be shared with families during four information and feedback sessions, and online with the ability for families to provide feedback via survey, in the spring. Principal and teacher feedback about the lessons will also be gathered during this time. Feedback from these sessions will be used by our teams to make a final recommendation that will be forwarded to our Instructional Materials Committee on May 3, and to the Board in June.