



Parents or Legal Guardians,

This letter is to notify you that the Austin ISD Board of Trustees has approved a human sexuality and responsibility (HSR) curriculum to be provided to all district students from kindergarten through high school. The age-appropriate units will be taught in the months of November and December, and during the months of April and May for students enrolled in the high school health education course for the Spring semester. During 2021-22, all HSR curriculum lessons were revised to comply with current law and to meet the updated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Health.

Texas State Law Regarding Human Sexuality Instruction

In accordance with [Texas Education Code, Sec. 28.004](#), the district's HSR 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 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*. 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 and 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 body parts and their functions; the process of reproduction and pregnancy.
- *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 development; up-to-date, medically accurate information on methods of contraception, including effectiveness and failure ("human use reality") rates.
- *Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV*: the impact of STIs on young adults and how to prevent and reduce the risk of STI transmission, and how to access STI testing and treatment.

As required by state law and [AISD Board Policy EHAA](#) (Legal) and (Local), 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.

Curriculum Review

Any district parent or legal guardian has the right to review all curriculum materials used in human sexuality instruction. All materials, including teacher notes, handouts, and video links are available on the district's [Human Sexuality and Responsibility website](#). The [website](#) also includes information related to modifications and adaptations for the curriculum to be accessible by students with disabilities, HSR-related district policies, all notices and written consent forms, and additional non-curriculum related resources for families.

Orientation Meeting

Prior to the implementation of the HSR unit at your child(ren)'s school, the principal will conduct at least one orientation meeting for families. At this meeting, parents/legal guardians will have an opportunity to learn more about the HSR policies, curriculum, the opt-in permission process, and may ask questions. Parents/legal guardians will receive reasonable written notice of the time and location of the orientation session at their student's school. All school orientation sessions will be scheduled during the fall semester before the unit is taught.

Permission Process

A parent/legal guardian will choose whether or not to allow their student to participate in all or part of the human sexuality and responsibility curriculum by completing the HSR permission letter. Campuses will send the HSR permission letters home via email or printed hard copy at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the start of instruction. Students who opt-out will be provided alternative lessons that support social and emotional learning. These students will not be punished in any manner for nonparticipation. More information about the permission letters are located on the [Human Sexuality and Responsibility website](#), [Family Resources page](#).

School Health Advisory Council Roles

Under state law and AISD Board Policy EHAA (Legal), the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) shall request a board resolution in order to review and make recommendations to the district about any changes to the current human sexuality curriculum. After the board's adoption of a resolution, the SHAC will hold at least two public meetings on any revised curriculum materials before adopting or recommending revisions to the board at a public meeting of the board.

Opportunities for Parent Involvement

Parents may attend SHAC meetings and offer suggestions for revision of the curriculum during the public comments/citizen's communications portions of the meeting or in writing submitted to SHAC. More information may be found on the [SHAC website](#).

Parents may also attend their Campus Advisory Councils (CACs) or campus committees. CACs are composed of teachers, parents/guardians, staff and secondary students. Parents may assist with the planning and implementation regarding this unit such as when to teach the unit during the identified time, and who will teach the lessons on their campus.

Additionally, families have access to resources to use on the [AISD Human Sexuality and Responsibility web page](#). The district's Office of Academics is also a resource for any parent seeking support in providing instruction directly to their child in the home.

Grievance Procedures

A parent may use the grievance procedure at [FNG](#) concerning a complaint of a violation of notice requirements.

Please visit the [AISD Human Sexuality and Responsibility web page](#) for possible updates regarding human sexuality and responsibility curriculum. Parents/Legal guardians may also contact their campus principal for any additional information or questions.

