

Questions for Parents to Ask About Sex Education at Their Local School

Parents are the best advocates for the quality of their children's education. The new comprehensive sexuality education law has provisions for parents to ask questions about sex ed classes, curriculum and teachers at their school. The following questions are for parents to ask their children's school leadership about how they are complying with the new, higher standards for comprehensive sexuality education.

1. Is the school offering sex ed (called "human growth and development curriculum" in the law) to students? If so, is it in compliance with the new law governing sex education in state statute 118.019?
2. What is your school's policy for allowing people to review the current sex ed curriculum? May I see the curriculum (can include books or handouts, teachers' guides, audio-visual materials, tests) and when will the school office hours be open for curriculum review?
3. If our school uses teachers from outside the school to provide sex education, who makes the decision to approve the teacher or volunteer? Who is ensuring that volunteers are qualified to provide instruction that complies with the law and is medically accurate, age-appropriate, science-based and non-discriminatory?
4. How can I be sure that my child's religious beliefs and our family values are respected in the classroom where sex ed is taught? What are teachers going to say regarding communication about sexuality between students and their families?
5. How will students who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning (or who have family members or friends who are LGBT) be ensured that their sex ed classes are safe and non-discriminatory?
6. What is your opt-out policy for parents who wish to not have their children participate in sex ed classes? What alternative activity, supervision and grading will children receive if parents opt-out?
7. If I have more questions about sex ed classes at the school, can I have the best contact information to the school board members or the curricula advisory group members who make decisions about our school's curriculum?

For more resources for parents who want to ensure that comprehensive sexuality education is available for all students at their school, or for help on working with a school that is not offering comprehensive sex education, contact the ACLU of Wisconsin at (608) 469-5540. The ACLU of Wisconsin is a member of the Healthy Youth Alliance, a coalition of youth rights and public health advocates who support the Healthy Youth Act, signed into law in February, 2010.

