
SENATE BILL 5297

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Haugen, Tom, Prentice, Keiser, Pridemore, Murray, Regala, Fraser, Kilmer, Rockefeller, McAuliffe, Shin, Weinstein, Kline, Marr, Kohl-Welles and Oemig

Read first time 01/16/2007. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing medically and scientifically accurate
2 sexual health education in schools; adding a new section to chapter
3 28A.300 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that young people
6 should have the knowledge and skills necessary to build healthy
7 relationships, and to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy and
8 sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection. The primary
9 responsibility for sexual health education is with parents and
10 guardians. However, this responsibility also extends to schools,
11 religious organizations, and other community groups. It is in the
12 public's best interest to ensure that young people are equipped with
13 medically and scientifically accurate, age-appropriate information that
14 will help them avoid unintended pregnancies, remain free of sexually
15 transmitted diseases, and make informed, responsible decisions
16 throughout their lives.

17 (2) The legislature intends to support and advance the standards
18 established in the January 2005 guidelines for sexual health
19 information and disease prevention developed by the office of the

1 superintendent of public instruction and the department of health.
2 These guidelines are a fundamental tool to help school districts,
3 teachers, guest speakers, health and counseling providers, community
4 groups, parents, and guardians choose, develop, and evaluate sexual
5 health curricula to better meet the health and safety needs of
6 adolescents and young adults in their communities.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
8 RCW to read as follows:

9 (1) By September 1, 2008, every school that offers sexual health
10 education must assure that sexual health education is medically and
11 scientifically accurate, age-appropriate, appropriate for students
12 regardless of gender, race, disability status, or sexual orientation,
13 and includes information about abstinence and other methods of
14 preventing unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. All
15 sexual health information, instruction, and materials must be medically
16 and scientifically accurate. Abstinence may not be taught to the
17 exclusion of other materials and instruction on contraceptives and
18 disease prevention. Sexual health education must be consistent with
19 the January 2005 guidelines for sexual health information and disease
20 prevention developed by the department of health and the office of the
21 superintendent of public instruction.

22 (2) As used in this act, "medically accurate" means information
23 that is verified or supported by research in compliance with scientific
24 methods, is published in peer-review journals, where appropriate, and
25 is recognized as accurate and objective by professional organizations
26 and agencies with expertise in the field of sexual health including but
27 not limited to the American college of obstetricians and gynecologists,
28 the Washington state department of health, and the federal centers for
29 disease control and prevention.

30 (3) The superintendent of public instruction and the department of
31 health shall make the January 2005 guidelines for sexual health
32 information and disease prevention available to school districts,
33 teachers, and guest speakers on their web sites. Within available
34 resources, the superintendent of public instruction and the department
35 of health shall make any related information, model policies,
36 curricula, or other resources available as well.

1 (4) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with
2 the department of health, shall develop a list of sexual health
3 education curricula that are consistent with the 2005 guidelines for
4 sexual health information and disease prevention. This list shall be
5 intended to serve as a resource for schools, teachers, or any other
6 organization or community group, and shall be updated no less
7 frequently than annually and made available on the web sites of the
8 office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department
9 of health.

10 (5) Schools that offer sexual health education are encouraged to
11 review their sexual health curricula and choose a curriculum from the
12 list developed under subsection (4) of this section. Any school that
13 offers sexual health education may identify, choose, or develop any
14 other curriculum, if the curriculum chosen or developed complies with
15 the requirements of this section.

16 (6) Consistent with WAC 392-410-140, any parent or legal guardian
17 who wishes to have his or her child excused from any planned
18 instruction in sexual health education may do so upon filing a written
19 request with the school district board of directors of its designee.
20 In addition, any parent may review the sexual health education
21 curriculum offered in his or her child's school by filing a written
22 request with the school district board of directors, the principal of
23 the school his or her child attends, or the principal's designee.

24 (7) The department of health may adopt such rules as are necessary
25 to determine whether a curriculum constitutes a sexual health education
26 curriculum that is consistent with the 2005 guidelines for sexual
27 health information and disease prevention.

28 (8) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall,
29 through its Washington state school health profiles survey or other
30 existing reporting mechanism, ask schools to identify any curricula
31 used to provide sexual health education, and shall report the results
32 of this inquiry to the legislature on an annual basis, beginning with
33 the 2008-09 school year.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act may be known and cited as the
35 healthy youth act.

--- END ---