

The SIECUS State Profiles



KANSAS

KANSAS'S SEX ED SNAPSHOT

THE STATE OF SEX EDUCATION

Advocates have faced an uphill battle to advance sex education in Kansas over the past six years in an apparent backlash to a 2007 effort to advance instruction requirements. In 2007, the Kansas School Board of Education [voted](#) to improve sex education requirements, revoking policies that required instruction to stress abstinence and mandated parental consent for participation. The Board then voted to implement a policy that recommends abstinence-plus instruction rather than abstinence-only instruction. Seven years later, legislators introduced bills in 2014 ([House Bill 2620](#) and [Senate Bill 376](#)) and again in 2016 ([House Bill 2199](#)) that would once again require parental consent before students could receive sex education instruction. Known as an “[opt-in](#)” policy, these requirements present an unnecessary barrier to receiving sex education. In 2017, young people from the Kansas chapter of URGE (Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity) [called upon](#) legislators to pass a state resolution requiring schools to teach comprehensive sex education.

While schools in Kansas are required to teach sex education, local school boards may establish any additional requirements for sex education curriculum. Further, Kansas standards for health education include instruction on puberty, abstinence, STIs, and laws associated with sexual behavior. Curriculum is not required to be comprehensive and schools are not required to include instruction on sexual orientation, gender identity, healthy relationships, or affirmative consent. Mandating local control over sex education presents unique challenges that have resulted in a glaring disparity regarding the quality of sex education that students receive. Such discretion allows for the implementation of policies and curriculum that stigmatize marginalized youth, such as students of color and LGBTQ youth, and presents further challenges in ensuring that low income districts have access to the resources needed to implement comprehensive sex education.

Right now, advocates can take action to ensure young people in their community have access to quality sex education. After contacting their local school board, advocates can determine what topics are missing from sex education instruction, such as instruction on consent, sexual orientation and gender identity, and contraceptives. They can then vocalize the important need for advancing sex education requirements in their community. Further, advocates can contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for advancing comprehensive sex education requirements. Advocates are encouraged to use the SIECUS [Community Action Toolkit](#) to guide local efforts to advance sex education.

STATE SEX EDUCATION POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS AT A GLANCE

- Kansas schools are required to teach sex education as part of their physical education curriculum.
 - Curriculum is not required to be comprehensive.
 - Kansas has no standard regarding education on abstinence. However, the Kansas Model Curricular Standards for Health Education includes instruction on abstinence.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on consent. However, the Kansas Model Curriculum Standards include instruction on laws associated with sexual behaviors, including consent.
- Kansas has no standard regarding the ability of parents and guardians to remove their children from sex education instruction. However, the Kansas Model Curricular Standards for Health Education provides samples for both [“opt-in”](#) and [“opt-out”](#) letters.
- Kansas has no standard regarding medically accurate sex education instruction.

STATE HOUSE HIGHLIGHTS

This section highlights sex education bills that were introduced during the 2019 state legislative session as well as bills that have been introduced thus far in 2020. These proposed bills provide a brief overview of both recent and current legislative action taken to advance or restrict sex education. For a more comprehensive look at relevant legislation concerning sex education and related topics such as reproductive health care, LGBTQ rights, and HIV/AIDS, continue reading on to the “State Legislative Activity” section of Kansas’s profile.

No bills have been introduced concerning sex education to date.

MORE ON SEX ED IN KANSAS

STATE LAW

The [Kansas Administrative Regulations \(§ 91-31-32\)](#) require that elementary and secondary students be taught “physical education, which shall include instruction in health and human sexuality.” Kansas does not require schools to follow a specific curriculum. However, in order to be accredited, schools must meet the minimum “performance and quality criteria” established by the Kansas State Board of Education. Kansas does not require parental permission for students to participate in health and human sexuality instruction.

STATE STANDARDS

The [Kansas Model Curricular Standards for Health Education](#) outlines basic competency requirements for public schools. The standards establish the Family Life, Relationships and Human Sexuality content standards for kindergarten through grade 12. Students in grades 9-12, must be able to evaluate:

- 1) Adapting to changes associated with puberty
- 2) Adapting to change within the family
- 3) Changing responsibilities from adolescence to adulthood
- 4) Responsible behaviors within relationships (communication, abstinence, etc.)
- 5) Potential outcomes of sexual activity (STIs, pregnancy, etc.)
- 6) Impact of media and technology on sexual behaviors
- 7) Laws associated with sexual behaviors (consent, harassment, assault, rape, human trafficking, etc.)

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8) Differences between individual, family, culture, community, and global values

STATE LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

State legislative activity related to sex education does not take place in isolation from the broader embroiled political and policy climate. Attacks on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ) individuals, and efforts to limit access to abortion care and other reproductive health care services prevent students from receiving comprehensive sex education and accessing sexual and reproductive health care services. Below are highlights of current legislative activity related to these topics. Kansas’s 2020 legislative session convened January 13, 2020.

2019 SESSION: ADJOURNED MAY 29, 2019

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
HOUSE BILL 2227	PROHIBITS PHYSICIANS FROM ENGAGING IN CONVERSION THERAPY WITH A CLIENT UNDER 18 YEARS OLD. THIS ACT DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY RELIGIOUS LEADER OR OFFICIAL OF ANY RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION.	DIED IN THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
HOUSE BILL 2274	REQUIRES ABORTION PROVIDERS TO NOTIFY PATIENTS THAT MEDICATION ABORTIONS MAY BE REVERSIBLE.	DIED IN THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH WELFARE
HOUSE BILL 2330	REQUIRES EACH BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT A POLICY PROHIBITING BULLYING BASED ON, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, A STUDENT’S RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, SEX, RELIGION, DISABILITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION.	DIED IN THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION COMMITTEE
SENATE BILL 67	REQUIRES ABORTION PROVIDERS TO NOTIFY PATIENTS THAT MEDICATION ABORTIONS MAY BE REVERSIBLE.	ENACTED
SENATE BILL 167	REQUIRES ABORTION PROVIDERS TO NOTIFY PATIENTS THAT MEDICATION ABORTIONS MAY BE REVERSIBLE.	DIED IN THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

LEGISLATIVE KEY

<p>SEX EDUCATION REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY HIV/AIDS (THAT IMPACTS YOUTH)</p>

YOUTH SEXUAL HEALTH DATA

Young people are more than their health behaviors and outcomes. While data can be a powerful tool to demonstrate the sex education and sexual health care needs of young people, it is important to be mindful that these behaviors and outcomes are impacted by systemic inequities present in our society that affect an individual’s sexual health and well-being. To learn more about Kansas’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results, [click here](#).

Last updated on April 7, 2020

STATE SCHOOL HEALTH PROFILES DATA

In 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the School Health Profiles, which measure school health policies and practices and highlight which health topics were taught in schools across the country. Since the data were collected from self-administered questionnaires completed by schools' principals and lead health education teachers, the CDC notes that one limitation of the School Health Profiles is bias toward the reporting of more positive policies and practices. In the School Health Profiles, the [CDC identifies 20 sexual health education topics](#) as critical for ensuring a young person's sexual health. Below are key instruction highlights for secondary schools in Kansas as [reported](#) for the 2017–2018 school year.

Reported teaching all 20 critical sexual health education topics

- 14.3% of Kansas secondary schools taught students all 20 critical sexual health education topics in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 24.4% of Kansas secondary schools taught students all 20 critical sexual health education topics in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching about the benefits of being sexually abstinent

- 73.3% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about the benefits of being sexually abstinent in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 88.5% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about the benefits of being sexually abstinent in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching how to access valid and reliable information, products, and services related to HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy

- 57.4% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to access valid and reliable information, products, and services related to HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 81.3% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to access valid and reliable information, products, and services related to HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching how to create and sustain healthy and respectful relationships

- 68.9% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to create and sustain healthy and respectful relationships in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 87.8% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to create and sustain healthy and respectful relationships in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching about preventive care that is necessary to maintain reproductive and sexual health

- 51.4% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about preventive care that is necessary to maintain reproductive and sexual health in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 74.5% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about preventive care that is necessary to maintain reproductive and sexual health in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

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Reported teaching how to correctly use a condom

- 22.9% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to correctly use a condom in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 43.9% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to correctly use a condom in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching about methods of contraception other than condoms

- 46.2% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about methods of contraception other than condoms in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 69.1% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about methods of contraception other than condoms in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching about sexual orientation

- 27.9% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about sexual orientation in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 40.9% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about sexual orientation in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching about gender roles, gender identity, or gender expression

- 30.7% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about gender roles, gender identity, or gender expression in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 44.2% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about gender roles, gender identity, or gender expression in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported providing curricula or supplementary materials relevant to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ) youth

- 35.8% of Kansas secondary schools provided students with curricula or supplementary materials that included HIV, STD, or pregnancy prevention information relevant to LGBTQ youth.

Visit the CDC's [School Health Profiles](#) report for additional information on school health policies and practices.

The quality of sex education taught often reflects funding available for sex education programs.

To learn more about federal funding streams, [click here](#).