

State Profiles

Kansas State Profile



Kansas's State of Sex Ed

Sex education **is** required by proxy via Kansas schools being required to instruct on human sexuality as part of their physical education curriculum. This curriculum is not required to align with the [National Sex Education Standards](#).

[Download Scorecard](#)

B

Sex Ed
Requirement

D-

Sex Ed
Content

Overall State Policy Grade

D+

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Current Requirements

- 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 regulation regarding medically accurate sex education instruction.

RECENT LEGISLATION SHAPING THE STATE LANDSCAPE

Advocates have faced an uphill battle to advance sex education in Kansas over the past several years in a sustained 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. In recent years, attacks on the public education system overall have increased via curriculum transparency and so-called “parental rights” bills. Several of these bills were introduced in 2022, including **House Bill 2662**. While appearing to increase parental rights, these bills, in fact, stigmatize the vital and important information provided under sex education and similar instruction and infringe upon young people’s right to access this education to help them make healthy, informed decisions for themselves. Further, they create an administrative burden upon an already overburdened public education system.

Current efforts to improve accessibility to sex education in schools focus on advocating for its inclusion in schools, outside of the physical education curriculum. While schools in Kansas are required to teach physical education that encompasses “human sexuality”, 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 align with the [National Sex Education Standards](#), not required to include instruction on sexual orientation, gender identity, healthy relationships, or affirmative consent. 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 LGBTQAI+ youth, and presents further challenges in ensuring that low income districts have access to the resources needed to implement 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. Advocates are encouraged to take action on pending legislation that seeks to advance or restrict the principles of sex education. For a current overview of pending legislation, see table below. Further, advocates can contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for advancing sex education requirements. Advocates are encouraged to use the SIECUS [Community Action Toolkit](#) to guide local efforts to advance sex education and to reach out to [EducateUS](#) or [Let's Talk](#), an inclusive sex education organization located in Lawrence, to get connected to local advocacy groups.

More on sex ed in Kansas...

State Law: A Closer Look

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

State Legislation

State legislative activity related to sex education does not take place in isolation from the broader embroiled political and policy climate. In 2022, a national wave of attacks on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQAI+) individuals, attempts to restrict or prohibit instruction on “divisive concepts” such as “Critical Race Theory” (which is not taught in public schools), and efforts to limit access to abortion care and other reproductive healthcare services swept the country in an effort to prevent students from receiving sex education and accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare services. Below are highlights of current legislative activity related to

these topics. **Kansas's 2024 annual legislative session convenes January 8, 2024.**

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' Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results, [click here](#). At the time of publication, the 2021 YRBS data was not made available yet.

Kansas School Health Profiles Data

In 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the 2020 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 22 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 2019–2020 school year.

Reported teaching all 22 critical sexual health education topics

- 12.9% of Kansas secondary schools taught students all 22 critical sexual health education topics in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 27.4% of Kansas secondary schools taught students all 22 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

- 59.6% 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.

- 91.2% 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

- 51.6% 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.
- 83.7% 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

- 63.9% 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.
- 91.6% 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

- 45.4% 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.
- 75.2% 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.

Reported teaching how to correctly use a condom

- 23.6% of Kansas secondary schools taught students how to correctly use a condom in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 40.4% 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

- 39.8% 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.
- 67.5% 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 diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities

- 24.4% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 49.0% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities in a required course in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Reported teaching about how gender roles and stereotypes affect goals, decision-making, and relationships

- 33.0% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about gender roles and stereotypes in a required course in any of grades 6, 7, or 8.
- 61.0% of Kansas secondary schools taught students about gender roles and stereotypes 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

- 34.6% 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](#).

