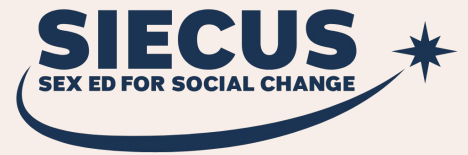


2025 United States Sex Education



STATE REPORT CARD

Executive Summary:

Sex education in the United States is a patchwork of state and local policies that dictate what, if any, sexual health instruction is taught within schools across the country. As a result, access to quality and comprehensive knowledge about sexual and reproductive health is largely influenced by the zip code young people live in.

Historically, SIECUS has published the State Law and Policy Chart to summarize existing state laws and regulations regarding sex education and/or HIV/AIDS instruction. This has served as a complement to our State Profiles available on our webpage for each one of the 50 states as well as territories, which go into further state specific detail on educational standards and relevant state-specific legislation.

In 2023, SIECUS shifted from publishing the State Law and Policy Chart and developed a preliminary rubric system, which assigns each state a grade based on our analysis of policies and educational standards. The result, the State Profile Report Cards, attempts to paint a clearer picture of what sex education laws look like across the country and how various states compare to one another. We aim to provide an accessible and illuminating resource that highlights the key gaps in legal access to sexual health information for young people in the hopes that advocates on the ground will mobilize and join the movement to advance sex education for all.

Updated annually, the State Report Cards were updated to better reflect the current socio-political climate and intersectional oppositional attacks against sex education topic areas. As a result, SIECUS staff analyzed an expanded catalogue of policy issue areas, such as instruction on pregnancy outcomes, including abortion, and instruction on menstrual health. As a result, the state grades for 2025 may differ slightly from the previous iteration of scoring. This could reflect either new legislation that shapes student access as of May 2025, updates to our grading criteria, or re-interpretation of existing policy data based on our Policy team's consensus.

For more information on policy analysis and development assistance, please reach out to Alison Macklin, amacklin@siecus.org. For local and state organizations wanting to join the our movement, please reach out to Miranda Estes, mestes@siecus.org.

How We Graded:

Each state received an overall grade derived from two main categories: sex ed requirement grade and a content requirements grade.

The *Sex Ed Requirement Grade* is calculated based on a series of sub-criteria that review the existing laws and statues in each respective state that require some form of school-based sex education, HIV/AIDS instruction, and/or detailed healthy relationships instruction (instruction on consent, violence prevention, communication, etc). This score is also based on whether sex education is [opt-in or opt-out](#), which means if parental permission is required PRIOR to enrolling in sex education or parents must request to have their child removed from sex education. Lastly, this score reflects whether or not sex education may be required by proxy due to mandated educational standards from a state's department or board of education.

The *Content Requirements Grade* comprises various sub-criteria such as “Is sex education required to be medically accurate by law?”, “Is it required to be LGBTQIA+ inclusive by law?”, “Is there instruction on contraception?”, and much more. Further, each sub criteria is weighted based upon whether or not that content is required by law or how MUCH of it is required to be taught. New content criteria for 2025 included instruction on all pregnancy options, including abortion, as well as educational requirements on menstrual health, disorders, and hygiene. This category also accounts for which states legally require alignment with the [National Sex Education Standards](#) by state law or statute, the current gold standard for quality sex education.

Together, these two categories make up the overall grade which reflects the state of sex education policy in each respective state. An important note, however, is that while this grade highlights existing laws and policies in a state, it does not tell the complete story. One of the main issues faced by sex education advocates across the country is the actual implementation of these policies in respective local school districts. While policies may exist at the state level, enforcement of these policies varies locally. Thus, SIECUS aims for the state report cards to remain an iterative process in which we hope to eventually analyze implementation of these policies as another category within each state’s grades to truly present the landscape of sex education in the United States.

State	SEX ED RQMT. GRADE	CONTENT GRADE	OVERALL GRADE
Oregon	A	A-	A
Washington	A	A-	A
California	A	B+	A-
Illinois	C	A-	A-
Distr. of Columbia	A	B	A-
New Jersey	B	B+	A-
Rhode Island	A	B	A-

State	SEX ED RQMT. GRADE	CONTENT GRADE	OVERALL GRADE
Vermont	A	B-	B
Colorado	D	B+	B
Maryland	A	B-	B
Maine	A	C+	B-
Hawaii	A	C	B-
Nevada	C	B+	C+
Missouri	C	C+	C
Wisconsin	B	C	C
Delaware	A	D+	C
North Carolina	B	C-	C
Iowa	A	D+	C
Virginia	D	C	C
New Mexico	B	D+	C-
West Virginia	B	D+	C-
Minnesota	B	D+	C-
Alabama	C	D+	C-
South Carolina	A	D-	C-
Tennessee	C	D+	C-
Texas	D	C-	C-
New Hampshire	B	D	D+
Georgia	A	F	D+
Kansas	A	F	D+

State	SEX ED RQMT. GRADE	CONTENT GRADE	OVERALL GRADE
Kentucky	F	D+	D+
Pennsylvania	C	D	D+
Alaska	D	D	D
Montana	B	F	D
New York	C	D-	D
Connecticut	C	D-	D-
Michigan	C	D-	D-
Massachusetts	D	D-	D-
North Dakota	B	F	D-
Florida	B	F	F
Idaho	D	F	F
Louisiana	C	F	F
Nebraska	D	F	F
Oklahoma	C	F	F
Wyoming	F	D-	F
Ohio	D	F	F
South Dakota	D	F	F
Utah	D	F	F
Mississippi	C	F	F
Arkansas	F	F	F
Indiana	F	F	F
Arizona	F	F	F

Definitions

These definitions are for the purpose of scoring policy in this project and might not apply in other contexts.

Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE): Instruction on human sexuality and sexual health that is medically accurate, age appropriate, inclusive and/or culturally relevant, and evidence-based or evidence informed. This instruction must encompass STI and pregnancy prevention through contraception, healthy relationships, adolescent development, assault prevention, anatomy, sexual orientation and gender identity, and more.

Sex education: Instruction on sexual health including STI prevention AND pregnancy prevention alongside healthy relationships, puberty, anatomy and development and more. Maybe standalone instruction required under names such as "sexual health education", "sexuality education", "family life education", "personal health and safety education", "human growth and development instruction."

Health education (that includes sexual health concepts): Instruction on physical health that may incorporate some sex education concepts such as STI prevention AND/OR pregnancy prevention and sexual violence OR healthy relationships.

Detailed Healthy Relationships Education: Instruction on healthy relationships which may include topics such as consent, healthy communication, signs of toxic relationships, physical boundaries, assault/abuse prevention, but does not include any sexual health topics.

HIV/AIDS Education: Instruction on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment that does not require instruction on other sexual health topics such as pregnancy prevention, relationships, reproduction, anatomy, puberty, other STIs, etc.

Sex ed by proxy: Some states require that public schools implement or follow state department of education standards or core curriculum which may include health education standards that are on sexual health topics. For these states, we would say sex ed is taught by proxy in that likely all schools are required to teach/are teaching sex education that meets these standards.

Opt-In: A school must notify parents and guardians and obtain consent prior to the start of instruction of sex education. If the consent is not given, the student cannot receive the instruction.

Opt-Out: A school must notify parents and guardians prior to the start of instruction of sex education, but a parent/guardian must submit a request to have them removed if they do not want their child to participate.

Abstinence-only: laws (or standards that have force of law) require stressing/emphasizing abstinence until (heterosexual) marriage AND do not require covering contraception OR restricts contraception from even being taught OR failure rates of contraception AND/OR purports a certain moral ideology re: sexuality.

Abstinence-plus: laws (or standards that have force of law) require stressing abstinence AND also requires contraception AND/OR STI prevention and can purport a certain moral ideology re: sexuality.

Methodology:

SIECUS State Profile Grades were calculated by using **2 categories** that totaled up to the overall grade given.

The first category, **Sex Ed Requirement**, delves into what policies exist that mandate instruction of sex education and any limitations to enrollment in sex education. This category is made up of **4 criteria** and each response to the criteria has a weighted score assigned to it. It is the compilation of these scores that equal the letter grade assigned. The corresponding scores are listed behind the criteria.

Is sex education required by state law?

- Sex education mandated (3)
- Health education mandated and incorporates some sexual health concepts (2)
- HIV/AIDS instruction or detailed healthy relationships education mandated (1)
- No instruction mandated (0)

Is sex education required by proxy (via mandate to abide by health education state standards)?

- Yes (2)
- No (0)

Note: Between the first two criteria, only one is considered based on the higher score (example: Minnesota required HIV/AIDS education by law which is 1 point but they also have required health education standards that go beyond HIV/AIDS instruction which gives them 2 points)

Is sex education [opt-in or opt-out](#)?

- Opt-in (-2)
- Opt-in for some topics, for example sexual orientation and gender identity (-1)
- Opt-out (0)

Is sex education explicitly prohibited in specific grade levels?

- Yes (-1)
- No (0)

Total Sex Ed Requirement Grade:

3 = A

2 = B

1 = C

0 = D

-1 or below = F

The second category, **Content Requirement**, covers state policies that moderate the quality of sex education and what topics are required to be taught in sex education curriculum. These requirements must be required by law or by mandated health education state standards. This category is made up of 15 criteria.

Is sex education required to be age-appropriate?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Is sex education required to be evidence-based?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Is sex education required to be culturally relevant?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Is sex education required to be medically accurate?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Does sex education instruct on HIV/AIDS and other STIs?

- Covers STIs, including HIV/AIDS (1)
- Covers only HIV/AIDS (0.5)
- Not covered (0)

Does sex education require instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Does sex education require instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity to include false and/or stigmatizing information about LGBTQIA+ people?

- No (0)
- Yes, implied (-0.5)
- Yes (-1)

Does the state have a “Don’t Say Gay” law that restricts discussion on sexual orientation and gender identity?

- No (0)
- Yes (-1)

Does sex education instruct on consent?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Does sex education require instruction on healthy relationships?

- Yes, detailed (1)
- Yes, some topics (0.5)
- No (0)

Does sex education require instruction on condoms and/or contraception?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Does sex education require instruction on condoms and/or contraception?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Are the National Sex Education Standards explicitly named in statute?

- Yes (2)
- No (0)

Does sex education instruct on abstinence?

- Abstinence covered (0)
- Abstinence stressed/emphasized (-1)
- Abstinence-only (-2)

Does instruction cover abortion?

- Discusses abortion in a positive or neutral way (1)
- Instruction on abortion not required (0)
- Stigmatizing or false information on abortion required, including "[Baby Olivia](#)" laws OR instruction prohibited (-1)

Does sex education instruct on menstrual health beyond puberty?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Total Content Requirement Grade:

13 = A+, 12.5-11.5 = A, 11-10 = A-
9.5-8.5 = B+, 8-7 = B, 6.5-5.5 = B-
5-4.5 = C+, 4-3.5 = C, 3-2.5 = C-
2 - 1.5 = D+, 1 - 0.5 = D, 0- -0.5 = D-
-1 or lower = F

Overall State Grade:

16 - 14 = A+, 13.5-12.5 = A, 12-11 = A-
10.5-10 = B+, 9.5-8.5 = B, 8-7 = B-
6.5-6 = C+, 5.5-4.5 = C, 4-3 = C-
2.5-2 = D+, 1.5-1 = D, 0.5-0 = D-
-0.5- -8 = F

