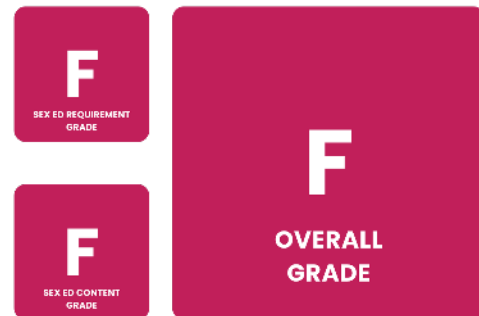




## Arizona State of Sex Ed

Sex education is not required, nor is HIV/STI education in Arizona schools. If sex education is taught, it must instruct on abstinence before marriage and discourage adolescent sexual activity, with no requirement on instruction of other topics such as contraception. It must be opt-in.



[View Bill Tracker](#)

### Current Requirement

- Arizona students are not required to receive sex education or HIV/STI education.
- If a school chooses to teach sex education, the curriculum must emphasize abstinence before marriage and discourage adolescent sexual activity.
- Arizona statute does not require that sex education include instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- If sex education is provided, it cannot be taught before fifth grade.
- If sex education is provided, it must be age-appropriate. Any instruction on HIV/AIDS, specifically, must be medically accurate.
- Instruction on abortion is prohibited
- There is no requirement to teach about consent.
- Parents or guardians must provide consent before their child receives sex education. This is referred to as an “opt-in” policy.

### RECENT LEGISLATION SHAPING THE STATE LANDSCAPE

In recent years, advocates in Arizona have worked tirelessly to narrowly defeat anti-sex education, anti-LGBTQIA+, and “parental rights” bills. Since the [repeal](#)

of the [“no promo homo” law](#) in 2019, SIECUS has not observed any successful progressive sex education legislation in Arizona which underscores the need for sex education advocacy in the state.

Instead, Arizona continues to experience a wave of coordinated state legislative attacks on inclusive and affirming education and school environments. The passage of [House Bill 2035](#) in 2021 dealt a blow to sex education in Arizona by requiring written parental consent for their children to participate in sex education instruction—or any broader instruction related to sexuality—in public and charter schools, and preventing students in grades 1-5 from participating in sex education. This is known as an [“opt-in” policy](#) which creates unnecessary hurdles that prevent students from accessing the sex education they have a right to receive.

In 2025, the Arizona legislature passed [House Bill 2670](#), a “Baby Olivia” bill that requires fetal development instruction in grades seventh and eighth health education. It also allows the Board of Education to require it in grades one through six or nine through twelve if they choose to do so. Detailed instruction in fetal development is not considered best practice nor in alignment with the National Sex Education Standards. Further, the opposition continues to introduce this legislation across the country in an effort to spread anti-abortion misinformation and perpetuate abortion stigma from a young age. Thankfully, Arizona’s governor has vetoed this bill to prevent it from being enacted into law.

In addition, numerous bills were introduced under the guise of “parental rights”. These bills represent the opposition’s attempt to attack public education by stigmatizing vital and important curriculum and requiring additional, unnecessary procedures for consent, review of instructional materials, and advanced notification. For example, two bills have been enacted in 2022 and one in 2023 that would increase unnecessary parental involvement within the school system such as [House Bill 2161](#) (2022) which prohibits schools from withholding any information about a “change in their child’s emotional, mental, and physical health” which has been called out by advocates as constituting a [“forced outing”](#) clause, a policy that allows for school employees and administration to [“out”](#) LGBTQIA+ students to their parents without their consent.

Similarly, bills that would seek to restrict access to instructional materials deemed “sexually explicit” have also been enacted into law. In 2022, House Bill 2495 was enacted and prohibits Arizona public schools from using or referring students to sexually explicit material unless the school acquires parental consent and the material is either “Classical Literature,” “Early American Literature,” or required for a course to obtain college credit. In the bill, the definition of sexually explicit material includes “masturbation, homosexuality, sexual intercourse or physical contact with a person’s clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks or if such person is female, breast.” This language can now be used to effectively restrict discussions on LGBTQIA+ relationships and the content that can be discussed in sex education.

The lack of sex education state policy leaves Arizona schools to decide what, if any, sex education is taught in schools, also known as “local control”. Local control over sex education presents unique challenges that have resulted in glaring disparities 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 LGBTQIA+ youth, and presents further challenges in ensuring that low income districts have access to the resources needed to implement sex education. A [2024 investigation conducted by LOOKOUT](#), a local Arizona queer rights news outlet, discovered at least 8 school districts (Duncan, Heber-Overgaard, Gila Bend, Ganado, Parker, Nogales, Kingman, and Scottsdale) are not offering any kind of sex education. Advocates note that local “parental rights” conservative groups have pushed against school districts adopting better sex education curriculum, or even holding classes altogether, leading to a chilling effect for school districts wanting to provide sex education. The result is that young people, who already [make up a large proportion of new STI cases in Arizona](#) and the United States at large, are left unprepared and without the knowledge they need to access vital sexual and reproductive health care.

Right now, advocates can take action to ensure young people in their community have access to quality sex education. Particularly, advocates can invest in local school board races to elect strong advocates who support sex education. Advocates can also contact their local school board to 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 instruction requirements in their community. Advocates are encouraged to take action on pending legislation that seeks to advance or restrict the principles of sex education.

**Arizona's 2025-2026 legislative session convened January 13th, 2025 and adjourned April 26th, 2025.**

Further, advocates can contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for a statewide sex education mandate. Advocates are encouraged to use the [SIECUS Community Action Toolkit](#) to guide local efforts to advance sex education. For more information on getting involved in local and state advocacy for sex education, reach out to our State Policy Action Manager, Miranda Estes ([mestes@siecus.org](mailto:mestes@siecus.org))

## **More on sex ed in Arizona...**

### **State Law: A Closer Look**

Arizona law does not require schools to teach sex education or HIV education. However, [Arizona Revised Statutes §§ 15-711, 15-716, and 15-102](#) state that if a school chooses to teach these topics, instruction must be age-appropriate, include instruction on the laws relating to sexual conduct with a minor (grades 7-12), and stress abstinence. Further, if a school chooses to teach HIV education, such instruction must be medically accurate. [Arizona Revised Statutes 15-115](#) states that school districts may not provide instruction that does not present childbirth and adoption as preferable options to abortion, stigmatizing the decision to access abortion care.

[Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-303](#) states that schools may “provide a specific elective lesson or lessons concerning sex education as a supplement to the health course of study.” Schools that choose to provide sex education must have the lessons approved by the school’s local governing board. All sex education materials and instruction that discuss sexual intercourse must:

1. Stress that pupils should abstain from sexual intercourse until they are mature adults;
2. Emphasize that abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only method for avoiding pregnancy that is 100% effective;

3. Stress that sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) have severe consequences and constitute a serious and widespread public health problem;
4. Include a discussion of the possible emotional and psychological consequences of pre-adolescent and adolescent sexual intercourse and the consequences of pre-adolescent and adolescent pregnancy; and
5. Advise pupils of Arizona law pertaining to the financial responsibilities of parenting and legal liabilities related to sexual intercourse with a minor.

In Arizona, parents or guardians must provide written permission for the child to participate in sex education, according to [Arizona Revised Statutes 15-711 Sec. B](#). This is referred to as an “opt-in” policy.

Further, after the enactment of **House Bill 2035**, [Arizona Revised Statutes 15-711 Sec. A](#) prohibits instruction in sex education prior to fifth grade.

## State Standards

Arizona has *Health Education Standards* in place that provide a foundation for curricula in the state for grades K-12. Concepts related to sexuality are not specifically mentioned in these standards.

## 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. In recent years, there has been an increase in legislative attacks on the implementation of CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) which [tracks six categories of health risk behaviors](#) including sexual health behaviors. **To learn more about Arizona's 2021 YRBS results, [click here](#).** In 2023, Arizona’s high school YRBS data was not weighted to be representative of all students and the state did not participate in the middle school YRBS data collection.

## Arizona School Health Profiles Data

In 2024, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the 2022 [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. **To view Arizona's results from the 2022 School Health Profiles Survey, visit CDC's [School Health Profiles Explorer](#) tool.**

Visit the CDC's [School Health Profiles](#) 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](#).**