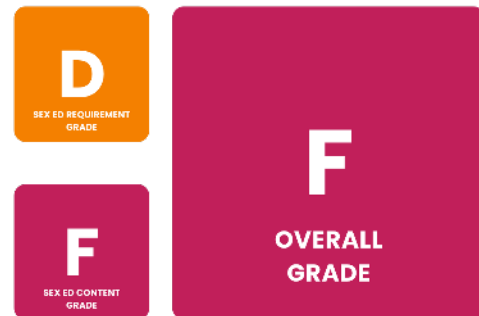




Idaho State of Sex Ed

Sex education is not required by law, nor is HIV/STI education. However, required health standards require instruction on "Growth, Development, & Family Life" that must be factual and medically accurate. As of July 2025, all education that discusses human sexuality requires parental permission, and instruction on gender and sexuality is banned in grades K - 12. Idaho schools also must show stigmatizing fetal development videos in family life education.



[View Bill Tracker](#)

Current Requirement

- Idaho schools are not required to teach sex education.
 - If a school offers sex education, the curriculum must encourage abstinence.
- Idaho statute has no regulation on medically accurate sex education. However, the Idaho Department of Education's health education standards state that if taught, growth, development, and family life instruction should be factual and medically accurate.
 - Curriculum must include "fetal development" instruction, including the viewing of a medically inaccurate, stigmatizing animation called "Meet Baby Olivia", an anti-abortion propaganda film.
 - Curriculum is not required to include instruction on consent, and some instruction on healthy relationships is required.
- Idaho statute restricts instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity for students in K - 12 in a manner that is not in accordance with state standards or considered developmentally appropriate.

- Parents or guardians must give written permission in order for a student to participate in any form of sex education. This is referred to as an “opt-in” policy.

RECENT LEGISLATION SHAPING THE STATE LANDSCAPE

Over the last several years, Idaho has become increasingly hostile not only toward sex education, but also LGBTQIA+ students, school library materials, and has taken several significant steps to enshrine parental rights.

In 2023, Idaho enacted [House Bill 228](#) which amended the previous definition of sex education and defines abstinence as “the absence of any sexual activity prior to marriage, which activity includes physical contact between individuals involving intimate or private areas of the body that can potentially: (a) Result in pregnancy; (b) Transmit sexually transmitted diseases and infections; or (c) Present emotional risks” while defining sex ed as only studying the anatomy and physiology of human reproduction.

The 2024 legislative session also saw several anti sex education and anti-LGBTQIA+ bills pass into law. [House Bill 710](#) prohibited sexually explicit or “obscene” materials from being made available in schools or libraries, and amended the definition of “harmful to minors” to be more vague. [House Bill 666](#) prohibits abortion providers (such as Planned Parenthood) from writing materials or instruction for sex education curricula in the state. As a detrimental step to LGBTQIA+ student inclusion, [House Bill 538](#) was passed and protects school employees and students who refuse a person's preferred name or pronouns, and [House Bill 421](#) legally defined terms such as sex, gender, boy, girl, father, and female to only use cisgender and biologically exclusive language.

On March 31, 2025, Governor Brad Little signed [House Bill 239](#) into law, which makes several regressive changes to sex ed policy that go into effect July 2025. Parental permission will now be prior to any human sexuality instruction ([creating an opt-in policy](#)). The bill also redefines “human sexuality” and makes distinction between the term and sex education which means “sexual conduct, sexual pleasure, sexual intimacy, sexual abuse, sexual violence, eroticism, pornography, deviant sexual behavior, sexual attraction, sexual orientation, or any form of sexual identity, gender identity, gender ideology, or

gender conversion." This dangerous rhetoric not only stigmatizes sex education, but also severely limits the kind of sex education that can be taught. In order to achieve positive health and behavioral outcomes, sex education should align with the [National Sex Education Standards](#) which encompass a breadth of topics in addition to reproductive anatomy including puberty, sex, gender, healthy relationships, pregnancy, and much more.

[Senate Bill 1046](#) was also enacted into law this legislative session which requires schools to include two videos in all sex education and human development courses from grades 5 - 12. First, a video showing fetal organ development in the womb and another showing and all stages of human development from fertilization until birth. Aligned with the larger trend of "Baby Olivia" bills, these videos are modeled after the "Meet Baby Olivia" video developed by Live Action - an extremist anti-abortion group known for their deceptive and manipulative tactics. These efforts will only increase misinformation about abortion and perpetuate abortion stigma in a state that is already a restrictive state for abortion access. Finally, [House Bill 352](#) was enacted and prohibits instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity in grades K - 12 in all public schools, adding to Idaho's legislation on the central role of parental rights educating their children on "the social system of our culture." Although framed as affirming parental rights, in practice, House Bill 352 and similar laws weaponize the concept of parent rights, ultimately restrict LGBTQIA+ students' access to inclusive classroom instruction.

Currently, if sex education is taught, Idaho's health standards require curriculum to encourage abstinence, include instruction on pregnancy and disease prevention and the consequences of sexual activity, healthy relationships, puberty, and STIs. However, local school districts determine if they want to provide this or additional instruction. As a consequence, advocates report the quality of sex education being taught varies greatly by district.

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 LGBTQIA+ youth, and presents further challenges in ensuring that low income districts have access to the resources needed to implement sex

education. Advocates report that the embroiled political climate in Idaho, paired with the minimal health education requirements and a lack of resources to advance sex education, create significant barriers to implementing sex education across the state. There is an identified need for increased community support for advanced sex education, and more statewide coalition partners.

Right now, advocates can take action by fighting back against recently passed anti-sex ed legislation to ensure young people in their community have access to quality sex education. Advocates can then vocalize the importance of implementing inclusive sex education, including a culturally responsive curriculum that addresses the needs of youth of color and LGBTQIA+ youth, or medically accurate instruction on contraceptives, HIV and STI prevention, healthy relationships, and consent. Advocates are encouraged to take action on pending legislation that seeks to advance or restrict the principles of sex education. **Idaho's 2025 legislative session convened January 6th, 2025 and adjourned on April 4th, 2025.**

Further, advocates can contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for a statewide sex education mandate. Advocates are encouraged to use the [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)

More on sex ed in Idaho...

State Law: A Closer Look

Sex education is not mandated in Idaho. [Idaho Statute §33-1608](#) states that the “primary responsibility of family life and sex education” rests with a student’s home and church and that “the schools can only complement and supplement those standards which are established in the family.” Local school boards may decide to offer sex education. If a school board institutes sex education, the program must place “major emphasis” on the home (including “appreciation of the important place the family home holds in the social system of our culture”), family, and church as areas of importance for learning

such knowledge. School boards must include parents and community groups in all aspects of instituting and evaluating sex education programs.

In addition, the statute states that programs should give young people “the scientific, physiological information for understanding sex and its relation to the miracle of life.” They must also include “knowledge of the power of the sex drive and the necessity of controlling that drive by self-discipline.”

[House Bill 239](#), passed on March 31, 2025, which amends [Idaho Code Section 33-1609](#) to redefine the terms “human sexuality” and “sex education” as two distinct concepts. Human sexuality is defined as “sexual conduct, sexual pleasure, sexual intimacy, sexual abuse, sexual violence, eroticism, pornography, deviant sexual behavior, sexual attraction, sexual orientation, or any form of sexual identity, gender identity, gender ideology, or gender conversion.” “Sex education” is defined as “the study of the anatomy and the physiology of human reproduction.” In 2023, Idaho enacted [House Bill 228](#) into law which also amended [Section 33-1609](#) to change the definition of abstinence to the below:

“Abstinence” means the absence of any sexual activity prior to marriage, which activity includes physical contact between individuals involving intimate or private areas of the body that can potentially:

- (a) Result in pregnancy;
- (b) Transmit sexually transmitted diseases and infections; or
- (c) Present emotional risks.”

[House Bill 239](#) also states that, “prior to any child attending instruction that addresses human sexuality as it is specifically and narrowly defined in section 33-1609, 29 Idaho Code...the school district offering such instruction shall notify parents and legal guardians of children who are eligible to attend such instruction no less than two (2) weeks before the date that such instruction will begin.” Schools must provide a description of curriculum, and allow parents to review materials if requested. Students are not able to attend

instruction unless their guardian “submits a signed and written permission form to the board of trustees within one (1) week of the commencement of the instruction granting the school district permission to allow the child to attend the instruction.” This statute enshrines an opt-in policy in Idaho, which has been shown to prevent students from receiving sex education.

Several recent laws drastically shape sex education content for students in Idaho. [House Bill 352](#), enshrined into law on March 31, 2025, requires public schools to adopt policies that “prohibit classroom instruction by public school personnel on sexual orientation or gender identity from kindergarten through grade 12 or in a manner that is not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.”

Due to [Senate Bill 1046](#), beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, each school must provide instruction on human growth and development for students in grades 5 through 12, which must include:

“(a) A high-definition ultrasound video, at least three (3) minutes in duration, showing the development of the brain, heart, sex organs, and other vital organs in early fetal development; and

(b) A high-quality, computer-generated rendering or animation showing the process of fertilization and every stage of human development inside the uterus, noting significant markers in cell growth and organ development for every week of pregnancy until birth.”

The above “human growth and development” instruction must also be included in every class that discusses human biology, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases or sexually transmitted infections (STDs or STIs).

(2) “Sex education” means the study of the anatomy and the physiology of human reproduction.

State Standards

For schools offering sex education, the Idaho Department of Education’s [*Idaho Content Standards for Health Education*](#) requires content related to

the “consequences of sexual activity” beginning in grades 6-8. By grade 12, this content should include “encouragement of abstinence from sexual activity, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (e.g., transmission and prevention), and pregnancy prevention.” Instruction should also include discussions of emotional intelligence, stress management, mental illness, suicide prevention, healthy relationships, acceptance of self and others, communication skills, and conflict resolution. All information should be “factual, medically accurate, and objective.”

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 Idaho’s 2021 YRBS results, [click here](#). As of 2023, Idaho [no longer participates](#) in data collection for YRBS.**

Idaho 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 Idaho’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](#).