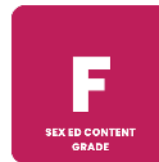




Georgia State of Sex Ed



Current Requirement: Georgia schools must provide sex education and AIDS prevention education.

- Instruction must emphasize abstinence from sexual activity until marriage as an important personal goal.
- Age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education is required in K-9th grade.
- Georgia has no regulation requiring sex education and AIDS prevention education to be medically accurate.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on consent.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Parents may remove their children from all or part of sex education instruction with written notification. [This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.](#)

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Recent Legislation Shaping the State Landscape

In recent years, Georgia lawmakers have advanced a series of education policies that, while not always explicitly aimed at sex education, create a restrictive environment that threatens the inclusion of topics related to gender, identity, and sexuality in classrooms. During the 2025 Georgia legislative session, [Senate Bill 248](#) was introduced and sought to restrict public school access to materials deemed harmful to minors and prohibit “inappropriate sex-based topics,” including SOGI instruction, while imposing additional parental review, consent, and notification requirements. It also would have limited sex education to abstinence-based

instruction and AIDS prevention in grades 6–12, with strict restrictions on sexually explicit instructional materials and expanded parental rights over curriculum. Fortunately, SB 248 died in committee, and brave advocates were not deterred from attempting progressive legislation that would support youth in Georgia. In fact, advocates continue to push for bold, youth-centered reforms- including the introduction of the Reproductive Freedom Act during the 2025/2026 sessions ([HB 598](#) / [SB 246](#)), which sought to expand abortion access for minors and affirm their right to make informed decisions about their reproductive health.

Additionally, our partners at the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential (GCAPP) worked to introduce 2026 legislation through [House Bill 1505](#), which sought to modernize statutory language around HIV instruction and also require sex ed to be medically accurate and age-appropriate. Unfortunately, the bill did not advance before sine die, the end of session. However, we'd like to celebrate a courageous local policy decision made by the largest school district in the state- Gwinnett County. In February 2026, the Gwinnett County Public School Board voted 3 - 2 to offer parents a choice between a comprehensive sex education curriculum (CSE), their existing abstinence-based curriculum, or opting out entirely; if parents do not affirmatively select a curriculum option, CSE will be the default instruction for middle and high school students.

Advocates in Action

At the local level, Georgia advocates can contact their local school board to determine what topics are missing from sex education instruction, such as instruction on consent, sexual orientation, gender identity, and contraceptives. Additionally, attend school board meetings to speak up in support of sex education and highlight the critical need to strengthen instruction requirements in their community. At the state level, advocates are encouraged to continue to push for medical accuracy in sex education and HIV instruction without compromising for abstinence-only approaches.

Advocates can also contact state legislators to support a statewide comprehensive sex education mandate and use the [Community Action Toolkit](#) to strengthen local organizing efforts. For additional guidance, advocates can contact the SIECUS Policy team by emailing info@siecus.org or join the Sexuality Education Policy Action Council (SEPAC) using our [interest form](#).

More on sex ed in Georgia...

State Law: A Closer Look

[Georgia Code Annotated §§ 20-2-143](#) requires Georgia schools to teach sex education and AIDS prevention education. Georgia law requires the state board of education to set minimum guidelines that sex education programs must meet. The [guidelines](#) created by the board require instruction to “emphasize abstinence from sexual activity until marriage and fidelity in marriage as important personal goals.” In addition, [Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.12](#) states that sex education instruction should address peer pressure and promote “high self-esteem, local community values, and abstinence from sexual activity as an effective

method of prevention of pregnancy, STIs, and AIDS.” Local school boards largely decide which subjects education must cover, age-appropriate messages, and the grade level at which topics are introduced.

Parents or guardians may remove their children from all or part of sex and/or STI/HIV education by sending written notice to the school. [This is called an “opt-out” policy.](#)

State Standard

The Georgia Department of Education has also established the *Georgia Performance Standards for Health Education* for grades K–12. These standards were most recently revised in 2021. The health education standards act as a “framework for local schools to use in order to create an instructional program that will enable their students to become healthy and capable of academic success.” Beginning in grade 8, health education standards require discussion on abstinence as the “most effective and healthy means for preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs).” Sexual violence prevention instruction is included in grades K–12 standards.

Youth Sexual Health Data

The CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) [tracks six categories of health risk behaviors](#), including sexual health behaviors. **To learn more about Georgia's 2023 YRBS results, [click here](#).** The CDC’s School Health Profiles [identify 22 sexual health education topics](#) as critical for ensuring a young person’s sexual health. **Georgia's 2024 School Health Profiles response rate was not high enough to be representative and thus is excluded from the 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](#).