

Health Education Curriculum Update

Understanding PPS 8th Grade Sexual Health Curriculum

Presented by:

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Agenda



- 01** Updated MA State Standards-
Curriculum Alignment
- 02** PPS Commitment to Our Students
- 03** Sexual Health Overview
- 04** Curriculum Planning and
Opt Out Procedure

- 05** Lesson Overview and Standards
Alignment
- 06** Caregivers as Partners-
Resources for Families
- 07** Clarification
- 08** Curriculum Expansion

Massachusetts Health Standards Update and Alignment



- Updated in 2023 for the first time since 1999
- Includes PE and Health
- Practice-Based (Skills-Based)
- Summer 2025 Curriculum Work to update PPS middle school scope and sequence

**COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH AND
PHYSICAL
EDUCATION**

Grades Pre-Kindergarten to 12

Massachusetts
Curriculum
Framework -
2023

Massachusetts Health Education Standards

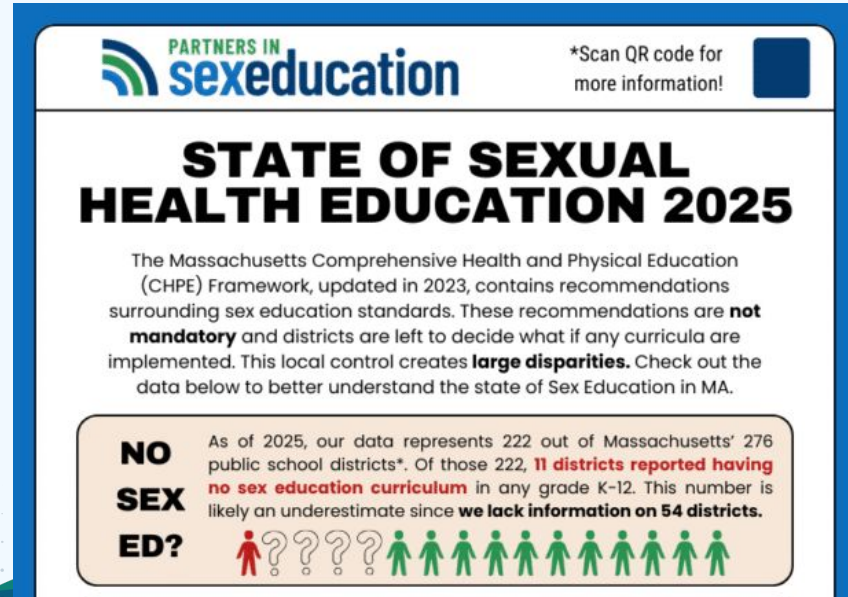
Practices/Skills
Practice 1: Decision-Making and Problem-Solving.
Practice 2: Self-Management and Goal Setting.
Practice 3: Social Awareness, Relationship, and Communication Skills.
Practice 4: Movement Skills.
Practice 5: Self-Awareness and Analyzing Influences.
Practice 6: Information and Resource Seeking.
Practice 7: Self-Advocacy and Health Promotion.

Topics
Healthy Relationships [HR]
Mental and Emotional Health [MH]
Nutrition and Balanced Eating [NE]
Personal Safety [PS]
Physical Activity and Fitness [PF]
Physical Health and Hygiene [PH]
Public, Community, and Environmental Health [CE]
Sexual Health [SH]
Substance Use and Misuse [SU]

Updating PPS Health Curriculum

~Commitment to our students

- Identify gaps in our current curriculum
- Align with Standards
- Sexual Health Education was missing in the middle school




PARTNERS IN sexeducation *Scan QR code for more information!

STATE OF SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION 2025

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education (CHPE) Framework, updated in 2023, contains recommendations surrounding sex education standards. These recommendations are **not mandatory** and districts are left to decide what if any curricula are implemented. This local control creates **large disparities**. Check out the data below to better understand the state of Sex Education in MA.

NO SEX ED? As of 2025, our data represents 222 out of Massachusetts' 276 public school districts*. Of those 222, **11 districts reported having no sex education curriculum** in any grade K-12. This number is likely an underestimate since **we lack information on 54 districts**.



What is Comprehensive Sexual Health?

Comprehensive Sexual Health is a broad term that includes many topics:

Anatomy, Reproductive Health, Self-Image, Decision Making, Relationships, Respect, Bodily Autonomy & Consent, Values, Self Image, Sexual Behavior, Sexual Consent, Disease Prevention, Pregnancy Prevention, Sex Assigned at Birth, Gender, Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, etc.

Comprehensive Sexual Health in MA

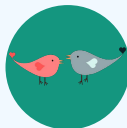
- Massachusetts mandates that any school offering sexual health education must provide a medically accurate, age-appropriate, and comprehensive curriculum consistent with the state's Comprehensive Health Framework.
- This education is intended to help students develop healthy relationships, delay sexual activity, prevent pregnancy and STIs, and understand topics like consent, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
- While local districts have discretion, state guidelines provide the framework and standards for these programs, and **parents have the right to opt their children out of all or part of the instruction.**

Why teach Sexual Health?



PROVIDES ACCURATE INFORMATION

In this age of phone, technology, and social media, students need accurate information more than ever



SUPPORTS SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Helps students navigate relationship pressures, body image and self-esteem, respectful communication



PROMOTES SAFETY, CONSENT, AND BOUNDARIES

Teaching about healthy relationships and communication skills early helps to prevent sexual harassment, abuse and coercion, and unsafe or uninformed decision-making



ENCOURAGES CONVERSATIONS TO BE CONTINUED AT HOME

Families are partners in this process. Health education teaches factual information. Parents and caregivers teach values.

Our Sexual Health Curriculum Development

- Team of 6 teachers over the course of 3 months
- Input from local districts, parents, consultants
- Administration involvement
- Based off of several standards-based curricula
- 8th grade only for this year
- 3 class lessons
- Lessons instructed by licensed health teachers

Opt-Out Procedure

- Opt-Out form sent home prior to lessons being taught, with lesson topics and teacher contact information
- Syllabus sent home with unit overview and another link/option to opt-out
- Opt-Out form deadline is updated each term to allow for sub planning for students who have opted out
- Students who have been opted out receive an alternate assignment in another location while lessons being taught
- Parents and caregivers may view lessons in entirety upon request
- Additional information including lessons and videos posted on the PPS Website for review

Climate-Setting

Topics	Objectives and Resources	MA Standards Addressed
1.Climate Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Provide a definition of sexual health education❑ Provide students with an overview of upcoming lessons❑ Review skills practiced and embedded in health curriculum❑ Establish an inclusive classroom culture by identifying norms and expectations	Practice 7- Self-Advocacy and Health Promotion-8.7.SH.1, 8.7.SH.2, 8.7.SH.3 Why: Lesson introduces expectations for respectful, inclusive discussions; boundary-setting; and self-advocacy.

Human Anatomy

Topics	Objectives and Resources	MA Standards Addressed
2. Human Anatomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Identify male and female reproductive anatomy.<input type="checkbox"/> Understand body part functions.<input type="checkbox"/> Learn about the menstrual cycle.<input type="checkbox"/> Use inclusive and factual language.	<p>Practice 6- Information and Resource Seeking-8.6.SH.1, 8.6.SH.2</p> <p>Why: Lesson covers medically accurate reproductive anatomy and the menstrual cycle.</p> <p>Lesson teaches accurate reproductive system structure and function.</p>

Reproduction

Topics	Objectives and Resources	MA Standards Addressed
3. Human Reproduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Define sexual intercourse and reproduction.<input type="checkbox"/> Learn the steps of conception.<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss when pregnancy can and cannot occur.<input type="checkbox"/> Understand how abstinence and contraception prevent pregnancy.	<p>Practice 6- Information and Resource Seeking-8.6.SH.1, 8.SH.2</p> <p>Practice 7- Self-Advocacy and Health Promotion-8.7.PS.2, 8.7.SH.3</p> <p>Why: Lesson addresses conception, menstrual cycles, sexual intercourse, and pregnancy prevention.</p>

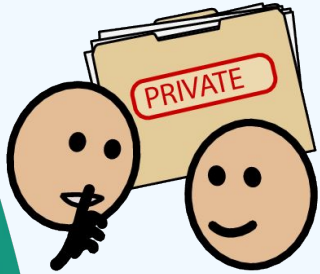
Healthy Boundaries and Consent

Topics	Objectives and Resources	MA Standards Addressed
4. Personal Boundaries and Consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Define personal boundaries and consent.❑ Learn self-advocacy and respect for others.❑ Analyze scenarios about boundaries❑ Practice refusal skills❑ Learn about the law in regard to the age of consent for sexual intercourse❑ Reinforce that the responsibility always lies with the person who violates consent.	<p>Practice 7- Self-Advocacy and Health Promotion-8.7.SH.1, 8.7.PS.4</p> <p>Practice 3- Social Awareness, Relationship, and Communication Skills- 8.3.HR.2, 8.3.HR.5, 8.3.HR.6</p> <p>Why: The lesson teaches defining boundaries, communicating limits, and recognizing when to seek help.</p>

Understanding and Preventing STIs

Topics	Objectives and Resources	MA Standards Addressed
5. Understanding and Preventing STDs/STIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Define STDs/STIs and HIV. <input type="checkbox"/> Learn how they are transmitted and prevented. <input type="checkbox"/> Compare risk levels of different behaviors. <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize abstinence, protection, and reliable information sources. 	<p>Practice 1- Decision-Making and Problem Solving 8.1.SH.3, 8.1.SH.4, 8.1.SH.7, 8.1.HR.5, 8.1.HR.6</p> <p>Practice 2- Self-Management and Goal-Setting 8.2.SH.1, 8.2.SH.2</p> <p>Why: Lesson teaches how STDs/HIV are transmitted and how risk differs by behavior.</p>

Anonymous Questions- End of each class



- Write down one question you may still have relating to the topics that were discussed during this lesson
- Do not put names on the cards
- Everyone writes something
- If you do not have questions, write "no question" on your card

Caregivers as Partners- Resources for Families

- Lesson overview sent out via email to parents before the unit begins
- Topics and Videos provided
- Additional resources to encourage conversation at home

Clarification regarding Curriculum Planning Process

- Review and re-evaluation of materials
- Meetings as a team
- Respectful discussions about what content to include and how to deliver lessons
- Made adjustments as needed, based on many factors

Curriculum Expansion

- 2026-2027 school year
- Include grades 6-8
- Comprehensive and scaffolded
- Include a parent information session
- Similar opt-out procedure

Thank

You!

School Committee

Administration

PCIS and PSMS Principals

Health Education Teachers

