

2021 -- H 5604

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LC001605  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

Introduced By: Representatives Kislak, Donovan, Potter, Henries, Morales, Alzate, Felix,  
and McGaw

Date Introduced: February 15, 2021

Referred To: House Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 16-22-18 of the General Laws in Chapter 16-22 entitled "Curriculum  
2 [See Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended to read  
3 as follows:

4           **16-22-18. Health and family life courses.**

5           (a) Every ~~secondary~~ school grades six (6) through twelve (12) teaching courses in family  
6 life or sex education within this state shall include, as part of the course instruction, abstinence  
7 from sexual activity and refraining from sexual intercourse as the preferred method of pregnancy  
8 prevention and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. Provided further, part of the course  
9 instruction may incorporate age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate elements of effective  
10 and evidence-based programs on the law and meaning of consent. Such age-appropriate and  
11 developmentally appropriate elements of effective and evidence-based programs on the prevention  
12 of pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual violence may include instruction that  
13 increases student awareness of the fact that consent is required before sexual activity. Provided  
14 further, courses in family life or sex education shall be appropriate for students of all races, genders,  
15 sexual orientations, ethnic and cultural backgrounds; affirmatively recognize pleasure based sexual  
16 relations, different sexual orientations and be inclusive of same-sex relationships in discussions and  
17 examples. In addition, comprehensive course instruction shall include gender, gender expression,  
18 gender identity, and the harm of negative gender stereotypes.

19           (b) Upon written request to the school principal, a pupil not less than eighteen (18) years

1 of age or a parent or legal guardian of a pupil less than eighteen (18) years of age, within a  
2 reasonable period of time after the request is made, shall be permitted to examine the curriculum  
3 program instruction materials at the school in which his or her child is enrolled.

4 (c) A parent or legal guardian may exempt his or her child from the program by written  
5 directive to the principal of the school. No child so exempted shall be penalized academically by  
6 reason of the exemption.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM

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1           This act would amend the current law so that courses in family life or sex education would  
2 be taught in grades six through twelve and would be appropriate for students of all races, genders,  
3 sexual orientations, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Teachings would recognize pleasure based  
4 sexual relations, different sexual orientations and be inclusive of same-sex relationships. The act  
5 would also provide that instruction include gender, gender expression, gender identity, and the  
6 harm of negative gender stereotypes.

7           This act would take effect upon passage.

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