

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines regarding family life education

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to Shelby County Schools (SCS) students and staff and the program of family life education within Shelby County Schools.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

Program of Family Life Education

Family life education is an abstinence-centered sex education program that builds a foundation of knowledge and skills relating to character development, human development, decision making, abstinence, contraception and disease prevention. Abstinence-centered or abstinence-based means an approach that promotes sexual risk avoidance, or primary prevention, and teaches vital life skills that empower youth to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships, accurately understand sexually transmitted diseases and contraception, set goals, make healthy life decisions, and build character. Abstinence-centered education is a holistic approach that addresses the physical, social, emotional, psychological, economic and educational consequences of nonmarital sexual activity.

Family Life Curriculum

Shelby County Schools adopts the family life curriculum recommended by the Tennessee State Board or Department of Education (e.g., the Michigan Model for Health), unless otherwise determined by the Shelby County Board of Education.

Instructors

All family life instructors and presenters must comply with applicable state laws (TCA 49-6-1301 to 1307) and any SCS instructor or partner must be trained in the family life curriculum adopted by the school Board.

Provisions for Parent

Parents shall be afforded all of their rights as outlined in the state law regarding family life education (TCA 49-6-1301 to 1307).

Not less than thirty days prior to commencing instruction of the family life curriculum, the District shall notify parents or legal guardians of students whom it anticipates will be present for instruction in sex education that:

- the District is using a family life curriculum that meets the requirements of state law and
- the parent or legal guardian shall have the right to examine the grade level instructional materials and confer with the student's instructor, school counselor or principal, as designated by the District, regarding any or all portions of family life.

A parent or guardian who wishes to excuse a student from any portion of family life shall submit a request, in writing, to the student's instructor, school counselor, or principal. A parent or guardian who wishes to excuse a student from all portions of family life shall submit a request in writing to the student's principal. A student who is excused from any or all portions of family life shall not be penalized for grading purposes if the student satisfactorily performs alternative health lessons. Principals and teachers shall make alternative health lessons available to students who are excluded from any or all portions of family life education.

Additionally, a parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in family life may file a complaint with the Superintendent if the parent or legal guardian believes that a teacher, instructor, or representative of an organization has not complied with the requirements of the state law regarding family life curriculum. The Superintendent shall investigate the complaint and report the findings, along with any recommendations for disciplinary action, to the Board for further action. The Board shall file, in a timely manner, a report with the commissioner regarding any action or inaction taken.

Public Meeting

The District shall hold at least one public meeting prior to adopting a family life curriculum and thereafter not less than once each September shall schedule a meeting to explain the program of family life education to parents and members of the general public and provide them the opportunity to speak and express their opinions and concerns.

Procedures

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for the implementation, evaluation, and periodic review of the family life education program and curriculum.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

A. The Chief Academic Office (or designee) is responsible for implementation of this policy and answering questions concerning the interpretation of this policy.

B. The Chief Academic Office (or designee) is responsible for ensuring that parent requests to examine the grade level instructional materials and confer with the student's instructor, school counselor or principal regarding any or all portions of family life are addressed.

C. Principals and teachers are responsible for making alternative health lessons available to students who are excluded from any or all portions of family life education.

D. The Superintendent responsibility for ensuring that this policy is followed.

Legal References:

1. TCA § 49-6-1301
2. TCA § 49-6-1302

Cross References: