

Option to Decline Sex Education Instruction

Grades 6 and above
(No action necessary for participation)

DEAR PARENTS:

The GADOE Board Rule 160-4-2-.12 requires that each local board of education develop and implement a comprehensive health and physical education program that includes sex education and AIDS prevention education. This rule states that sex education shall also include annual age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades K - 9 and human trafficking awareness education in grades 6 - 12. Regulations allow parents/guardians to exercise the option of excluding their child from the sex education instruction program.

The current curriculum used to deliver sex education instruction in grades 6-12 is the *Choosing The Best* curriculum. The *Choosing The Best* curriculum is an abstinence-centered, sexual risk avoidance, and relationship education program. It is research-based, medically accurate, and universally applicable and inclusive. It supports the CDC stance that the **most reliable way to avoid the risk** of STD's is to be abstinent until you enter into a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner. This type of relationship is most commonly referred to as marriage and may be referenced as such. The program reinforces that the **only 100% effective method** for avoiding STD's, HIV/AIDS, or pregnancy is abstinence. The program focuses on the reasons and methods to avoid at-risk behaviors. It includes lessons on making decisions, understanding healthy relationships, identifying risks, understanding consequences, knowing facts and statistics regarding STD's, and dealing with peer pressure. Topics regarding gender identity or sexual orientation are **not** discussed since delaying sexual at risk behavior is the healthiest choice for **everyone**, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. Demonstrations of birth control methods and value judgements regarding controversial topics such as abortion are not a part of the curriculum. These topics may be referenced only in terms of statistics of effectiveness or risks of physical, emotional, or social consequences that may be experienced.

The curriculum was selected by a Sex Education Review Committee to be implemented in **grades 6 and above**. The committee was composed primarily of non-teaching parents of Houston County public school children, educators, health professionals, and other community representatives. The committee also included male and female 11th-12th grade student representatives. Future adoptions and/or changes to the sex education curriculum must be come through the Committee for its recommendation to the Board of Education for final approval.

Parents may preview all materials by contacting the **school counselor**.

For more information on *Choosing The Best* go to <http://www.choosingthebest.com/> or contact Blanche Lamb, Coordinator for Special Programs, at blanche.lamb@hcbe.net or at 478-988-6330.

No action is required at this time if you permit your child to participate. Student materials will be accessible in digital form during the instructional unit of study. Your student will have his/her own login information.

ONLY complete this form if your child will **NOT** be allowed to participate. Return to your child's teacher.

☐ **No** (My child may **not** participate in the *Choosing The Best* sex education instructional unit of study.)

STUDENT'S NAME (print)

PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE