

SUMMERS COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Adopted: 6/8/89
Reference: Board Minutes

Code: VI-A-6
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AIDS EDUCATION

Instruction concerning Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is required by State Law to be a part of the curriculum. This matter must be treated with great importance due to the nature and deadliness of the disease, but most also be treated with tact and discretion due to the nature of its most widely used method of transmission. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop has been quoted as saying that he believes AIDS education cannot begin effectively until "somewhere about the ninth grade*" since you cannot understand AIDS "until you understand your own sexuality" (School and College, March 1989). It shall be the policy of the Summers County Board of Education that instruction, concerning AIDS, its nature, causes, transmission, symptoms, shall be a part of the curriculum of our schools and shall be handled by the teachers in a manner consistent with the maturity of their students.

The goal of this policy is to assist in the protection of students by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to avoid behavior that will put them at-risk of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The Summers County Instructional program shall include the following concepts.

I. Instructional Program

- a. AIDS prevention education shall be integrated into current programs of study such as health, science, developmental guidance, and social studies as appropriate and should be included as a part of the instruction of other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).
- b. The program shall be comprehensive to provide not only knowledge about the disease AIDS, but also have a focus on the behaviors and skills necessary to prevent exposure to the virus.
- c. All high school students will, upon completion of the course requirements for graduation, have received appropriate AIDS prevention education. Such instruction shall normally be delivered with the health and science course requirements for graduation.

An outline of basic instruction should include:

Early Childhood Education (K-4)

- a. The existence of a disease called AIDS
- b. That AIDS can affect people of all ages
- c. That AIDS is a very serious disease

Middle childhood Education (5-8)

- a. The severity of AIDS, that it currently has no cure
- b. That AIDS can be transmitted in a variety of ways
- c. That AIDS can be prevented, generally, by the life style of the individual
(Grades 7-8): The symptoms of AIDS and the fact that AIDS causes a variety of other diseases to be more readily contracted by the individual

Adolescent Education (9-12)

- a. That AIDS is transmitted by:
 1. Blood Transfusions (but that this causative factor is becoming less significant)
 2. Use of needles in injecting illegal drugs when the needle is contaminated with blood containing the virus
 3. Through sexual contact with an infected person
- b. The difference between a person carrying the HIV virus and a person actually having AIDS
 1. However, that most, if not all, HIV carriers will contract AIDS
- c. That AIDS is preventable with responsible action by the individual (the student, in this case)
 1. Not injecting drugs
 2. Abstinence from pre-marital (and extra marital) sexual relations

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EMPHASIZE: THAT SEXUAL ABSTINENCE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF AIDS PREVENTION THAT THE STUDENT IS THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS/HER POSSIBILITY OF CONTRACTING OR PROBABILITY OF NOT CONTRACTING AIDS, BY HIS/HER CHOSEN ACTIVITIES

That there are agencies that will test for AIDS if suspected, and there are agencies that counsel concerning sexual activity.

Teachers should use acceptable materials and vocabulary in teaching about AIDS and human sexuality (as well as about other sexually transmitted diseases). Questions should be answered honestly, matter-of-factly, and in a manner consistent with the maturity of the student. Guidelines, such as those published by the Centers for Disease Control and the January 29, 1988 MMW Report (CDC published) may be used as resources.

II. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- a. Provisions shall be made for all school staff to receive in-service training about the nature of the AIDS epidemic and means of controlling its spread and the role of the school in providing education to prevent transmission.
- b. Educational personnel responsible for classroom instruction shall receive staff development that will enable them to implement effective AIDS education programs.
- c. Educational personnel responsible for delivering instruction shall periodically participate in staff development activities that will provide current information related to AIDS education.

III. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- a. Parents or guardians shall be made aware of and invited to staff development programs related to AIDS prevention education.
- b. As curricular materials are developed and/or adopted, parents or guardians shall be made aware of these materials. The AIDS curriculum and materials shall be available for parental examination.
- c. Parents may provide written notice to the school principal to exempt their children from AIDS instruction.