

HB 2491 -- INSTRUCTION IN HUMAN SEXUALITY AND SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

SPONSOR: Smith

This bill changes the laws regarding instruction in human sexuality and sexually transmitted infections in a public or charter school. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Requires any course materials and instruction relating to human sexuality and sexually transmitted infections to also be based on peer-reviewed projects that have been demonstrated to influence healthy behavior and be age appropriate;
- (2) Changes the requirement to present abstinence as the preferred choice of behavior by repealing the provision regarding the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity and the higher risk of dropping out of school because of the consequences of the diseases and an unplanned pregnancy and specifying that abstinence is the only sure way to avoid pregnancy or sexually transmitted infection;
- (3) Repeals the provision requiring students be presented with the latest medically factual information regarding the possible side effects and health benefits of all forms of contraceptives or present students with information on contraceptives and pregnancy in a manner consistent with the provisions of the federal Abstinence Education Law and specifies that students must be presented with the latest medically factual information about the health benefits and side effects of all contraceptives and barrier methods as a means to prevent pregnancy and reduce the risk of contracting infections and other diseases;
- (4) Repeals the provision requiring the instruction to include a discussion of the possible emotional and psychological consequences of preadolescent and adolescent sexual activity and the consequences of adolescent pregnancy as well as the advantages of adoption and specifies that students must be provided with information about the vaccine for human papilloma virus and its possible medical benefits;
- (5) Requires the materials and instruction to encourage family communication about sexuality;
- (6) Requires the materials and instruction to help young people gain knowledge about the physical, biological, and hormonal changes of adolescence and subsequent states of maturation and the skills to make responsible decisions about sexuality;

(7) Requires the materials and instruction to help pupils develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and stress management in order to make healthy decisions about sexuality and relationships;

(8) Requires the materials and instruction to teach pupils about the dangers of sexual predators, including on-line predators. Pupils must be taught how to behave responsibly and remain safe on the Internet and about the personal and legal consequences of inappropriate text messaging;

(9) Requires the names and affiliations of presenters of human sexuality instruction to be disclosed to the parent or legal guardian of each student before the instruction occurs; and

(10) Repeals the provisions prohibiting a school district or charter school, or its personnel or agents, from providing abortion services or allowing a provider of abortion services to present or furnish course materials or instruction relating to human sexuality or sexually transmitted diseases to its students.

This bill is similar to HB 670 (2015).