

Comprehensive Health Education Act

The Comprehensive Health Education Act was enacted in 1988 to ensure that South Carolina students receive an age-appropriate, comprehensive, education program developed with community control in compliance with the provisions of the law. Comprehensive health education encompasses all aspects of a young person's life, not just sexuality. Included are, among other things: skills, attitudes, and practices of children and youth that are conducive to their good health and that promote wellness, health maintenance, and disease prevention. The State Board of Education approved the South Carolina Academic Standards for Health and Safety Education on July 8, 2009. These Standards provide the scope and sequence for age appropriate comprehensive health education. The link to the Standards is as follows: <http://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/health-education/standards/> .

The Comprehensive Health Education Act was amended in 2014 to include Erin's Law and the State Board of Education approved grade level instructional units for the 2014 legislation, Erin's Law (Act 293). These materials are offered as optional resources that schools and districts may choose to use. The 2014 amendment to the Comprehensive Health Education Act requires that all schools provide instruction in sexual abuse and sexual assault prevention during the academic calendar year to students in grades PreK-12th grade. The law can be accessed at: <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c032.php> .

There are additional new developments for Anderson School District Two this year. The South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has been awarded a federal grant that allows for a team approach in taking a closer look at teen pregnancy in South Carolina. The grant funding will provide Anderson County with \$300,000.00 per year for 5 years to provide evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs. The money will also help officials create a health clinic for teens at the county's health department.

Along with the Standards, the Comprehensive Health Education Act requires that an appointed CHE advisory committee assist in the selection of curriculum components and materials. This school year, our schools will be mapping age-appropriate curriculum to correlate with State Standards expectations. The State Standards outline specifically what must be taught at each grade level.

All districts must notify parents of students in the relevant grades (6-12) of the content of the instructional materials concerning reproductive health, family life, pregnancy prevention, and of their option to exempt their child from this instruction, and sexually transmitted diseases if instruction in the diseases is presented as a separate component. Notice must be provided sufficiently in advance of a student's enrollment in courses to allow parents and legal guardians the opportunity to exempt their children. This notice for Anderson School District Two was provided through InfoSnap in the school registration process. Upon receipt of a statement signed by a student's parent or legal guardian stating that participation by the student in the health education program conflicts with the family's beliefs, the student will be exempted from any portion or all of the units on reproductive health, family life, and pregnancy prevention where any conflicts occur.