A Bill

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSTRUCTION REQUIRED BY
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS; TO REQUIRE THAT A PUBLIC
SCHOOL DISTRICT PROVIDE AGE-APPROPRIATE AND RESEARCH-
BASED INSTRUCTION IN HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT TO
A PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE THAT A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROVIDE AGE-APPROPRIATE AND RESEARCH-
BASED INSTRUCTION IN HUMAN GROWTH AND
DEVELOPMENT TO A PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 18, Subchapter 7, is amended
to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-18-714. Human growth and development instruction.
(a) As used in this section:
(1) "Age-appropriate" means topics, messages, instructional
materials, and teaching methods that are suitable for a particular age or age
group of children and adolescents based on developing cognitive, emotional,
and behavioral capacities typical for the age or age group; and
(2) "Research-based materials" means information that is:
(A) Verified or supported by the weight of research
conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods;
(B) Recognized as medically accurate and objective by leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field, including without limitation the:

(i) American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists;
(ii) American Public Health Association;
(iii) American Academy of Pediatrics; and
(iv) National Association of School Nurses; and

(C) Published in peer-reviewed journals, if appropriate; and

(D) Free of racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and gender biases.

(b) A public school district shall provide:

(1)(A) Instruction that includes information regarding life skills and human growth and development to public school students in kindergarten.

(B) Public school districts shall use research-based materials in order to develop, evaluate, and update instructional materials and teaching strategies for the instruction required under subdivision (b)(1)(A) of this section;

(2) Age-appropriate and research-based materials for the instruction in human growth and development to public school students in grades one through twelve (1-12), including without limitation instruction regarding:

(A) Human sexuality;
(B) Self-esteem;
(C) Stress management;
(D) Interpersonal relationships;
(E) Domestic abuse;
(F) Human papillomavirus and the availability of a vaccine to prevent human papillomavirus; and

(G) Acquired immune deficiency syndrome;

(3) Annually to a parent or legal guardian of a public school student enrolled in the public school district information regarding the:
(A) Human growth and development instruction required under this section that is used in the public school student’s grade level; and

(B) Procedure by which the parent or legal guardian of a public school student may inspect the instructional materials used for the human growth and development instruction under this section before the instructional materials are used in the public school student’s classroom; and

(4) Upon request by a public agency or organization, information to the public agency or organization regarding the:

(A) Human growth and development instruction required under this section that is used in each grade level; and

(B) Procedure by which the public agency or organization may inspect and update the instructional materials that are used for the human growth and development instruction required under this section.

(c)(1) A public school student shall not be required by the public school district to receive the human growth and development instruction required under this section if the public school student’s parent or legal guardian files with the public school principal a written request that his or her child be excused from the human growth and development instruction.

(2) A public school district shall provide to each parent or legal guardian of a public school student information regarding the fact that he or she may make a written request that his or her child be excused from the human growth and development instruction required under this section.

(d) A public school district or a community college as defined in § 6-61-501 that offers general adult education classes or courses shall offer periodically for parents, legal guardians, prospective biological parents, prospective adoptive parents, and foster parents an instructional program in:

(1) Parenting skills; and

(2) Human growth and development.

(e) An area education agency shall offer periodically a staff development program for teachers who provide instruction in human growth and development as required under this section.

(f) The Department of Education shall identify and disseminate information regarding early intervention programs for public school students who are at the greatest risk of:
(1) Dropping out of school;
(2) Substance abuse;
(3) Adolescent pregnancy; or
(4) Suicide.

(g) A public school district may develop and make available abstinence-based or abstinence-only materials to be used for the human sexuality component of the human growth and development instruction required under subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section.