

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Health Education is part of the required instructional program at all grade levels in San Francisco Unified School District. The goal of comprehensive sexual health education is to help students learn the facts, and to make good decisions now and later in life. In addition, health education reinforces discussions about health in the home, and facilitates better communication between youth and adults.

California state law requires that HIV/AIDS prevention education is taught in middle school and high school. San Francisco Unified follows the state requirement. If comprehensive sexual health education is taught, the District shall follow state laws (California *Education Code* Section 51930-51939). The District may not pick and choose topics to teach.

HIV/AIDS prevention instruction includes (age-appropriate):

- Information that HIV is the virus that causes AIDS, and how it affects the body.
- How HIV is and is not spread.
- Discussion regarding why people infected with HIV are susceptible to other infections.
- Making healthy decisions and staying away from risky activities.
- Discussion about society's views on HIV/AIDS, and people with HIV/AIDS.

All San Francisco schools commemorate the week of World AIDS Day (December 1st) with age-appropriate activities, including:

- Food drives
- Displaying the Names Project quilt
- Letters to people who are HIV positive
- HIV/AIDS prevention lessons.

In high school, health education teachers directed lessons also focus on:

- Accepting personal responsibility in making decisions to promote health and wellness;
- Developing a plan to improve personal physical fitness and nutritional awareness;
- Understanding emotional and mental health;
- Learning about drugs and the skills to resist the pressure to use substances;
- Understanding sexuality, reproductive health, and the importance of social relationships;
- Learning about diseases and disorders, including sexually transmitted diseases and HIV;
- Understanding environmental and public health issues

Students may attend the district approved theatrical performances provided by the New Conservatory Theatre. The New Conservatory is a local, (501c3) nonprofit organization that has for many years provided educational theater performances in grades K-12 to promote awareness of HIV issues, peer pressure, self-esteem, and individual responsibility. It offers highly-regarded, culturally competent, age-appropriate interactive presentations consistent with evidence-based strategies in HIV prevention.

You can examine instructional materials (written and audio visual) at the school. If you have questions, please see your child's teacher or principal. State law allows you to remove your students from HIV/AIDS prevention education or comprehensive sexual health education or any part of an educational program that conflicts with religious, moral or personal convictions. *If you do not want your student to participate in the HIV/AIDS prevention or sexual health instructional program, please give a note to your student's teacher of health.* This request is valid for the entire school year. You can also view Education Code 51930 – 51939 at the www.healthiersf.org website or request a copy.

Sincerely,