

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 24, 2009

Public encouraged to provide feedback on revised Human Growth & Development and HIV/AIDS & STI Curriculum

On Tuesday, March 24th a revised curriculum for Human Growth and Development was presented to the Kyrene Governing Board for first reading. The document will remain open to the Kyrene Community until April 24, 2009 to collect comments and feedback from parents, teachers and community members. A recommendation will then be made to the Governing Board at their meeting on April 28, 2009.

The revised curriculum is for Health Strand 8: Growth & Development and Strand 9: HIV/AIDS & STI's. Background information, a summary of changes and the revised curriculum objectives are all available on the Kyrene website at the link below:

<http://www.kyrene.org/curriculum/health/healthreview/index.htm>

Also included on the website is a feedback page. The feedback will be reviewed, *as it is submitted*, by the Health Steering Committee* and the Kyrene Governing Board prior to recommendation for adoption.

The Health Steering Committee is made up of parents, teachers, health professionals and administrators. The Health Steering Committee operates under Open Meeting Law with meeting dates, agendas, and minutes posted at www.kyrene.org.

See below for background and proposed revisions.

Background:

In February of 2008 the Curriculum and Assessment Department and the Health Steering Committee conducted a Governing Board Study Session on the Health Curriculum Strand 8 (Growth & Development) and Strand 9 (HIV/AIDS & STIs) to update the Governing Board on the status of the committee's work. At that Study Session committee members identified the need to continue looking for new resources for the instruction of Strand 8 (Growth & Development) and Strand 9 (HIV/AIDS & STIs). Committee members also indicated that in light of their ongoing study of the research and teen behavior, that consideration should be given to revisiting the curriculum objectives to ensure that they provided for the instruction of medically accurate information that would help teens in making good health choices and avoiding risky behaviors. The Governing Board acknowledged the committee's concerns.

As the Health Steering Committee continued to review feedback from previous adoptions and lessons they

found repeated concerns by parents and teachers that some consideration should be given to further expand the curriculum to include more information about prevention of both pregnancy and STIs. In response to this feedback the Health Steering Committee continued to study research related to teen behavior and discuss possible revisions to the curriculum objectives. Each item being considered either for revision, deletion, or addition was considered in light of feedback received, nationally and medically recognized research, and Arizona State Board of Education guidelines. Motions for proposed changes were voted on following Robert's Rules of Order. Most motions passed unanimously or had at most one or two abstentions or "no" votes

Summary of the revisions made to previously adopted curriculum objectives

- Much of the work entailed refining language to ensure that the purpose of each objective was clear and that the objectives were medically accurate
- The committee drafted several new objectives that expanded the scope of the curriculum from an abstinence only curriculum to an abstinence plus curriculum. In particular was the addition of objectives in 7th & 8th grade regarding barrier methods of protection for pregnancy and STI transmission. It is important to note that the objectives use the verb "recognize" which was chosen specifically because it was the intent of the committee to provide information to students with no intent for providing demonstration or distribution.
- Additional objectives were added that relate to body image, self esteem, dating safety, rape, and sexual abuse.
- Finally, some objectives were deleted, combined, or modified in order to ensure the curriculum was manageable and concise.

The Health Steering Committee continues to feel that for the age group we are teaching, the message should be that abstinence is best. However, the committee also feels that teens should have information regarding prevention, should they choose to engage in sexual activity. The health cost of not providing this information to teens is significant.