

Personal Health & Safety and Sexual Health Education Implementation Toolkit

The CPS Sexual Health Education Policy requires that Personal Health & Safety (PHS) and Sexual Health Education (SHE) be taught annually to all PreK-12 students. The PHS/SHE curriculum is aligned with the National Sex Education Standards and meets Erin’s Law requirements. It is designed to equip all students with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and make decisions about their social, emotional, and physical health.

The purpose of this document is to provide implementation guidance for school staff regarding this updated policy, which is overseen by the Office of Student Health and Wellness. The information below breaks down aspects of the policy and provides best practices to meet all policy requirements.

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PROGRAM COMPONENTS

As stated in section I-A of the policy, “The Personal Health & Safety...and Comprehensive Sexual Health Education instructional program...teaches medically accurate information that is trauma-informed, culturally, developmentally, linguistically, and age-appropriate and builds on the knowledge and skills that were taught in the previous grades.”

- PreK-5th grade students receive Personal Health and Safety (PHS) Education while 6th-12th grade students receive Sexual Health Education (SHE).
- Curriculum topics are identified and aligned with the [Keeping Youth Safe and Healthy Act \(IL Public Act 102-0522\)](#) and [Erin’s Law](#). The first law requires that K-5 Personal Health & Safety Education and 6-12 Sexual Health Education be aligned with the [National Sex Education Standards](#) while Erin’s Law requires that all Illinois public schools provide child sexual abuse prevention education.
- PHS/SHE Implementation is a [Healthy CPS requirement](#). When schools complete the Healthy CPS survey each Spring, they report (and get credit for) implementing PHS/SHE.
- The PHS/SHE curriculum is not available to the public. Parents/guardians can meet with the PHS/SHE instructor at their child(ren)’s school or virtually to review specific lessons.
- Students in 5th-12th grade have the right to access confidential sexual health services referrals and free condoms. All students who need them have the right to access free menstrual hygiene products.

What is Comprehensive Sexual Health Education?

As stated in section I-B-1 & 1-B-2 of the policy, PHS/SHE “must be inclusive of varied student experiences and must be taught in a way that demonstrates respect for and inclusion of all students, as outlined in the Purpose section of this policy...PHS/SHE must not impose educators’ personal opinions on students, stigmatize behavior, or include fear tactics.”

The curriculum is designed to provide age-appropriate, medically accurate, and comprehensive sexual health education to students in grades PreK-12. The purpose of this education is to provide students with accurate, unbiased, and comprehensive information so that they can make the best decisions for their own lives.

Comprehensive PHS/SHE must be:

- Medically accurate
- Developmentally appropriate
- Taught in the standard classroom without separating students by gender, sex, orientation, or ability
- Inclusive of all students, including diverse learners, pregnant/parenting youth, and LGBTQ+ students

Comprehensive PHS/SHE must NOT:

- Include instructor’s personal opinions, beliefs, or experiences
- Use fear and/or shaming tactics to dissuade students from engaging in particular behavior
- Make assumptions about student’s beliefs, behaviors, experiences, identities (including sexual orientation and gender), or communities
- Include abstinence-only or sexual risk avoidance education

ANNUAL INSTRUCTION

As stated in section I-B of the policy, “All lessons outlined in CPS curriculum must be provided to students in grades Pre-K-12 every school year addressing all topic areas outlined in Section A of this Policy...Sexual health education must be taught in the standard classroom environment with all students together, not separated by sex, gender, or ability.”

- Students are required to receive all the lessons and skills outlined in the [PHS/SHE Scope and Sequence](#). There is no minute requirement for teaching this content.
- Curriculum topic areas are derived from the [National Sex Education Standards](#) and include: consent and healthy relationships, anatomy and physiology, puberty and adolescent development, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation and identity, sexual health, and interpersonal violence.
- Students must be taught all together in a standard classroom environment and cannot be separated by gender, assigned sex, or ability. Keeping all students in the same classroom environment:
 - Ensures the same comprehensive PHS/SHE is taught to all students
 - Provides an inclusive space for all identities
 - Reinforces positive communication around PHS/SHE
 - Prevents Trans/Nonbinary/Gender Nonconforming students from being forced to pick a gendered room, which is a Title IX violation
- The entire PHS/SHE curriculum is available in Spanish. The [parent/guardian notification letters](#) and [Scope and Sequence](#) documents are available in all 9 of the CPS common languages.
- Each lesson contains adaptations for diverse learner students. DL teachers are free to make additional adaptations for their specific students.

Steps for Implementation

Schools should complete 4 steps when preparing to implement PHS/SHE:

1. **Make a plan:** Schedule an initial planning meeting with administrators, trained instructors, social workers, counselors, and any other relevant staff to plan when and in which classes PHS/SHE will take place. Have this meeting as early in the school year as possible.
2. **Send 3 parent/guardian notifications:** at least 1 notification must be a written letter. The first notification needs to be sent out at least 2 weeks before instruction begins. All notifications should include the parental opt-out option (see page 9 for details).
3. **Hold parent meetings:**
 - a. The curriculum is not available to the public. Parents can review lessons and ask questions in a meeting (either virtually or in-person) with their child's instructor. These meetings are an excellent opportunity to clear up confusion or misunderstandings about PHS/SHE, especially if students were opted out in previous years.
 - b. [Pre-made parent info night slides are available in English and Spanish.](#)
4. **Create a plan for opted out students:** Make a plan for where opted-out should go (they should not be kept in the same room where PHS/SHE is taking place), who will be supervising them, and what students will do. Opted-out students should be given an activity related to health or social emotional learning that focuses on the same health education skill (ex: decision making) but with a different topic that isn't sexual health education.

Strategies for Implementation

Schools can choose an implementation strategy that works best for their school and student population. There is not a specific class in which PHS/SHE must be taught or a specific staff member who must teach it – this is to be decided by each school. The top priority is that students receive PHS/SHE. Each school decides when the instruction is provided, in what classes, and by which teacher.

Listed below are examples of implementation strategies that have worked well for some schools.

Who teaches PHS/SHE?

1. Every classroom teacher teaches PHS/SHE to their own classes
2. A few staff teach PHS/SHE to all classes (e.g. PE teachers, health teachers, counselors, social workers)
3. One staff member per grade is trained and they only teach that grade
4. Homeroom or advisory teachers teach PHS/SHE during advisory/homeroom
5. PHS/SHE is imbedded within science or social studies classes
6. Pre-approved community-based organization staff teach all/some lessons (see page 23)

Note: Administrators, including principals and assistant principals, are discouraged from providing classroom instruction. Students will likely feel less comfortable talking about PHS/SHE topics with their principals or APs.

In what class(es) is PHS/SHE often taught?

- Health or PE
- Science
- Social Studies
- Advisory
- During Social-Emotional Learning time

STAFF TRAINING

As stated in section I-E of the policy, “Any teacher who provides Personal Health & Safety or Sexual Health Education instruction and any other staff member who supports a teacher in providing such instruction must successfully complete the sexual health education instructor training with the Office of Student Health and Wellness and pass the post-exam prior to teaching lessons.”

- All staff who teach PHS/SHE must complete the [required OSHW instructor training](#); certification lasts for 4 years. Curriculum access is provided only to trained instructors. Untrained staff are unable to access the curriculum.
- Each school must have a minimum of two trained PHS/SHE instructors. Schools with SpEd teachers must have an additional trained staff member who is a SpEd teacher.
- Schools are strongly encouraged to have as many staff members trained as possible. Implementation works better and students receive better education when more staff are trained.
- PHS/SHE instructors should demonstrate the following qualities:
 - Comfort with the content and ability to answer students’ sensitive questions
 - Dedication to providing inclusive, safe, and affirming education for all students
 - Belief in personal autonomy, sexual agency, and [reproductive justice](#) values
 - Commitment to maintaining student confidentiality and using affirmed names and pronouns
 - Ability to teach about consent, healthy relationships, and sexual violence and prevention

Instructor Preparation

Instructors should reflect on their personal values and how those values may impact instruction. Instruction should provide students with the knowledge and tools needed to make the best choices for their lives. For example, saying “we want to avoid teenage pregnancy” or “it’s best to wait until you’re older to have sex” is highly inappropriate. Instead, use language like “pregnancy can happen if...” or “it’s best to wait until you’re ready to have sex.”

- Review the following resources to assist in your preparation:
 - PHS/SHE [Instructor Training Participant Slides](#) and [Resource List](#).
 - [BE HEALTHY](#), adapted from the [Healthy Teen Network](#) (See page 14).
 - [Instructor Guide to LGBTQ+-Inclusive Sexual Health Education](#).
 - [Challenging Victim-Blaming Language and Behavior Guide](#) from the UK Council for Internet Safety.
- Instructors should practice:
 - Using language and examples that are LGBTQ+ inclusive (e.g. they/them pronouns, diverse family structures) and do not enforce [heteronormativity and cisnormativity](#). All language related to biology and puberty should be [gender neutral](#).
 - Using terminology that is uncomfortable for them to say (ex: anatomy terms, phrases related to sexual activity, phrases related to puberty).
 - [Answering sensitive questions](#) from students.
- Ask for help when you need it:
 - Talk to your admin and coworkers if you need support. Providing sexual health education should not fall on just your shoulders!
 - Bring in outside organizations to help you teach (see page 18)
 - [Attend Sexual Health Office Hours](#)
 - Contact the Sexual Health Team: sexualhealth@cps.edu

PHS/SHE Instructor Training One-Pager

Sexual Health Policy Requirements:

- All students in grades PreK-12 must receive all lessons outlined in the [Scope and Sequence](#) annually
- Topic areas aligned with [NSES](#), [Keeping Youth Safe and Healthy Act](#) and [Erin's Law](#)
- Minimum of 2 instructors + 1 SpEd instructor per school
- Only trained instructors can teach SHE, certification is valid for 4 years.
- Parents must be notified and given opt-out option
- Students must have access to sexual health services referrals, condoms (grades 5-12), and menstrual hygiene products (grades 3-12)

Comprehensive sexual health education:

- Teaches about anatomy, contraception, condoms, abstinence, healthy relationships/consent, sexual orientation & gender identity
- Is inclusive of all experiences/identities, medically accurate, developmentally appropriate, Portrays sex as a natural and healthy part of life, respects personal autonomy
- **DOES NOT** include abstinence-only education, instructor's personal opinions or assumptions, scare/shaming tactics, misinformation or withholding information

CPS PH&S and SHE Curriculum

- Grades PreK-5: Personal Health and Safety
- Grades 6-12: Sexual Health Education
- *SHE curriculum is not publicly available and cannot be distributed to parents.* [Scope and Sequence](#) is publicly available

Required Parent/Caregiver Involvement:

- 3 [notifications](#) (at least 1 written), including opt-out information, must be sent at least 2 weeks prior to instruction. Schools CANNOT turn notification letters into consent forms. See [School-to-Home Communications toolkit](#)
- [Scope and Sequence](#) should be included with notification
- Hold parent meetings to address questions/concerns

Sexual Health Services (SHS):

- Condom availability is required for all schools with grades 5-12. Learn more: [Condom Availability Toolkit](#).
- Free menstrual hygiene products must be available in at least one bathroom (ordered by facilities manager).
- Schools must designate 1 staff member to provide SHS resources/referrals. Learn more in the [Sexual Health Services Referrals Toolkit](#).
- Youth 12 y/o and older have the [right to confidential sexual health care](#) without parental notification/permission

Four Steps When Answering Sensitive Questions:

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Clarify | 1. Respond |
| 2. Affirm | 2. Check for Understanding |

Definitions:

- Gender Identity: How an individual feels about and understands their gender. (Ex: woman, man, transgender, genderqueer, non-binary)
- Sex Assigned at Birth: Label applied to people at birth based on genitals by medical professionals. (Ex: male, female, intersex)
- Sexual Orientation: Sexual attraction to other people. (Ex: lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual)
- Gender Expression: Presentation of gender through clothing and behavior

How to make Sexual Health Education LGBTQ+ inclusive

- Acknowledge that gender and sex are not binary
- Teach that all relationships are valid
- Address LGBTQ+ bullying and harassment
- Emphasize similarities across bodies
- Emphasize patterns, not rules
- Always use gender-inclusive and affirming language
- Emphasize physiology rather than gender.

[Instructor Guide to LGBTQ-Inclusive Sexual Health Education](#)

[Sexual Health Education Policy](#)
[Additional PHS/SHE Instructor Resources](#)
[How to navigate the PHS/SHE google group and folder](#)
 Sexual Health Team: sexualhealth@cps.edu
 Office of Student Health and Wellness: oshw@cps.edu
[Sexual Health Education Page](#) | [Sexual Health Services Page](#)

Parent/Guardian Notifications

As stated in section I-D of the policy, "In alignment with Illinois law, parents/guardians must be notified and given the opportunity to opt-out their child(ren) from any class or course in Comprehensive Personal Health & Safety and Comprehensive Sexual Health Education before instruction begins. Schools must not require active parental consent."

Notification letter basics:

- Parents/guardians must receive a minimum of 3 notifications
- The first notification must be sent 2 weeks before instruction begins
- At least 1 notification must be a written letter
- The format of the 2 other notifications is up to each school and can be a written letter, email, phone call, paper flier, social media, text, etc.
- [Notification letter templates](#) are available in all 9 CPS common languages
- Use the [School-to-Home Communications Toolkit](#) for help communicating with parents/guardians

What should be included in the notification letters?

- Grade-specific [Sexual Health Scope & Sequence](#)
- Parent meeting information (see page 11)
- Opt-out information (see page 10)
- Date education will take place
- School letterhead
- Principal signature

PLEASE NOTE: The notification letter is NOT a consent form - schools are not allowed to turn notifications letters into a consent form. Parents only need to sign the notification letter if they do not want their child to participate. All students who are not opted-out are required to participate in the education.

Opting Out

As stated in section I-D-2 of the policy, “No student whose parent/guardian provides a written objection must be required to participate in any of the CPS Sexual Health Education Curriculum lessons and must not be suspended or expelled for refusal to participate in any such lesson or program.”

Opt-out Basics:

- Parental notification letters must inform parents that they can opt their child(ren) out of one, some, or all PHS/SHE lessons
- Students under 18 years old cannot opt out of the education themselves
- Schools cannot penalize students who are opted-out

How should a parent/guardian opt their child(ren) out?

- Parents/guardians should submit a written opt-out request detailing which lessons their child(ren) will not participate in. (An email is sufficient.)
- If a parent/guardian only provides a verbal request, schools are still required to honor it. School staff should make a written note of the parent/guardian request to ensure they have complete documentation for all opt-out requests.

Making arrangements in advance for opted-out students:

- Make a plan for where opted-out students will go, who will supervise them, and what activities they will do. Opted-out students should not be kept in the room where the PHS/SHE lessons are taking place.
- Opted-out students can complete an activity related to health or social emotional learning (ex. decision making, communication, or respect for others). Utilize the resources in the [Health Education Curriculum Folder](#) for support.

PLEASE NOTE: Conversations and lessons related to health, safety, and identity topics that occur outside of the PHS/SHE curriculum are not subject to parental notification and opt-out requirements. When possible, schools should inform parents/guardians of lessons related to these topics in the same way they would communicate about other classroom content.

Parent/Guardian Engagement

The PHS/SHE curriculum is not publicly available. Staff cannot email (or print and give) lesson copies to parents/guardians. Schools should hold parent/guardian info sessions to allow them to review any material in a meeting with their child's instructor.

Parent/Guardian engagement basics

- Notification letters should instruct parents/guardians about how they can meet with school staff to learn more about the curriculum and review materials.
- Use the premade [PHS/SHE Parent Meeting Info Slides](#) when meeting with parents/guardians (available in English and Spanish).
- Virtual meeting option:
 - [Google appointment scheduling](#) can allow parents to schedule individual appointments. Alternatively, host a virtual open house for all families.
 - Share the curriculum with parents by sharing your screen so parents can see curriculum materials.
- In-person meeting option:
 - Allow parents to schedule individual meetings with school staff or host an open house where all parents are invited.
 - Share the curriculum with parents by printing and passing out the curriculum materials, and ensure that they are collected at the end.

Managing parental pushback

The best way to prevent PHS/SHE pushback is to provide parents/guardians with clear and accurate details about the instruction well in advance before instruction begins.

There are typically two types of parental pushback. Different types of pushback warrant different responses:

1. **When parents are open to dialogue** - offer a parent meeting to provide information that will clarify misunderstandings. Example: Parents might be angry because they think their kindergartener is learning how to have sex. Respond by debunking myths, "in Kindergarten, we teach students about respecting other people's bodies, how to identify trusted adults, and how to be kind to others."

2. **When parents are unwilling to engage** - reiterate state laws and policy requirements. If parents are angry and unwilling to respectfully engage with staff, offering additional information will not be helpful or effective. Instead, respond by saying, “Illinois law requires that PHS/SHE be aligned with the [National Sexuality Education Standards](#) and [CPS policy](#) requires that all students receive this education annually, unless opted out by a parent or guardian.”

Remind parents/guardians that they can opt out of one, some, or all lessons. Email sexualhealthed@cps.edu for support in managing challenging parental engagement issues.

Additional resources for parents/guardians:

- [CPS Sexual Health Education Website](#)
- [Sexual Health Education Overview for Parents](#)
- [Parent Resource List](#) (includes recommendations in other languages and resources for parents of Diverse Learners)
- Curriculum Connection for Parents ([Pre-K to 2nd Grade](#)) (3rd-5th Grade)
- [DON'T PANIC: Talking with Your Middle Schooler about Healthy Relationships and Sexuality](#)
- [DON'T PANIC: Talking with Your High Schooler about Healthy Relationships and Sexuality](#)
- [How to Talk to Your Teen About Pornography](#)

BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In alignment with the District's [Healing-Centered Framework](#), PHS/SHE should be taught with a trauma-informed and culturally-responsive lens. Instructors should demonstrate themselves to be safe and supportive when teaching about abuse, violence, and discrimination and center the needs of students with marginalized identities.

- Instructors should set group agreements and appropriately acknowledge when those agreements have been violated. Violations should be addressed using [restorative justice practices](#).
- Inform social workers, nurses, and counselors when SHE instruction is taking place so they can plan for additional support.
- Be mindful of when students are displaying behaviors that are atypical for them (such as disengaging, remaining quiet, uncharacteristic laughing, aggression, etc.) and connect them with a social worker or counselor.
- Include content warnings when delivering sensitive information.
- Communicate with students about what they need to feel safe and supported during the lessons.
- Allow students to practice self-care throughout the lessons (ex: put their heads down, pace in the back of the classroom, close their eyes). Instructors can encourage students to focus only on their own participation and not call attention to students practicing self-care.
- Incorporate personal autonomy into your lessons. This means that young people are considered the experts of their bodies and lives and that others should respect the choices they make. Honor their identities, relationships, privacy, and interests.

BE HEALTHY - Best Practices for Teaching PHS/SHE

- **B - Build Group Agreements:**

It is important to build group agreements or expectations so everyone knows what behavior is expected of them throughout the class period. Instructors should refer back to group agreements when an issue arises in the classroom.

- **E - Employ Unbiased Language:**

Young people pick up on the unspoken implications of our language. When we say something like “get tested for STIs to make sure you’re clean” we are implying that having an STI makes a person dirty. It’s very easy for unconscious bias to slip into our language, especially since we come from a culture that does not talk about sex freely. Instructors therefore need to be really thoughtful about our language. Instead of saying “pregnancy is a consequence of sex,” say something like “pregnancy can happen.”

- **H - Hurtful Comments Must be Defined:**

Rather than just telling students to “stop saying that” when a hurtful comment is made, instructors should additionally define the hurtful comments and explain why it is disrespectful and unwelcome.

- **E - Encourage Student Questions:**

It is important to encourage students to ask questions for many reasons:

- You may be the only safe adult in their life they can talk to about these topics
- If you do not answer their questions, they may turn to unreliable sources
- Student questions will help you understand what topics they need additional information on
- By encouraging students to ask questions, you are eliminating the taboo around sexual health

- **A - Acknowledge Discomfort Appropriately:**

If you are feeling uncomfortable about teaching sexual health education, talk to your administration to see if there is a support staff who can assist you. Do not acknowledge your discomfort to the students. It will discredit you as an instructor.

- **L - Leave Old Assumptions at the Door:**

When teaching sexual health education, you must teach in a way that is respectful and inclusive for all students, regardless of their identity and life experiences. Do

not assume a students' gender identity, sexual orientation, family structure, anatomy, sexual health (pregnancies, STIs/HIV), history of sexual abuse, etc.

- **T - Take Charge when Group Agreements are Violated:**

After setting your group agreements, ensure you are following them and taking charge if they are violated. If you do not respond when a student violates the group agreements, they lose their impact.

- **H - Humor is OK, Sometimes:**

Nervous laughter is a very common stress response. This is acceptable in the classroom. Additionally, if something unexpected happens (example: a condom breaks during a demonstration) and you or students laugh, this is an acceptable form of laughter. Make sure that you and/or students are never making fun of students, a group of students, a particular identity, etc or a specific experience. Do not tell sex-related jokes.

- **Y - Your Stories and Values Stay Out of the Classroom:**

Sexual health education is for our students. Please do not share your personal stories, experiences, and values with our students. We are only sharing fact-based, medically accurate and developmentally appropriate information with our students. You may share a universal value (example: everyone deserves respect) however cannot share a personal value (example: no sex should take place before marriage).

Classroom Management

It is typical for some students to find lessons related to PHS/SHE uncomfortable or awkward. They might act out, be disruptive, or use hurtful language. It is the instructor's responsibility to set classroom expectations and hold students accountable for any harmful actions. Below is a list of suggestions for how an instructor can create and manage a safe classroom environment.

- Set group agreements at the outset of PHS/SHE and appropriately acknowledge when those agreements have been violated. Violations should be addressed using [restorative justice practices](#).
- Affirm the diversity of the students in their classrooms and provide a safe and supportive environment for all students.
- Interrupt harmful language, explain why it is harmful, and follow through with any necessary actions. This includes homophobic, transphobic, misogynistic, racist, or [victim-blaming](#) language.
- Allow informal terminology in the classroom when appropriate, however instructors should respond by providing medically accurate terminology.
- Provide an option for students to ask anonymous questions by using an anonymous question box or google form.
- Allow a [giggle minute](#) at the beginning of a lesson for students to laugh at words/phrases they find funny or uncomfortable. After getting the giggles out of their system at the same time, bring the class back together to complete the lesson.

Diverse Learner Inclusion

As stated in section I-C of the policy, "Students who are designated as Diverse Learners must be provided medically accurate, developmentally-appropriate sexual health education. Instruction shall be individualized as it relates to each student's disability and their IEP specifically in the areas of Method of Communication, Modifications, and Accommodations."

In addition to the 2 trained instructors, each school must have an additional trained instructor who is a SpEd teacher in schools with SpEd teachers on staff.

- SECAs do not count as fulfilling this SpEd requirement, though they are encouraged to become trained.
- The person who fills this SpEd requirement does not count towards the requirement of having a minimum of 2 trained staff members per school.
- The person who fills the SpEd requirement must be working as an actual SpEd teacher. Someone who has a SpEd endorsement but is not working as a SpEd teacher (like a substitute teacher or a counselor) does not count towards meeting this requirement.

DL students must receive PHS/SHE in the same manner as other students. If DL students are regularly included in the classroom with general students, they should remain there for PHS/SHE.

Making DL adaptations:

- The PHS/SHE curriculum contains DL adaptations written by CPS DL teachers.
- Teachers can/should make additional adaptations as needed to accommodate their students as each student and classroom is different.
- See the [Diverse Learners Resources for SpEd Staff](#)

LGBTQ+ Inclusion

As stated in the purpose section of the policy, PHS/SHE must be “inclusive of and sensitive to the needs of students based on their... gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or sexual behavior.”

As stated in section I-B of the policy, “All lessons outlined in CPS curriculum must be provided to students in grades Pre-K-12 every school year addressing all topic areas outlined in Section A of this Policy...Sexual health education must be taught in the standard classroom environment with all students together, not separated by sex, gender, or ability.”

Instructors are required to provide LGBTQ+ inclusive education so that all students feel represented and safe within their schools. Inclusion requires specific actions and ongoing commitment, similarly to how schools support DL and ELL students.

Instructors should prepare by:

- Reviewing the *Supporting Transgender, Nonbinary, and Gender Nonconforming Students* training on SafeSchools and its accompanying [guidelines](#)
- Reviewing the [Instructor Guide to LGBTQ+ Inclusive Sexual Health Education](#)
- Practicing using language/examples that are LGBTQ+ inclusive (e.g. they/them pronouns, diverse families), do not enforce [heteronormativity and cisnormativity](#), and remain [gender neutral](#). Use the [Supporting Gender Diversity Toolkit](#).
- Requesting an [OUT for Safe Schools Badge](#)
- Starting/supporting a Gender & Sexuality Alliance club

Students must not be separated by gender or sex to ensure that:

- Staff are not making assumptions about students' gender or body parts
- Trans/Nonbinary/Gender Nonconforming students are not forced to pick a gendered room, which is a Title IX violation
- the same comprehensive PHS/SHE is taught to all students
- Reinforces positive communication around PHS/SHE

Gendered spaces are allowed when they are voluntary, such as a lunch discussion or after school club. However, students must be kept together in the classroom.

Responding to Students' Sensitive Questions

Use these Four Steps to answering sensitive questions:

1. **Clarify (if needed)**
2. **Affirm**
3. **Respond using functional knowledge:**
 - a. Age/developmentally appropriate
 - b. Basic – answer the question being asked
 - c. Medically accurate
 - d. No personal opinions
4. **Check for understanding**

Example: A student asks, “What are blue balls?”

1. **Clarify:** “Are you referring to testicles?”
2. **Affirm:** “Thanks for asking this question!”
3. **Respond using functional knowledge:** “Blue balls is a commonly used term for when a person with testicles is experiencing sexual arousal and wants to ejaculate (or finish) and isn’t able to, which can lead to discomfort. This discomfort is temporary and not a medical emergency; it will pass. Also the balls, or testicles do not actually turn blue.

Some people might use the concept of having “blue balls” as a way to pressure people to have sex when they do not want to. They might say something like ‘If you stop, you’re going to give me blue balls.’ There is never an excuse to pressure people to do things they don’t want to.”

4. **Check for understanding:** “Did that answer your question?”

For additional practice, [review more suggestions for how to answer sensitive questions](#).

Implementation Suggestions for Options Schools

Because of rolling admissions and lack of grades, Options schools are likely unable to meet all the above mentioned policy requirements. It is recommended that Options schools try their best to teach as many lessons to students as possible. Receiving even a little bit of sexual health education is better than receiving none.

Consider and identify the main content areas within the curriculum using the [Scope and Sequence](#) as a reference. These can include (but are not limited to):

- Consent and healthy relationships
- Anatomy and reproduction
- STIs and prevention
- Birth control and condom use
- Media literacy
- LGBTQ+ identity
- Sexual assault and violence prevention

Once you've identified the content areas you want to teach, pull lesson materials from the curriculum about that content area. For example, if you are teaching high school students of all ages about healthy relationships you could reference lesson 2 of 9th grade, lesson 5 in 10th grade, and lesson 6 for 11th grade.

You might be able to squeeze some of these adapted lessons into a science or social studies class. Perhaps your school can host a day about health and life skills where students can choose which lesson they want to join from the list above.

Ultimately, Options staff are responsible for making a strategy that works best for their students and schools. If you would like assistance brainstorming strategies, email sexualhealthed@cps.edu.

SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES (SHS)

As stated in section 2-A,B,C of the policy, "Schools must designate a staff member to provide sexual health service resources to students...Schools that teach grade 5th and up must maintain a condom availability program....All schools that serve grades 3-12 shall make menstrual hygiene products available."

Sexual Health Services Designees & Referrals

- All schools must have one SHS Designee. Their responsibilities include:
 - Counseling students on sexual healthcare needs and helping them make appointments, if needed
 - Managing condom inventory and accessibility
 - Ensuring that pads/tampons are freely accessible in student bathrooms
- The Designee role can be filled by any school staff member, but they must be at school daily and have the skills to discuss sexual health with students
- Principals must appoint designees via an [OSHW survey](#)
- Designees must complete the [SafeSchools Sexual Health Services: Connecting Youth to Care](#) training

Condoms Availability Program (CAP)

- All students in grades 5-12 must be able to freely access condoms when desired
 - Condoms may not be distributed to all or select students but must be freely available to any 5th-12th grade students
 - Condoms should be stored in a location with full student access (ie. not a locked cabinet or restricted office)
- See the [Condom Availability Toolkit](#) for guidance and to order condoms. All condoms are provided by the Chicago Department of Public Health.

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)

- All schools must make free pads and tampons available in student bathrooms of every school building. They cannot be solely kept in the nurse's office.
- Menstrual hygiene products are ordered by the school's custodial manager in the same way they order toilet paper and paper towels; schools are not required to pay for these products.

PRINCIPALS' ROLE

As stated in section 1 - E of the policy: "Principals must annually designate a minimum of two instructors to deliver instruction at their school and ensure these instructors successfully complete the required training. Schools with diverse learner populations must also have a minimum of one Special Education Teacher trained to deliver PHS/SHE."

Administration responsibilities before PHS/SHE begins:

- Designate at least 2 staff members to complete PHS/SHE training, plus an additional SpEd teacher if your school has SpEd teachers on staff.
- Make a plan for when and in what classes PHS/SHE will take place, who will teach which grades, and when to schedule parent/guardian meetings.
- Ensure parents/guardians receive at least 3 notifications, they must be sent at least 2 weeks before instruction begins. See page 9 for notification information.
- Ensure there is a plan for opted-out students.
- Ensure that diverse learner students receive PHS/SHE and that students are not separated by gender/sex.

Administration responsibilities during/after PHS/SHE begin:

- Ensure that all students receive all lessons, skills, and topics outlined in the scope and sequence (unless opted out by a parent or guardian).
- Ensure annual [Healthy CPS](#) survey is completed in the Spring semester and report that PHS/SHE was implemented.

Administration responsibilities for sexual health services:

- Ensure condoms are freely available for students in grades 5-12.
- Menstrual hygiene products must be freely available in at least one student bathroom in each school building.
- Designate one staff member to serve as the sexual health services designee.

USE OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOs)

As stated in section I-F of the policy, "A school may use a CPS-approved community-based organization to provide instruction. An outside consultant/organization may teach lessons on some or all of the topics outlined in the CPS Scope & Sequence of Sexual Health Education."

- Schools may bring in a pre-approved CBO to provide some or all of the PHS/SHE instruction. Organizations not included on this list are not allowed to provide instruction.
- The list of preapproved CBOs can be found on the [Communities in Schools website](#). Scroll down to the Excel Sheet titled "Sexual Health CBO Locator."
 - CBO Locator:
 - ➦ SY24 Sexual Health Education - Community Based Organizations (Res...
- CBOs must follow all CPS policies and guidelines around inclusive, accurate, comprehensive PHS/SHE. All CBO instructors must complete and pass the same PHS/SHE Instructor Training referenced on page 6.
- Schools remain responsible for providing educational content listed in the [Scope and Sequence](#) that is not covered by the CBO.
- Schools that bring in CBOs are still required to have a minimum of two trained instructors, plus an additional trained SpEd instructor.
- Once a school is partnered with a CBO, complete the following steps:
 - Confirm with a partner organization that all facilitators have been approved and background checked through the [CPS vendor process](#) and are currently certified to teach PHS/SHE within CPS.
 - Ensure that the CBO is implementing a curriculum aligned with the [CPS Scope & Sequence](#) and you have communicated about which lessons/topic areas they will/will not cover.