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Director of the Department of Education

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## Ensuring High-Quality Health Education for Oregon Students

Health education is essential for equipping students with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions, develop healthy habits, and contribute to their communities. Oregon's Health Standards, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2023, provide a foundation for comprehensive, age-appropriate learning that supports student well-being.

### Continuing to Teach Oregon's Health Standards

Oregon school districts should continue teaching the 2023 State Board of Education Health Standards. These standards ensure that students receive consistent, high-quality health education that prepares them for success.

ODE remains committed to ensuring students and educators have access to high-quality resources that align with the state's vision of health education—supporting students in gaining the skills necessary for empowered decision-making and lifelong well-being. Resources available to guide instruction include:

- [Health and Sexuality Education Standards](#)
- [Supporting Gender Expansive Students: Guidance for Schools](#)
- [Every Student Belongs Guidance](#)
- [LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Success Plan](#) and ODE's [LGBTQ2SIA+ Resources webpage](#)

### Health Instructional Materials Adoption for 2024-25

School districts are required to adopt instructional materials on the cycle established by the State Board of Education, with the 2024-25 school year designated for ODE's Health Education instructional materials evaluation. These materials support student learning, align with grade-level goals, and reflect the latest knowledge and best practices in health education.

To comply with Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR 581-022-2355), school districts should adopt new Health Education materials for implementation in the 2025-26 school year. **Districts have the option to postpone adoption by up to two years from the required implementation date**, but delaying may require adopting



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multiple content areas simultaneously in the future, which can create challenges related to budgeting, professional development, and teacher workload.

The State Board of Education has approved instructional materials for K-5, middle school, and high school. If a district chooses to use materials not included in the state-approved list, they must conduct an independent adoption process following OAR 581-022-2350.

### **Understanding the Limited High School Health Material Options**

Only one instructional material met the criteria for State Board adoption at the high school level. ODE's evaluation process only reviews comprehensive health materials, not standalone sexuality education resources. Many high-quality sexuality education programs exist but are not reviewed under Oregon's adoption process, creating barriers for districts that wish to use them but do not want to conduct an independent review.

Additionally, publisher participation plays a role in material availability. For the most recent instructional materials review, only seven publishers submitted materials across all grade levels. Some submissions lacked comprehensive sexuality education, focused only on supplemental topics, or did not align with Oregon's commitment to culturally responsive, medically accurate education. As a result, only one high school curriculum met the required evaluation criteria.

### **Next Steps for Districts Choosing Non-Adopted Materials**

Districts that opt to use materials not included in the State Board of Education's list must follow an independent adoption process as outlined in OAR 581-022-2350. This process ensures that selected materials meet state standards, align to the criteria, and support students in gaining a well-rounded health education.

### **Why Comprehensive Health Education Matters**

A strong health education program provides lifelong benefits for students and communities. When health instruction is comprehensive, inclusive, skills-based, and scaffolded across grade levels, research shows that it contributes to:

- Improved school climate



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- Decreased violence
- Increased academic achievement
- Long-lasting, intergenerational benefits

Oregon's health and sexuality education standards remain unchanged, and school districts should continue their implementation plans. By providing students with high-quality, research-based health education, Oregon schools can support student success and well-being for years to come.

For more information, visit the Oregon Department of Education websites:

[Health Education](#)

[Sexuality Education](#)

[Instructional Materials](#)