

ODE Guidance for Utilizing Guest Speakers for Sexuality Education

July 2019

Some schools and teachers may choose to bring in guest speakers to host sessions on sexuality education and healthy relationships. The below guidance describes requirements for guest speakers and presentations.

I. CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

Prior to any presentations, please review all guest speaker materials, which may include slides, scripts, videos, and activities. Guest speakers must comply with the statutes and administrative rules governing instruction in sexuality education: the Human Sexuality Law ([ORS 336.455](#)), the Healthy Teen Relationships Act ([HB 4077](#)), the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education Law ([ORS 336.059](#)) and the Division 22 Human Sexuality Education Rule ([OAR 581-022-2050](#)).

Materials must be:

- ✓ Medically Accurate
- ✓ Not fear or shame based
- ✓ Comprehensive
- ✓ Inclusive
- ✓ Compliant with Oregon laws and educational standards

Medically Accurate

Guest speakers should utilize lessons and teaching methods aligned with current sexual health education research. Presenters must share only medically accurate information that does not use fear or shame as an instructional tool. Medical accuracy means that the preponderance of research published in peer-reviewed journals supports the messages, theories, and concepts included in the presentations.

Not fear or shame based

Guest speakers should use evidence-informed practices. Guest speakers should not use scare tactics, gender stereotypes, disparaging messages about condoms and other contraceptives, perpetuate stereotypes, or shame or belittle students. Instruction that predominantly relies on messages that cause students to be scared, apathetic, or disgusted by health or social outcomes is **not** permitted. Health information should focus on *accurate* information and *positive* skill building that empowers learners to make the best decisions for themselves based on their own goals and values.

Comprehensive

Guest speakers must provide information that falls under the umbrella of **comprehensive** sexuality education, which teaches that sexuality is a natural and healthy component of human development. Although abstinence can be taught as the healthiest and safest option, it cannot be taught at the exclusion of other content areas that support young people with information

on healthy sexuality and relationships. This means that sexual violence prevention, STI prevention, and unintended pregnancy prevention must be taught alongside abstinence. Additionally, messages cannot shame students who may have already had sexual experiences.

Inclusive

Guest speakers must provide inclusive sexuality education. Sexuality education content and approaches should acknowledge the oppressive systems and histories that have negatively impacted many students and communities. This means that guest speakers may not present content that is racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic, or heterocentric. Guest speakers must also use instructional approaches and content that are culturally responsive and acknowledges the value and diversity of students, family structures, and communities.

Compliant with Oregon Laws and Educational Standards

School districts should demonstrate how guest speakers meet state law governing instruction in sexuality education and contribute to meeting [Oregon's Health Education Standards](#) (2017). The Standards outline specific content areas that must be covered by each grade in public education. School districts should refer to these Standards when reviewing guest speaker content.

When considering a guest speaker, determine whether:

- ✓ The presenter's materials are comprehensive and NOT abstinence-only.
- ✓ The presenter's content has been vetted for medical accuracy.
- ✓ The presenter's content has been vetted for inclusion around race, gender, and sexual orientation.
- ✓ The presentation includes positive skill-building messages and does NOT rely on fear-based messages.
- ✓ The presenter's materials are inclusive of LGBTQIA students and families.
- ✓ The presentation and approach is sensitive to students who have experienced sexual abuse and other trauma.
- ✓ The presentation's content has been aligned to Oregon Laws and Health Standards.

II. PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

School district administration and staff must consider and follow local school district policies that pertain to classroom instruction and school building guests. Guest speakers and materials should be:

- ✓ Approved in the district's policies and plans
- ✓ Shared with parents/caregivers
- ✓ Supervised by teachers
- ✓ Coordinated with by school staff

Approved in Sexuality Education Plan of Instruction

All sexuality education instructional materials should be included in the district's Comprehensive Plan of Instruction, as required by [OAR 581-22-2050](#). The School District Board must approve these Plans of Instruction every 2 years. If Guest speaker materials are not included in the Plan

of Instruction, they are considered supplemental materials. Supplemental instructional materials that are used in addition to the approved curriculum must follow school district policies for approval. Refer to your school district policies for using supplemental instruction.

☐ **Shared with parents/caregivers**

According to [OAR-581-22-2050](#), everything that is included in the district's Plan of Instruction must be provided to parents/caregivers in advance for an opportunity to opt-out. Guest speakers who wish to present in a public institution must also follow these same rules.

☐ **Supervised by teachers**

Licensed classroom educators should remain in the classroom during guest presentations, to ensure safety and adherence to Oregon sexuality education policies.

☐ **Coordinated with by school staff**

Guest speakers must communicate and coordinate with school staff, following school procedures for school building guests. These may include registration, safety, and emergency protocols.

When considering a guest speaker, review whether:

- ✓ The guest speaker's presentation was approved and included in the district's Plan of Instruction.
- ✓ Parents/caregivers have been given an opportunity to learn about the guest speaker's content.
- ✓ A teacher will be present during the presentation.
- ✓ Appropriate school staff has coordinated with the guest speaker to ensure compliance with school building protocols.

For additional questions, please contact:
Sasha Grenier, MPH, CHES
Sexuality Education Specialist
Oregon Department of Education
sasha.grenier@state.or.us or 503-941-5689