



VALLEY LIFE CHARTER SCHOOLS

Developing Community Leaders

Health Education Fact Sheet - First presented to the board on September 26, 2019

Updated Feb 2020, to include AB1227 Moved by _____ 2nd _____ Aye _____ Nay _____

california Healthy Youth Act¹

What is the California Healthy Youth Act?

The California Healthy Youth Act, which took effect in January 2016, requires school districts throughout the state to provide students with comprehensive sexual health education, along with information about HIV prevention, at least once in high school and once in middle school.

The state legislation also allows districts to offer [age-appropriate](#) sexual health education in earlier grades if they choose to do so. But parents can opt-out of comprehensive sexual health education, and local districts choose which curriculum and instructional resources (including textbooks and worksheets) they will use to teach comprehensive sexual health education to their students.

Valley Life does not specifically teach comprehensive sexual health education to their students other than mandated 7th-grade instruction. Parents will have an opportunity to preview the 7th-grade curriculum prior to instruction and may opt-out.

This does not mean students do not discuss it while on the playground. When your student comes home with something that (s)he heard, please have open conversations with them - regarding your beliefs.

Are schools required to teach comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention?

Yes. The state legislation, originally known as AB 329, requires that students in grades **seven through twelve** receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education at least once in middle school and once in high school. However, school districts under the leadership of their locally elected boards and superintendents are tasked with selecting which curriculum and instructional resources (including textbooks and worksheets) they will use to teach this material to students.

State law defines comprehensive sexual health education as “education regarding human development and sexuality, including education on pregnancy, contraception, and sexually transmitted infections” (EC § 51931[b]). HIV prevention education is defined as “instruction on the nature of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and AIDS, methods of transmission, strategies

¹ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/he/cf/cahealthfaq.asp>



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to reduce the risk of HIV infection, and social and public health issues related to HIV and AIDS” (EC § 51931[d]).

Can parents opt out of sex education lessons?

Yes. The law makes it clear that parents can opt their children out of comprehensive sex education. According to the language in [AB 329](#), “the Legislature recognizes that while parents and guardians overwhelmingly support medically accurate, comprehensive sex education, parents and guardians have the ultimate responsibility for imparting values regarding human sexuality to their children.”

School districts are required to notify parents/guardians a minimum of 14 days prior to the first day of comprehensive sexual health instruction. To opt-out of this instruction, parents/guardians must request in writing that their child not participate in the instruction. If the parent/guardian does not request in writing that the child be withheld, the child will attend the instruction (EC § 51938[a]).



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Can parents opt out of instruction or materials that discuss gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation?

As mentioned above, parents or guardians can excuse their children from lessons about comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education, as well as research on student health behaviors and risks. Read more about the [LGBTQ-inclusivity requirements](#) (PDF) and how they interact with parental opt-out.

However, as stated in [Education Code 51932\(b\)](#), the opt-out provision of the California Healthy Youth Act does not apply to instruction or materials outside the context of comprehensive sexual health education, including those that may reference gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, discrimination, bullying, relationships, or family. For example, the opt-out rule associated with comprehensive sexual health education would not apply to a social studies lesson on the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 ruling in favor of same-sex marriage. Read more about the [FAIR Education Act of 2011](#).

Re Questions about Curriculum

Per the Education Code -

Charter schools are allowed an automatic waiver from most state laws, regulations, and policies governing school districts. They are not exempt from laws establishing minimum age for public school attendance, the California building standards, facilities requirements, and fiscal requirements such as the Charters Revolving Loan Fund policies. Charter schools are required to conduct statewide assessments and meet content standards.

Citations: Cal. Educ. Code § 47610; Cal. Educ. Code § 47611; Cal. Educ. Code § 41365

In order to better serve our students, Valley Life created a curriculum committee in 2017 - prior to adopting the current social studies and science curriculum. The committee consists of VLCS Staff, VLCS Board members, including the parent board member, and VLCS Parent Lighthouse Team. Social Studies and Science curriculum were both reviewed by the above members prior to purchasing.

Valley Life does not have an adopted curriculum for health education - Health education is mandated for 7th grade students, and is taught by our school nurse. Parents are encouraged to preview the content prior to instruction, and may opt out.



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VLCS uses StudiesWeekly for social studies curriculum. State law does not allow for an opt out of social studies education. The curriculum was reviewed and approved by our Lighthouse team, prior to getting board approval. To see the content / sequence for social studies, please review their website

https://store.studiesweekly.com/california/?__from_store=default

Human Trafficking Prevention Education and Training Act AB 1227

Effective January 1, 2018, the ***Human Trafficking Prevention Education and Training Act (Assembly Bill 1227)*** requires all school districts in California to provide human trafficking prevention education for students once in middle school and once in high school. Valley Life Charter School will be using a program called PROTECT (Prevention Organized To Educate Children on Trafficking) to provide this required training to our students and staff. PROTECT's grade-specific curriculum will be taught during the English Language Arts class period to all 7th grade students.

The PROTECT program was developed by three nonprofits in conjunction with the California Department of Education and the Office of the Attorney General. The curriculum is in line with the state standards of the California Healthy Youth Act and the Human Trafficking Prevention Education and Training Act, and is a statewide initiative designed to increase the ability of our youth to understand their own vulnerability. There are many ways that people are exploited in our world and PROTECT was designed to reduce vulnerability and exploitation.

I invite you to learn more about the program by visiting: www.protectnow.org.

If you do not want your child to participate, you must notify the school.

Brief Overview of the 7th Grade PROTECT Curriculum

Protecting a Masterpiece

Through the context of masterpieces of art, students are given the opportunity to see themselves as unique masterpieces worthy of respect, love and care. Students learn about the types of child abuse



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(including sexual exploitation), ways to develop personal boundaries, and the importance of reporting any situations of abuse or human trafficking to a safe and trusted adult.

Education Code: Growth, Development, and Sexual Health; Injury Prevention and Safety; Mental, Emotional and Social Health