

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 359

BY REPRESENTATIVE WESLEY BISHOP

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

SEX EDUCATION: Requires public school governing authorities in Orleans Parish to offer sex education instruction to students in certain grades

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:281(H), relative to sex education instruction in Orleans
3 Parish; to require public school governing authorities in Orleans Parish to adopt
4 policies for and to offer sex education instruction to students in certain grades; to
5 provide for definitions; and to provide for related matters.

6 Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published
7 as provided by Article III, Section 13 of the Constitution of
8 Louisiana.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 17:281(H) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

11 §281. Instruction in sex education

12 * * *

13 H.(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the By not later than the
14 end of the 2016-2017 school year, the governing authority of each public school in
15 Orleans Parish School Board shall adopt a policy that provides a plan for offering
16 comprehensive, age and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, and
17 evidence-informed instruction in sex education to students. Beginning not later than
18 the 2017-2018 school year, the governing authority of each public school in Orleans
19 Parish shall offer such instruction to all students in grades seven through twelve and

1 may offer such instruction ~~in sex education at the third grade level or higher.~~ to all
2 students in grades three through six.

3 (2) For the purposes of this Subsection, the following terms shall have the
4 following meanings:

5 (a) "Abstinence" means not engaging in sexual activity. Teaching about
6 abstinence informs students that it is the only one hundred percent effective method
7 of preventing unintended pregnancy, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, the
8 human immunodeficiency virus, and other sexually transmitted infections.

9 (b) "Age and developmentally appropriate" means instruction that is
10 designed to teach concepts, information, and skills suitable to a particular age, grade,
11 and developmental level, based on the cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral
12 capacity of most students at that age, grade, and level.

13 (c) "Comprehensive" means instruction that provides students with
14 knowledge about a variety of topics including abstinence, human development,
15 anatomy, physiology, families, personal safety, pregnancy, childbirth,
16 responsibilities of parenthood, contraception, healthy relationships, communication
17 skills, media literacy, responsible decisionmaking, and the prevention of acquired
18 immunodeficiency syndrome, the human immunodeficiency virus, and other sexually
19 transmitted infections.

20 (d) "Evidence-informed" means instruction that uses the best available
21 research and practice knowledge to guide program design and implementation. This
22 informed practice allows for innovation while incorporating the lessons learned from
23 the existing research literature, curricula, guidelines, and standards.
24 Evidence-informed sex education follows the National Sexuality Education
25 Standards: Core Content and Skills, K-12, which were developed by the American
26 Association for Health Education, the American School Health Association, the
27 National Education Association Health Information Network, and the Society of
28 State Leaders of Health and Physical Education, in coordination with the Future of
29 Sex Education Initiative.

1 (e) "Medically accurate" means instruction that is supported by peer-
2 reviewed research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods, and
3 recognized as accurate and objective by leading medical, psychological, psychiatric,
4 and public health organizations and agencies, including the American Medical
5 Association and the Centers for Disease Control.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 359 Engrossed

2015 Regular Session

Wesley Bishop

Abstract: Requires public school governing authorities in Orleans Parish to offer sex education instruction to students in grades seven through 12.

Present law authorizes all public elementary and secondary schools to offer instruction in sex education in grades seven and above and allows the Orleans Parish School Board to offer such instruction beginning in grade three. Provides that any sex education instruction offered be integrated into an existing course of study and limits the content of such instruction to scientific information that shall not include religious beliefs, practices in human sexuality, or subjective moral and ethical judgments. Provides that the major emphasis of any sex education instruction shall be to encourage sexual abstinence between unmarried persons.

Proposed law relative to Orleans Parish, requires public school governing authorities to adopt a policy that includes a plan for offering sex education instruction to students. Requires such governing authorities to offer the instruction in grades seven through 12 instead of permitting such instruction and specifies that such instruction be comprehensive, age and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, and evidence-informed. Defines such terms for purposes of proposed law. Otherwise retains present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:281(H))