

Current system:

- Health class for 1 semester
- In biology and anatomy classes, sex ed topics are up to the descriptions of the teacher
- There is one elective class that talks about queer issues (Gender and Sexuality), but it is only available to seniors.
- At the beginning of the pandemic, there was 1 sex ed class, and students didn't take it very seriously
- Even pre-pandemic, sex ed was just one week, and there was a lot of inherent homophobia in the curriculum

Desired additions/revisions to current system:

- Consent should be taught in schools
- We need expanded definitions of rape and assault
- It's exhausting to be a victim
- Discuss toxic masculinity and male sexual assault
- Hold schools accountable for protecting abusers
 - No victim blaming, avoid use of words like "alleged" when referring to instances of assault/harassment
 - Have a conversation about language and how it can be invalidating
- Teach sex ed all four years
- Provide opt-out option for students (/teachers?)
- Go over legal rights for victims—especially legal rights for minors
- Discuss in-depth how to report a rape
- Keep the first year the same, but include something about sexual assault and rape every year
 - Increase the maturity/depth of discussions over the course of the four years to account for the emotional growth students experience from ages 14-18
- Work with nonprofits
- Partner with RJ and Alternatives, Inc.
- Potentially partner with Howard Brown?

Comments from Katie Colby - Thanks for asking for my thoughts on this incredibly important topic. As a CIS white woman I am extremely humbled by that my thoughts on this could prove to be valuable. I will primarily be adding questions and considerations to dive deeper into topics with the assumption that changes to the Sex Ed curriculum will likely be perceived as an attack by some teachers who are already uncomfortable with the current (problematic) curriculum/structure.

Current system:

- Health class for 1 semester - *Chronologically when? Freshman year? Sophomore year? Taught by whom with what materials? List of teachers who teach it?*
- In biology and anatomy classes, sex ed topics are up to the descriptions of the teacher - *Why is this important? I have heard students cite their biology and anatomy classes are outrageously more informative than the sex ed or health classes - why is this the case? What's the chronology of when this class happens versus mandatory 1 week of sex ed?*
- There is one elective class that talks about queer issues (Gender and Sexuality), but it is only available to seniors. *When should it be available? Why? Who benefits? Who is taking the Gender and Sexuality class? Does the existence of this class reach students who don't take it and why is that important?*
- At the beginning of the pandemic, there was 1 sex ed class, and students didn't take it very seriously - *I hear you that this sounds like it was extremely unhelpful, but I'm not sure if there's an in depth argument or analysis to be found in this - naesayers will cite that many classes weren't taken seriously during the pandemic. If you bring this up to say that the content needs to be retaught because it's so crucial, that's a different issue and should be stated clearly*
- Even pre-pandemic, sex ed was just one week, and there was a lot of inherent homophobia in the curriculum - *So to clarify - in a semester long class there was only one week of sex ed curriculum, which equates to 2-3 block periods? Where do you think the inherent homophobia comes from - the text, the structure of the class, the instructor's personal bias, a combination? Why is that important? As you discuss, I'd suggest that you tie this bullet point to the first on "Health class for 1 semester"*

Desired additions/revisions to current system:

- Consent should be taught in schools - *ok, yes, but what does this look like? In choir this comes up during warm ups that involve tapping each other's shoulders (which we haven't been doing since Covid, so I've been accidentally neglecting this practice of modeling consent). So in my classroom the first few times I teach this I explicitly state that it's important to always ask for consent, never assume that it's ok today to touch your peer/friend/neighbor's shoulder just because it was last time, you're allowed to say "no" and it's not a big deal - the people around you will respect that by tapping the air instead or you can physically move yourself for this activity, and consent can change*

from day to day or person to person. As time goes on students know this routine and prompt each other even when I forget. I frequently state "consent is important!" in the context of these conversations, and the students then echo my modeling.

But we got to this point because I read some misc instagram posts or something and as an individual I realized this is important to model in my classroom. Not all teachers are going to come to this conclusion on their own, and certainly will not realize that the idea of consent as it pertains to intimate relationships has a place in every day classroom activities. This requires professional development. It's the right thing to do, and we can model consent in how we interact with each other physically, verbally, and even in physical property, but this will not be effective without staff/admin/teacher buy in. I mention this only to curb your expectations that all of the adults in Jones are going to start magically doing "the right thing," because you ask them to. They'll require education, training, practice, and assessment before this is commonplace in every classroom.

- *We need expanded definitions of rape and assault - start with primary definitions. How are we ensuring that classrooms are a safe space to hear these? Not "comfortable" space, but what must be done to create environments where participants can hear this content? I assume the group working on this project has victims of rape and assault in mind with this question, but also consider that figurative white boy who you think needs to hear it. Yes, he does, but how can this be delivered in a way that he hears it and doesn't enter into this learning already writing it off?*

Continuing - creating a list of some less explicit behaviors that can be defined as assault will help hesitant people understand what you mean by "expanded definitions." For example, one time in an after school activity two male identifying students were joking around. One bent to tie his shoe or pick something up, and the other mimed grabbing and humping the first student from behind. This is an example of a clearly inappropriate and sexually related behavior, but many people would write off as not worth addressing because the two students were friends and "just joking." My response was brief but reinforced consent and assault - "Did he know you were doing that? If he didn't know, could he consent and be part of the joke? You two might think it's fine, but that might have made a lot of other people uncomfortable, including me. What you do on your own time at home is up to you, but don't do that again here, even as a joke."

The term "harassment" should probably be included somewhere here too - students repeatedly asking someone to go out with them or kiss them or touch them after being told "no" is an important link between consent and assault.

- *It's exhausting to be a victim - HEARD! Where does this fit into the curriculum? Is the emotional trauma of being a victim a part of sex ed, or is it part of social emotional learning? This can be linked to my last sentence in the previous bullet - how are we creating spaces for this conversation to be had and actually heard by the people who*

need to hear it? Can a sex ed curriculum actually address victim fatigue and trauma? (To be clear, I don't know the answer to that question - that's not a probing question so much as I genuinely do not know)

- *Discuss toxic masculinity (broke this bullet into two) - What role does this play in sex ed? What other topics does this overlap on? How do we define toxic masculinity? Consider that it's quite possible that some or many teachers currently assigned the role of teaching sex ed and might skip over this topic because it feels like a personal attack to them. Adding a discussion of toxic masculinity to the curriculum won't guarantee it is taught.*
- *Male sexual assault - Uh, yes, why the heck wouldn't it already be in there? What might this sound/look like in language choices around sexual assault? Yes, many folks will benefit from explicitly acknowledging that sexual assault occurs to male individuals, but based on the context of the entire document I assume that this committee finds non gender conforming, trans, and other non-biarany people really important. I would encourage finding a curriculum that goes in depth on who can be victims of sexual assault and then continues to give examples and uses gender inclusive examples and language choices throughout to continue reinforcing that anyone can be the victim of sexual assault*
- *Hold schools accountable for protecting abusers - Oof, I hear the hurt in this bullet point. What I'm about to say in no way can help with the hurt in this statement, and I apologize in advance. In my opinion schools are in a sticky and crap situation in this circumstance. I would suggest discussion around this topic begins with an exploration on exactly what CPS framework exists to support and protect victims, but also contrast the obligations that schools have to comply with for their legal responsibilities to continue educating the perpetrator. Starting here may help to depersonalize previous harm done and make it easier to create suggestions that can't be dismissed by being in opposition to mandatory guideline.*
 - *No victim blaming, avoid use of words like "alleged" when referring to instances of assault/harassment*
 - *Have a conversation about language and how it can be invalidating*
 - *The two bullets above - I agree wholeheartedly, but again, what's the scope of a sex ed curriculum? How can these (incredibly important) elements be included in such a short time span?*
- *Teach sex ed all four years - logistics - How can this be scheduled? Taught by whom? To what avail? What does annual sex ed do that one week of sex ed doesn't? Can it be done in two years to keep within the framework of freshman/sophomore PE? What would this replace (because there's no room to add new requirements, logistically) and who might that upset?*
- *Provide opt-out option for students (/teachers?) - Oof, this is tricky. How do you make this equitable, hold people who need to learn accountable, yet also support victims from reliving trauma? Good luck with this point y'all, I'd save it for way last.*

- Go over legal rights for victims—especially legal rights for minors *YES! Where does it fall in the sequencing of the curriculum? Gender-inclusive language? Consider including discussion about bias and obstacles during the reporting process?*
- Discuss in-depth how to report a rape - *YES! Same questions as above ^^*
- Keep the first year the same, but include something about sexual assault and rape every year - *why is it ok to keep first year the same? No disagreement here about the value of repeated and more in depth annual discussion of assault, but is anything lost if there's less depth in freshman year sex ed? I really feel like by junior and senior year most students *think* they know about rape and sexual assault and that it's a waste of their time, so how does annual instruction keep the interest of the students who need it?*
 - Increase the maturity/depth of discussions over the course of the four years to account for the emotional growth students experience from ages 14-18
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Y'all, this is all so exciting, and also such hard work! There's so much to discuss in these bullets! This is my loving reminder that there will absolutely be pushback from people who think that sex ed shouldn't be taught in schools or that this is too far, so you should absolutely include in your planning/conversation how we educate and hold the door open to engage adults who don't understand why this conversation is necessary. YOU'RE AWESOME! GOOD JOB!