

Resolution A - Recognizing Comprehensive Sexual Health Education in Michigan Schools as a Policy Priority

SUBMITTED TO: Michigan Osteopathic Association House of Delegates
SUBMITTED BY: Michigan Osteopathic Association Student Liaison Committee
REFERRED TO: Public Affairs Committee
RECOMMENDATION: Support with Edits
SUBJECT: Recognizing Comprehensive Sexual Health Education in Michigan Schools as a Policy Priority
ACTION TAKEN BY MOA: Adopted as Amended

1 WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines Comprehensive Sexuality Education
2 as providing accurate and age-appropriate lessons to youth about sexual and reproductive health
3 and lists topics that are covered in comprehensive sexuality education as including, but not limited
4 to, “. . . families and relationships; respect, consent and bodily autonomy; anatomy, puberty and
5 menstruation; contraception and pregnancy; and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV¹”;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), American
8 Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) have all
9 released statements in support of comprehensive sexual education^{2 3 4}; and

10 WHEREAS, the sexual health education policy laid out in Michigan 1976 PA 451 currently
11 contains stigmatizing language when discussing topics of sexual health and does not enforce the
12 incorporation of medically accurate and objective information in a school’s sexual health education
13 curriculum with exceptions for HIV/AIDS education⁵; and

14 WHEREAS, college students have described their experience with sexual education during
15 adolescence as ‘inadequate’ and ‘awkward’ while also noting the use of scare tactics when
16 discussing STIs and leaving more to be desired in terms of discussing sexual assault and coercion⁶;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, programs that address gender and power dynamics in relationships during
19 comprehensive sex education are 80% more effective in reducing sexually transmitted infections
20 and unplanned pregnancy rates⁷; and

21 WHEREAS, comprehensive sex education that is inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender
22 identities leads to reduced bullying of LGBTQ+ members⁷; and

23 WHEREAS, students receiving their sexual health education from teachers trained in
24 comprehensive sexual health education were more likely to delay their first sexual encounter and
25 use protective measures such as condoms⁸, aiding in the prevention of STI and HIV transmission;
26 and

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27 WHEREAS, a thirty year systematic literature review found that comprehensive sexuality
28 education lead to increased recognition of the importance of gender equity and social justice,
29 improved knowledge on dating violence and intimate partner violence, decreased physical and
30 emotional dating violence, improved discussion of sex within relationships, improved self-esteem
31 and positive self image, and improved media literacy⁷; now, therefore, be it

32 RESOLVED, that the Michigan Osteopathic Association (MOA) advocates for state lawmakers to
33 amend current state laws to support the implementation of age-appropriate comprehensive
34 sexuality education curriculum inclusive of gender, sexuality, ability, and race/ethnicity in
35 Michigan’s public schools; and, be it further

36 RESOLVED, that the MOA encourages the teaching of medically accurate and objective sexual
37 health information with the removal of stigmatizing language in pre-existing local and statewide
38 sexual health education policies.

¹ World Health Organization. (2023, May 18). Comprehensive sexuality education. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education#:~:text=What%20is%20comprehensive%20sexuality%20education,their%20sexuality%20and%20sexual%20health?>

² Policy Priorities: Comprehensive Sexuality Education. ACOG. (2024, February). <https://www.acog.org/advocacy/policy-priorities/adolescent-health/comprehensive-sexuality-education>

³ *The Importance of Access to Comprehensive Sex Education*. American Academy of Pediatrics. (2024, February 15). https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/adolescent-sexual-health/equitable-access-to-sexual-and-reproductive-health-care-for-all-youth/the-importance-of-access-to-comprehensive-sex-education/?srsltid=AfmBOorl7k1L8MDfhL23PxJ7VT12wTIFhQ_bb5FZ226NsrX2Luu-EUTJ

⁴ *Adolescent Health Care, Sexuality and Contraception*. American Academy of Family Physicians. (2024, December). <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/adolescent-sexuality.html#:~:text=Comprehensive%20sex%20education%20includes%20discussions,and%20reproductive%20rights%20and%20responsibilities.>

⁵ Legislative Service Bureau, The School Code of 1976 (act 451 of 1976, as amended) (1987). Lansing, Mich.

⁶ Astle, S., McAllister, P., Emanuels, S., Rogers, J., Toews, M., & Yazedjian, A. (2020). College students’ suggestions for improving sex education in schools beyond ‘blah blah blah condoms and stds.’ *Sex Education*, 21(1), 91–105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2020.1749044>

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⁸ Ramírez-Villalobos, D., Monterubio-Flores, E. A., Gonzalez-Vazquez, T. T., Molina-Rodríguez, J. F., Ruelas-González, Ma. G., & Alcalde-Rabanal, J. E. (2021). Delaying sexual onset: Outcome of a comprehensive sexuality education initiative for adolescents in public schools. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11388-2>