



NORWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL

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April 12, 2022

Dear Norwood Community,

Recent media coverage has raised concern regarding the revised New Jersey Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education. The revised standards will be in place beginning in the 2022-2023 school year. As with all of our curriculum, we work collaboratively with our partner districts at the Northern Valley Curriculum Center to create a curriculum that meets the required standards. Each district then has an opportunity to implement the curriculum in a manner that they feel is best for their students.

We are currently working with the curriculum center to build our teachers' understanding of the revised standards and then we will have subsequent meetings in Norwood to review the new standards and create lessons for each of our grade levels. Next Fall, before any of the lessons are facilitated, parents will have the opportunity to attend an information session on the new standards and preview lessons at their child's grade level. Most importantly, if as a parent you feel that the lesson is in conflict with your conscience, morally, or religiously held beliefs you may opt your child out of the lesson and your child will be excluded from participation with no negative consequences. This opt-out would take place by completing a district form that will be distributed next school year.

Please know the "Pink, Blue, Purple" lesson that has been highlighted by the media, is from a program developed by Advocates for Youth as part of their Rights, Respect, and Responsibility program. This is a program that has not been reviewed or adopted by Norwood Public School. It is not a state requirement to use the program from Advocates for Youth in part or whole. The lessons were shared as a possible resource at a Board of Education meeting in Westfield, NJ and have been misinterpreted by media as a mandated program instead of a resource that districts may choose to use if they wish.

Finally, our goal is to implement the standards in a developmentally appropriate manner that allows our students to attain the skills and knowledge to live a healthy life physically, emotionally, and mentally. Our intent is to be as transparent as possible so you can make an informed decision when deciding if you want your child to participate in social and sexual health lessons. Once our units and lessons are finalized more information will be provided to the community. With many inaccurate headlines and articles that may cause unnecessary anxiety and worry, we kindly ask that you contact us if you have questions or concerns about our curriculum, programs, or instruction. We're happy to speak with you to answer your questions or address any concerns.

Sincerely,

Kevin Ulmer
Superintendent