



Fully Qualified Teachers of Health Education

Revised February 20, 2007

Michigan law and State Board policy requires that districts employ teachers of health education who are qualified to teach health education. Although federal law (*No Child Left Behind*) does not specifically address the qualifications needed to teach health education, state legislation and State Board policy clearly address the issue. The requirements of state law supersede the omission in federal legislation.

Required by State Law

See the sections of the *Revised School Code* that are contained in the Michigan Compiled Laws under MCL 380.1169, 380.1507, 380.1527, and 380.1531.

The following pertains to teachers with a secondary teaching certificate.

- According to state law and the "Administrative Rules Governing the Certification of Michigan Teachers," a secondary teacher is required to have an endorsement on his or her teaching certificate in the subject areas taught. A teacher who provides instruction in health or sex education at the middle school level or high school level is required to have the appropriate endorsement on his or her certificate. The endorsements which permit teachers to teach health, including sex education, include the *MA* (health), *MX* (health, physical education, recreation, and dance), or *KH* (family and consumer science) endorsements.

The following pertains to teachers with an elementary teaching certificate.

- A teacher with an elementary certificate may teach "all subjects," which may include health education, including sex education, at the grades indicated on the certificate. Some certificates specify that "all subjects" may be taught only in a self-contained setting (SC) for some grades.

The following pertains to all teachers.

- Any certified teacher may teach HIV prevention education after receiving the training in HIV prevention education provided by the Michigan Department of Education through the regional Comprehensive School Health Coordinators. A health endorsement is not necessary in order to teach HIV prevention education as defined below. Licensed health care professionals who have received training in HIV, as it pertains to young people, may also provide the instruction.

Definition of HIV Prevention Education

Schools are required by Michigan law to provide instruction that focuses on the principal modes by which dangerous communicable diseases, including, but not limited to, HIV/AIDS, are spread and the best methods for the restriction and prevention of these diseases

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(Section 380.1169.1 of the Revised School Code). In addition to this content, the Michigan Department of Education recommends, but does not require, the following content:

- Universal precautions for avoiding the spread of blood borne pathogens;
- Current statistics regarding prevalence of HIV and/or other sexually transmitted infections (STIs);
- How the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) affects the body and immune system;
- Current testing and treatment options for HIV and/or other STIs; and
- Importance of treating people living with HIV or AIDS with compassion.

Supported by the State Board of Education

State Board policy further supports the intention of the Michigan legislation. "All health education teachers should possess the necessary qualifications, skills, and training essential to perform their duties well." (*Michigan State Board of Education Policy on Comprehensive School Health Education, June 2004.*)

Recommended by the Michigan Department of Education

The following are strongly recommended, in keeping with the State Board of Education's goal to "attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students," and its recognition of the demonstrated influence of health on learning. See the Michigan State Board of Education's *Policy on Comprehensive School Health Education* (June 2004), and the Department's *Professional Development Vision and Standards* (August 2003).

- Middle school and elementary teachers holding an "All Subjects" elementary certificate may continue, under the law, to teach health education at the grades indicated on the certificate. However, to ensure that students learn appropriate material, and that schools are not in violation of other state laws, these teachers should receive specific training in effective health education.
- All health education teachers, regardless of years of service, should receive administrative support to participate in ongoing professional development activities *specifically related to health education*. These professional development activities should be research-based and theory-driven, focused on student learning, and relevant to the individual teacher. Professional development activities should provide teachers with opportunities to practice strategies that influence students' *health skills, behaviors, and attitudes*.
- Research shows that teachers who receive curriculum-specific training in a model health education curriculum have the most impact on student health behaviors. All health education teachers, K-12, need opportunities to become trained in specific, research-based, and theory-driven curricula, such as the *Michigan Model for Health*,[®] which is provided by Michigan's regional Comprehensive School Health Coordinators.



For more information about health education in Michigan public schools, please contact the Coordinated School Health and Safety Programs Unit at (517) 241-4284, or see the website at www.michigan.gov/healthed.

This summary should not be used to replace statute. For the exact language of Michigan Compiled Laws, go to www.michiganlegislature.org. Concerns regarding interpretation should be directed to legal counsel.