



## **Human Sexual Education Opt-Out Policy**

**Purpose:** The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all public schools to provide health and physical education (G.L. c. 71, §§ 1 and 3). Under G.L. c. 71, § 32A, parents/guardians have the right to exempt their children from lessons, courses, or instructional programs that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear procedures for parental/guardian notification, exemption requests, and access to instructional materials related to human sexual education at Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS). This policy ensures compliance with Massachusetts law while upholding HCCPS's commitment to family partnership, transparency, and student well-being.

### **Notification**

HCCPS shall:

1. Provide parents/guardians with advance notice when human sexual education curriculum, lessons, or activities are scheduled.
2. Make all instructional materials for human sexual education reasonably accessible for review by parents/guardians, educators, administrators, and others, to the extent practicable.
3. Distribute this policy annually to parents/guardians and submit a copy to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), as required.

### **Opt-Out Procedure**

Parents/guardians may exempt their child from any portion of the human sexual education curriculum by completing an Opt-out form provided by the Director of Teaching and Learning at any time prior to scheduled instruction. No student shall be penalized or disadvantaged in academic standing, school activities, or access to other curriculum as a result of an exemption. Students who are exempted will be provided with appropriate alternative activities or supervision during the period of instruction.

## **Instructional Standards Subject to Opt-Out**

Consistent with DESE guidance, parents/guardians may request exemption from instructional standards and practices that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. These include, but are not limited to, standards in the 2023 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Framework such as:

- Explanation of the relationship between sexual intercourse and reproduction.
- Analysis of ways to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Consideration of personal values, readiness, and decision-making regarding sexual activity.
- Instruction on methods of contraception, consent, and healthy sexual behaviors.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Director of Teaching and Learning or Designee**

- Ensure parents/guardians receive timely notice of human sexual education curriculum.
- Maintain records of all opt-out requests.
- Ensure that exempted students are provided appropriate alternative educational experiences.

### **Teachers**

- Provide advance notice of upcoming human sexual education lessons.
- Offer parents/guardians reasonable access to curriculum materials.
- Coordinate with the Director of Teaching and Learning regarding students who are exempted.

### **Parents/Guardians**

- Review instructional materials as desired.
- Submit written notification to the Director of Teaching & Learning or Head of School if requesting exemption.
- Communicate with the school regarding any questions or concerns about the curriculum.

### **Students**

- Participate in assigned instruction unless exempted by parental/guardian request.
- Respect the confidentiality and perspectives of peers regarding matters of health and sexuality.