

Curricular Exemptions

(formerly Exemptions from Instruction)

[NOTE: Boards of education are required, by statute, to provide HIV/AIDS instruction and implement the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program described in this policy. Boards of education may, but are not required to, provide family life education and firearms safety programs. For instruction in any of these areas, as well as dissection, state law provides that parents and guardians may submit a written request for a curricular exemption, which must be granted in accordance with the terms described below.]

Mandatory Curricular Exemptions:

Upon the written request of a parent or guardian received by the school district prior to planned instruction in the areas set forth below, the Madison Board of Education (the “Board”) shall permit curricular exemptions for instruction in the following areas:

1. Dissection;
2. Family life education;
3. HIV/AIDS;
4. Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program; or
5. Firearms safety programs.

Definitions:

“Dissection Instruction” is defined as instruction in which a student must participate in, or observe, the dissection of any animal.

“Family Life Education Instruction” is defined as instruction pertaining to family planning, human sexuality, parenting, nutrition and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic and social aspects of family life.

“HIV/AIDS Instruction” is defined as ongoing and systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) offered by the district pursuant to state law.

36 “Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program” is defined as the state-wide  
37 program identified or developed by the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration  
38 with the Department of Education and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc. (or a  
39 similar entity) that includes age-appropriate educational materials designed for children in  
40 grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and assault awareness  
41 and prevention that may include, but not be limited to, (A) the skills to recognize (i) child  
42 sexual abuse and assault, (ii) boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and  
43 contact, and (iii) ways offenders groom or desensitize victims, and (B) strategies to (i)  
44 promote disclosure, (ii) reduce self-blame, and (iii) mobilize bystanders.

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46 Written Request for Mandatory Exemption:

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48 Parents who wish to exercise such exemptions must notify the school district in writing in  
49 advance of the instruction to be provided.

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51 Permissive Curricular Exemptions:

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53 Except for the mandatory curricular exemptions noted above, or otherwise required by law,  
54 the Board does not require teachers to exempt students from any other aspect of the  
55 curriculum.

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57 Alternative Assignments:

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59 1. Any student excused from participating in, or observing, the dissection of any animal as  
60 part of classroom instruction shall be required to complete an alternate assignment to be  
61 determined by the teacher.

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63 2. Any student excused from participating in the sexual abuse and assault awareness and  
64 prevention program or a firearm safety program shall be provided, during the period of time in  
65 which the student would otherwise be participating in such program, an opportunity for other  
66 study or academic work as determined by the teacher.

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68 3. Any student excused from any other aspect of the curriculum may be required by the  
69 teacher to complete an alternative assignment as determined by the teacher.

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72 Legal References:

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74 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-16c.

75 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-16e.

76 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-18c.

77 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-18d.

78 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-19(b).

79 Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101q.

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