The Cleveland County Board of Education (the “Board”) is committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program that provides students with accurate information and encourages them to be responsible for their own health and behavior. The Board recognizes the primary role of parents in providing for the health and well-being of their children and seeks to involve parents as provided in this policy. The comprehensive health education program provided by the school system will meet the requirements of state law and the objectives established by the State Board of Education. The Board may, in its discretion, expand on the subject areas to be included in the program and on the instructional objectives to be met.

A. **COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM**

A comprehensive health education program must be taught to students from kindergarten through ninth grade. As required by law, the health education program must include age-appropriate instruction on bicycle safety, nutrition, dental health, environmental health, family living, consumer health, disease control, growth and development, first aid and emergency care, mental and emotional health, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, and reproductive health and safety education.

As required by law and beginning in seventh grade, reproductive health and safety education will include age-appropriate instruction on the benefits of sexual abstinence until marriage and strategies for remaining abstinent, STDs, the human reproductive system, preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, the effectiveness of contraceptive methods in preventing pregnancy, awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention and awareness.

B. **PARENTAL OPPORTUNITIES TO REVIEW MATERIALS AND WITHHOLD CONSENT FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION**

Each year before students participate in reproductive health and safety education or in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, the principal or designee shall notify parents of the opportunity to review the materials and objectives that will be used in instruction. A copy of all objectives and materials will be available for review in the media center of each school where these subjects will be taught.

The principal or designee shall also notify parents of the right to withhold or withdraw consent for their child’s participation in all reproductive health and safety education instruction or in specific topics such as STDs, the effectiveness and safety of contraceptive methods, awareness of sexual assault and sexual abuse, and sex trafficking prevention and awareness. Parents may also withhold consent to student participation in other separate instruction on the prevention of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or the avoidance of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Any parent wishing to withhold consent must do so in writing to the principal.
C. **STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTION**
   For reproductive health and safety education, teachers shall follow the instructional objectives and only use the age-appropriate materials that have been made available to parents for review in accordance with this policy. Information conveyed during instruction will be objective and based upon scientific research that is peer reviewed and accepted by professionals and credentialed experts in the field of sexual health education or other field authorized by law.

   A determination of what is an appropriate education for a student with disabilities must be made in accordance with the student’s individualized education plan, following all procedures as provided in the North Carolina *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*.

   Contraceptives shall not be made available or distributed on school property. Board of Education employees shall not provide information to students about where to obtain contraceptives or abortion services, unless consent is given by the parent or guardian to provide such information.

D. **HEALTH LIVING EDUCATION**
   The Cleveland County Schools Healthful Living Education program will clearly articulate, through qualified teachers and other appropriate personnel, using directive teaching methods, a curriculum that is abstinence-based, family-centered, and age-appropriate. The curriculum will encourage parental involvement, include factual and accurate information, will develop critical thinking skills, and will motivate students to make healthy and responsible choices.

Legal References: G.S. 115C art. 9; 115C-36, -81.25, -81.30; *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, State Board of Education Policy EXCP-000; State Board of Education Policy SCOS-007

Adopted: July 23, 2018

Replaces: Board policy 3370, Comprehensive Health Education Program, 3510, Healthful Living Education, and 3520, Drug and Alcohol Education