

Addressing Parent Concerns about Family Life Curriculum in Elementary School

District Procedure:

1. Parent/Caregiver should be provided the opportunity to review family life materials during a phone or in-person meeting with the classroom teacher. The HCPS procedures listed below should be followed for parent requests of family life curriculum review:
 - a. Parent/Caregiver contacts teacher to request a phone or in person meeting to discuss concerns and review curricular materials
 - b. A phone or in person meeting will be scheduled to discuss concerns and review curricular materials
 - c. If appropriate, Parent or Caregiver provides a written request to the teacher to opt child out of individual lessons or entirety of the unit within three days of the parent meeting. Students not participating in the unit will be provided with appropriate alternative health education assignments.
 - d. If additional questions or concerns remain after the above steps, parent/caregivers can email AskHCPS.org or call at 410-809-6193 so the question can be directed to the appropriate individual or specific office.
2. Curricular materials should not be sent home for independent review
 - a. Exception - YouTube videos from the curriculum can be shared with parents after the parent/teacher meeting (for parents to review on their own time)
 - i. During the meeting, teachers should share how the videos are used to provide context prior to the parent viewing the video

Key Points to Consider When Addressing Parents About Family Life Unit:

Building Parent Support for the Teacher/Parent Partnership:

1. Focus on building the relationship with the parent as a priority during the meeting
2. Emphasize your appreciation for the parent being invested in their child's education and taking the time to meet with you
3. Validate the parent's concerns
4. Highlight positive aspects about their child throughout the meeting
5. Share the goal of working with the parent to support their child in your classroom

Consideration:

1. Consider showing the parent the unit pacing guide as you begin the meeting
2. Allow the parent to share any concerns they have about the topics within the pacing guide and use that to drive the conversation during the meeting
3. The parents are welcome to see all materials within the curriculum, but it may not be necessary to review every lesson
 - a. Allow the parent to decide what they would like to review within the curriculum

Effective talking points:

1. The parent is the primary educator of their child, our role is to supplement the education they provide at home through sharing facts about family life topics for effective communication, healthy decision making, and overall well-being for our students
2. Family life education protects the health and well-being of young people now and into the future
3. Our goal is to partner with parents to ensure students learn about their family's values at home and medically accurate knowledge about family life topics from a trained teacher at school
4. The lessons we use in HCPS comply with district, state, and national requirements for health education. I'd be happy to share them with you for review.
 - a. The lessons were developed by health education curriculum writers, then vetted through our family life committee and the HCPS general curriculum committee for approval