

School Year 2020-2021

Dear Elementary School Parent:

The Rockdale County Public Schools (RCPS) strives to continue to help students stay physically and emotionally healthy during remote/virtual learning. As required by the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Mandate for Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention Education, RCPS Health Teachers will teach instruction in the areas of human growth and development, adolescent sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual abuse, assault, and exploitation prevention. The curriculum will present a strong program to students that abstaining from sex until marriage is the only sure way to avoid AIDS. The program will assist students in coping with social and peer pressures they face today. This will be done through the development of skills they can use in saying “no” to behaviors in which they do not wish to engage. These lessons are designed to be developmentally appropriate for the respective grade levels. This permission does not extend to younger students. Therefore, it is imperative that an adult is able to minimize and eliminate the risk of your students engaging in this instruction.

Growth and development are important and essential considerations in providing meaningful experiences for our young people. All pertinent concepts are presented in a logical, sequential manner beginning in kindergarten. As of August 2018, the Georgia Mandate for Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention requires students enrolled in grades K-9 to annually receive age appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education. RCPS utilizes Kindergarten students begin to associate that creatures of the same kind produce others of the same kind, middle school students are introduced to the correct anatomical terminology while identifying the physical and emotional differences between males and females, and high school students have experiences that will prepare them for parenting.

In addition, RCPS utilizes the *Think First & Stay Safe* curriculum in grades PreK-5. This child safety curriculum is research-based and has been scientifically evaluated and proven to help children stay safe. The *Think First & Stay Safe* program teaches students the importance of treating themselves and one another with kindness and respect. Through developmentally appropriate lesson plans, students learn about healthy relationship and personal boundaries. These interactive lessons allow children to better recognize appropriate vs inappropriate behaviors and use their critical thinking skills to make safe and healthy choices. Students whose parents support such education are much less likely to be bullied, abused or otherwise mistreated. The program provides a balanced perspective and keeps students engaged in learning vital safety strategies. Students are continually reassured that most people are kind and safe and can be counted upon, should the need for help arise. They learn to identify trusted adults in their lives and are encouraged to reach out and speak up when needed. To familiarize you with *Think First & Stay Safe*, please visit the program website: <https://childluresprevention.com/grades-prek-6/>.

What follows is a summary of the objectives to be addressed in the fifth grade growth and development unit of the Health Curriculum. The *Always Changing* instructional materials may be reviewed at <https://www.pgschoolprograms.com/Parents>. Additional information regarding Senate Bill 401 is also available at: <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20172018/SB/401>.

Parent permission is required for your student to take part in this important unit.

1. Students will identify differences in the physical characteristics found among their peers.
2. Students will identify the role of the endocrine glands in puberty.
3. Students will describe the physiological and psychological changes that occur during puberty.
4. Students will describe the need for special hygiene measures during puberty.

Additionally, HIV/AIDS instruction is offered in alignment to the Center for Disease Control’s Health Curriculum Analysis Tool. The purpose is for students to identify that HIV/AIDS cannot be contracted from casual contact with an infected person. This brief overview of HIV/AIDS is delivered during one lesson using Discovery Education’s *HIV and AIDS: Staying Safe* documentary. **Additional parent permission is required for your student to participate in this instruction.**

The instructional materials used in the unit may be reviewed using the link above or by contacting your child’s teacher or counselor to make an appointment. For details about our school system’s human sexuality program, contact Dr. Denise Richardson in Curriculum Services at 770-860-4271.

The elementary Georgia Performance Standards may also be viewed online at <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Standards/Pages/BrowseStandards/HealthEd.aspx>. Please be assured that the information will be presented in a prudent and tasteful fashion.

I encourage your support in meeting the needs of all our students. For your own child, I ask that you provide your consent for his/her participation in the growth and development unit. Please indicate your preference for your child’s participation in this class on the form below, sign the form, and return it to your child’s teacher. If you choose not to consent to participate, please contact your child’s teacher to develop an alternate plan of instruction that he/she can receive at school or at home.

Thank you for your interest in your child’s education and your support of the Rockdale County Public Schools.

Sincerely,



Dr. Terry O. Oatts
Superintendent

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I understand my student will receive remote/virtual instruction in the areas of human growth and development, adolescent sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases, and sexual abuse, assault, and exploitation prevention.

BY SIGNING BELOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE RISKS AND RELEASE AND WAIVE, AND FURTHER AGREE TO INDEMNIFY, HOLD HARMLESS, OR REIMBURSE THE ROCKDALE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE ROCKDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND ITS SCHOOLS, EMPLOYEES, AND AGENTS FROM AND AGAINST ANY CLAIM WHICH I, ANY OTHER PARENT OR GUARDIAN, ANY SIBLING, THE STUDENT, OR ANY OTHER PERSON, FIRM, OR CORPORATION MAY HAVE OR CLAIM TO HAVE, KNOWN OR UNKNOWN, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, FROM ANY LOSSES, DAMAGES, OR INJURIES ARISING OUT OF, DURING, OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN A REMOTE/VIRTUAL LESSON

_____ I do give consent for my child to participate in the growth and development unit, including lessons from *Think First & Stay Safe*.

_____ I do not give consent for my child to participate in the growth and development unit or *Think First & Stay Safe*.

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(Date)

(Student's Name)