

Dear Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Families,

Welcome back to the new school year! Thank you for joining us at HWDSB as we help all students achieve their full potential.

You may know that Ontario's school boards are implementing the Ministry of Education's revised Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum this year. The revised curriculum replaces the 1998 version.

The revised curriculum focuses on the foundations of living a healthy and active life. This includes teaching about human development and sexual health. We know that this can be a sensitive topic, and we know that some parents have concerns. We want to share how families can learn more and ask questions.

Teaching about Human Development and Sexual Health is not new in Ontario school boards. The revised HPE curriculum reflects the realities that today's students face regarding their health, safety and well-being. It contains new material related to important issues – healthy relationships, consent, mental health, online safety and the risks of sexting – and is more inclusive of Ontario's diverse population.

HWDSB is preparing its staff to deliver the revised curriculum, with the understanding that this can be a sensitive topic for some families. We want to ensure that our delivery of the revised curriculum will be done in a thoughtful way, with the understanding of our parent community.

We want parents to be well-informed about what their children will learn. For this reason, we are holding three Information Sessions on the revised Health and Physical Education curriculum. This is an opportunity for parents to ask questions, have their questions addressed and learn more about the curriculum.

Please feel free to attend any of the information sessions below:

Wednesday, November 4. Dr. Davey Elementary 99 Ferguson Ave. N., Hamilton from 3:30 – 5 p.m.
Thursday, November 5. Saltfleet Secondary 108 Highland Rd. W., Stoney Creek from 7 – 9 p.m.
Tuesday, November 10. Sir Allan MacNab Secondary 145 Magnolia Dr., Hamilton from 7 – 9 p.m.

We know that some parents will want to learn more about the revised HPE curriculum. The Ministry of Education has prepared parent materials in multiple languages. Some of the key resources being provided include:

- Copies of the elementary and secondary Health and Physical Education curriculum
- Parent Guides for Health and Physical Education
- Grade by Grade Overviews for Parents of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum
- Health and Physical Education Quick Facts for Parents

These are online at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html> (for an elementary focus) and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health.html> (for a secondary focus).

In addition, parents with questions may find answers in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of the HWDSB web page devoted to HPE. This is at <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/elementary/programs/healthphys-ed-curriculum/>.

All HWDSB schools will send parent letters home at each grade level at least one month before teachers cover sexual health in the curriculum.



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Parents with concerns about classroom lessons or learning are welcome to discuss these with the teacher or school principal. Our staff will strive to find a resolution on a case-by-case basis.

We thank our parents for their on-going input, and for everyone's interest in this important topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manny Figueiredo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Manny Figueiredo
Director of Education