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ALABAMA LAW
(Regular Session, 1992)

Act No. 92-590 S. 72-Senators Mitchell, Waggoner,
Amari, Lipscomb, Preuitt, Bolling,
Denton, Dial, Barron, Dixon, Owens,
Little, Hale, Windom, Ghee, Bailey,
Foshee, Smith (J), Mitchem and Ellis

AN ACT

To require public schools in Alabama to emphasize responsible sexual behavior and prevention of illegal drug use in those programs and curriculum that include instruction on such subjects; to specify the minimum contents to be included in that instruction; and to outline conduct that is improper or unlawful for school-age children.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of Alabama:

Section 1. (a) The Legislature finds that:

(1) Pregnancy and childbirth among unmarried adolescents, particularly young adolescents, often results in severe adverse health, social, and economic consequences, including: a higher percentage of pregnancy and childbirth complications; a higher incidence of low birth weight babies; a higher frequency of developmental disabilities; higher infant mortality and morbidity; a decreased likelihood of completing school; a greater likelihood that an adolescent marriage will end in divorce; and higher risks of unemployment and welfare dependency.

(2) Drug and alcohol abuse diminish the strength and vitality of the young people of our nation and state; an increasing number of substances, both legal and illegal, are being abused by increasing numbers of school children, even at the grade school level; abuse of any substance causes human behavior that influences many forces, including school, family, church, community, media, and peer groups. Prevention and early intervention in such behavior requires cooperation and coordination involving strategies designed to respond to carefully defined problems in which the education system of the state can play an important role.

(b) The purposes of this act are:

(1) To find effective means, within the context of the school environment, of reaching adolescents before they become sexually active in order to maximize the guidance and support available to adolescents from teachers, parents, and other family members, and to promote self discipline and other prudent approaches to the problem of premarital sexual relations of adolescents, including adolescent pregnancy.

(2) To encourage the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse among children in the public schools; to stimulate the development of improved approaches to the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse; to demonstrate the use of such approaches in model educational programs and to evaluate the effectiveness thereof; to disseminate successful approaches and significant information for use in educational programs throughout the public schools; and to provide training programs for school administrators, teachers, and counselors.

Section 2. (a) Any program or curriculum in the public schools in Alabama that includes sex education or the human reproductive process shall, as a minimum, include and emphasize the following:

(1) Abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only completely effective protection against unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) when transmitted sexually.

(2) Abstinence from sexual intercourse outside of lawful marriage is the expected social standard for unmarried school-age persons.

(b) Course materials and instruction that relate to sexual education or sexually transmitted diseases should be age-appropriate.

(c) Course materials and instruction that relate to sexual education or sexually transmitted diseases should include all of the following elements.

(1) An emphasis on sexual abstinence as the only completely reliable method of avoiding unwanted teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

(2) an emphasis on the importance of self-control and ethical conduct pertaining to sexual behavior.

(3) Statistics based on the latest medical information that indicate the degree of reliability and unreliability of various forms of contraception, while also emphasizing the increase in protection against sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS infection, which is afforded by the use of various contraceptive measures.

(4) Information concerning the laws relating to the financial responsibilities associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing.

(5) Information concerning the laws prohibiting sexual abuse, the need to report such abuse, and the legal options available to victims of sexual abuse.

(6) Information on how to cope with and rebuff unwanted physical and verbal sexual exploitation by other persons.

(7) Psychologically sound methods of resisting unwanted peer pressure.

(8) An emphasis, in factual manner and from a public health perspective, that homosexuality is not a lifestyle acceptable to the general public and that homosexual conduct is a criminal offense under the laws of the state.

(9) Comprehensive instruction in parenting skills and responsibilities, including the responsibility to pay child support by non-custodial parents, the penalties for non-payment of child support, and the legal and ethical responsibilities of child care and child rearing.

Section 3. (a) Any program or curriculum in the public schools of Alabama that includes drug education or instructs on the use of drugs or alcohol shall, as a minimum, include the following:

(1) Age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs that address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use and that provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs or alcohol for students in all grades of the public schools from early childhood level through grade 12.

(2) Information conveying to students that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful and is punishable by fines and imprisonment.

(3) Standards of conduct that are applicable to students and employees in all public schools and that clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on school premises, or as part of any activities of the school.

(4) A clear statement that sanctions, consistent with local, state, and federal law, up to and including expulsion or termination of employment and referral for prosecution, will be imposed on students and employees who violate the standards of conduct required by subdivision (3). A description of those sanctions shall be included.

Section 4. Conduct that is illegal under state or federal law, including but not limited to, illegal use or distribution of controlled substances, under-age alcohol use or distribution, sexual intercourse imposed by means of force, or sexual actions which are otherwise illegal, shall not be encouraged or proposed to public school children in such a manner as to indicate that they have a legitimate right to decide or choose illegal conduct.

Section 5. The provisions of this act are severable. If any part of this act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, that declaration shall not affect the part which remains.

Section 6. All laws or parts of laws which conflict with this act are hereby repealed.

Section 7. This act shall become effective immediately upon its passage and approval by the Governor or upon its otherwise becoming a law.

Approved May 21, 1992
Time: 5:54 P.M.

I hereby certify that the forgoing copy of an Act of the Legislature of Alabama has been compared with the enrolled Act and it is a true and correct copy thereof.

Given under my hand this 26th day of May, 1992.

McDOWELL LEE
Secretary of Senate

Signature below indicates that I have read and understand Alabama Law, Act 92-590, and intent to comply.

Signature: _____

Date: _____