

Comprehensive Sex Education Legislative Overview A6512 Nolan / S4844 Metzger

New York State does not require sex education to be taught in schools beyond certain requirements for the prevention of HIV/AIDS. As a result, students encounter a patchwork system, where the quantity and quality of sex education they receive varies widely by school district and in some cases classroom to classroom. This session, legislation was introduced in both chambers in March 2019, by Senator Jen Metzger (S4844) and Assemblymember Cathy Nolan (A6512). Senator Montgomery and Assemblymember Gottfried serve as co-prime sponsors in their respective chambers.

This legislation would amend the state regulation on health education (NY EDUC § 804) to explicitly include comprehensive sexuality education in the definition of health education. Specifically, it would:

- Define comprehensive sexuality education to be medically accurate, culturally responsive, LGBTQ+ inclusive, age-appropriate and aligned with the national sexuality education standards.
- Require sex ed to be taught K-12 in all public and charter schools.
- Require State Department of Education to develop, within one year from the bill's passage, state learning standards for each grade and a sample state curriculum for schools to use—to be made available online.
- Require the Commissioner to implement guidelines, procedures, and a tracking and evaluation system for sex ed teachers.
- Make available pre-service training and professional development.
- Ensures school districts have local control of the curriculum.
- Require all schools to start teaching comprehensive sex ed by the third year after the bill has passed.
- Provide an opt-out provision for parents and caregivers.