

Legal Mandates for Sex Education Advisory Boards (SEAB)

School districts choosing to implement sex education must have the following:

- ✓ **Sex Education Supervisor (SES)** – This is the designated person in a school district who oversees the program of instruction. The designated person must be approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). The form requires that the candidate have at least one of three requirements (physician, nurse &/or educator). It is a more seamless process if the candidate is within the district. The Sex Education Supervisor form can be found on the MDE website at michigan.gov/hived
- ✓ **Advisory Board Chairs** - Two co-chairs must be appointed by the school board to chair the sex education advisory Board, at least one of whom is a parent of a child attending a school operated by the school district. The other co chair is generally school personnel (health teacher, curriculum director, school nurse). Often the co-chair and Sex Education Supervisor are one in the same.
- ✓ **SEAB Membership** – The members must include:
 1. **Parents** of children attending the district's schools (recommend a parent from each building level, special education, alternative education)
 2. **Pupils** in the district's schools (recommend upper classman, male & female)
 3. **Educators** (recommend teacher from each building level, at a minimum a secondary teacher who provides sex education instruction).
 4. **Local clergy** (can be a youth minister)
 5. **Community health professionals** (Recommend a school nurse, provider from the school based health center, or health department. A physician or medical person does meet the mandate, however it is optimal if the person works with children/adolescents or in the area of reproductive health).
- ✓ At least **half of the members must be parents** who have a child attending a school operated by the school district. A **majority of those parent members must not be employed by a school district** (this does not include private schools or higher education).
- ✓ **Meeting Notice** – Members must be given two weeks written or electronic notice of meetings. Because of this requirement, it is suggested to set the meeting calendar at the first meeting, put it in the minutes of the meeting and send an email to all members with the dates and times of the meetings for the year. Best practice and courtesy dictates that a reminder notice be sent prior to each meeting.

- ✓ **Role of the SEAB** – Michigan law requires that school districts choosing to teach sex education must have an advisory board. The SEAB is responsible for the following:
 1. Establish goals and objectives for student knowledge and skills;
 2. Review materials and methods of instruction used and make recommendations to the board of the school district for implementation;
 3. Evaluate, measure and report the attainment of program goals and objectives at least once every two years.
- ✓ **SEAB Membership Selection & Terms** - Michigan law states that the local school board will determine the terms of service, the number of members, and a membership selection process that reasonably reflects the school district population. Generally the Superintendent presents this to the local school board for approval.

Here are some tips (**not legal mandates**) for membership:

1. Terms of service should be long enough (at least two years) so there can be a rotation process of old board members and new board members.
2. It is reasonable that a small district could have the minimum requirement of 8 members (one educator, clergy, student, health professional and 4 parents). A larger district however should increase proportionately.
3. Members represent their constituency as a whole. For example, parents represent the views of the majority of parents in the district, same for students. The role of the clergy is to represent the faith community rather than their own denomination. Health Professionals give input from the public health perspective and teachers provide input on quality of instruction with the materials and methods.
4. For a large board (more than 8 members) it is recommended (not required by law) to consider an application process, interview questions, by-laws and statement of the charge to the SEAB. Samples of these documents including commonly asked questions, SEAB leadership functions and a matrix of participants can be found on the MDE website at michigan.gov/hived
5. It is recommended (not legally mandated) that minutes be taken at each meeting, retain all notices and follow Roberts Rules of Order. It is also useful to establish *Group Operating Norms* and determine in advance how the group will come to consensus.