

Michigan's Health Class Bait-and-Switch: How New Standards Erase Parental Rights on Sex Ed

A. What's Really Hidden in Your Child's Health Class?

As a parent, you operate under the reasonable assumption that you are in control. You believe you have the right to decide when and how your children are introduced to sensitive and deeply personal topics like human sexuality, a right that is foundational to the family. You trust that the school system will partner with you, respecting your values and your authority in raising your children according to your faith.

However, a new proposal from the Michigan State Board of Education threatens to shatter that trust. The board has introduced a new Health Standards Framework that, if adopted, would fundamentally alter what is taught in your child's health class. This framework is not a minor update; it is a radical re-engineering of the curriculum designed to reclassify controversial sex education topics as mandatory "health education."

This seemingly bureaucratic change has profound consequences. It is a deliberate maneuver to strip parents of their legal right to notice and oversight, effectively silencing their voices on what their children learn about sexuality, gender, and relationships. This article will expose the most impactful and surprising changes hidden within this proposal and equip you to understand what is at stake for your family, your faith, and your freedom.

B. Takeaway 1: The Legal Loophole That Sidesteps Parents and the Law

At its core, the State Board of Education's proposal is an attempt to bypass transparency laws by relabeling "sex education" as mandatory "health education." Under current Michigan law, the two subjects are governed by different statutes. Sex Education ([MCL 380.1507](#)) explicitly requires community input and oversight, mandating that clergy, parents, and medical professionals serve on Sex Education Advisory Boards. In contrast, Health Education ([MCL 380.1170](#)) has no such requirement, giving local communities far less control.

This reclassification is a clear usurpation of legislative authority and an affront to good governance. This isn't merely a procedural shortcut; it's a direct contempt of the legislative process and the will of the people's elected representatives, who rejected these very changes in House Bill 6068 during the previous legislative session. By simply changing the name of the subject, the board is attempting to achieve through bureaucratic fiat what they could not achieve through the democratic process. And this usurpation of authority has immediate, devastating consequences for every parent in Michigan.

C. Takeaway 2: The End of "Notice and Opt-Out" for Parents

The most immediate and damaging impact of these new standards is the direct assault on parental rights. Under this new framework, schools are no longer required to notify you before teaching your child about sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity in a required health class.

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The content that was once optional and required your explicit awareness is now being folded into the mandatory curriculum without your consent.

Furthermore, these standards do not protect your fundamental right to opt your child out of this instruction. Because health class is required for all K-12 students, your ability to remove your child from lessons that violate your family's values is eliminated. The consequences could be severe; without a clear opt-out provision, local school districts could potentially initiate truancy charges against parents who refuse to allow their children to attend classes containing this objectionable material.

This approach goes beyond simply overriding parental authority; it actively seeks to undermine it.

The standards require government schools to teach your children how to talk to you about their feelings and sow distrust between parents, teaching children to question if their parents are “safe” and “trusted” adults.

D. Takeaway 3: A Forced Choice Between Faith and Profession

The proposed standards pose a grave religious liberty threat, placing Christians in an impossible position. For pastors, the reclassification of sex education as "health education" effectively removes them from the conversation. The law that ensures clergy, as spiritual shepherds, have a seat on Sex Education Advisory Boards would be rendered irrelevant, silencing a critical voice of moral and spiritual wisdom in the community.

For Christian educators in public schools, the threat is even more direct. The new standards would legally require health teachers to instruct students that gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation "...are distinct components of every child's individual identity." ([8.2.SH Page 32](#)). Teachers would be forced to explain that attraction "can be towards an individual of the same gender and/or different gender(s)," a position that directly contradicts the biblical understanding of identity, marriage, and sexuality.

If adopted, Christian Health Teachers will have to choose between faithfulness to God's Word or keeping their job.

E. Takeaway 4: The Radical Shift from Wellness to Activism

The current health standards in Michigan focus on practical, common-sense knowledge essential for a healthy lifestyle. They cover topics like "hygiene, nutrition, first aid, CPR, drug prevention, and other age-appropriate things." This is the curriculum parents expect and support—one that equips children with life-saving skills and promotes genuine well-being.

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The new proposed framework abandons this practical focus in favor of ideological instruction. It centers on "progressive 'social health', embedding language affirming critical theory, climate activism, 'reproductive health', and queer gender theory." The goal is no longer to teach children how to be healthy, but how to be activists. This shift transforms health class from a place of learning into a platform for indoctrination, where children are taught to become "activists and advocates for 'social issues' that violate their family's sincerely held religious beliefs and scientific truth."

F. Conclusion: Standing in the Gap for Our Children

These proposed standards are not about health; they are a direct assault on family, faith, and freedom, packaged deceitfully under the banner of education. They seek to replace the wisdom of parents with the ideology of the state, silence the moral clarity of the church, and force educators to violate their conscience. As people of faith, we have a biblical duty to stand in the gap and safeguard our children from harm (Matthew 18:5-6).

The question we must now ask ourselves is this: if we do not stand up to protect the hearts and minds of the next generation from this ideological overreach, who will?

G. What You Can Do Now

- **Pray:** Because prayer changes things!
- **Participate:** [Participate in the Public Comment Survey here](#) before October 10. You are not required to answer every question and can skip to the end to write your own thoughts.
- **Email:** Email every member of the State Board of Education (SBE) and respectfully share your concerns.
 1. Mr. Marshall Bullock, II – bullockml@michigan.gov
 2. Ms. Ellen Cogen Lipton – liptone@michigan.gov
 3. Mr. Tom McMillin – mcmillantl@michigan.gov
 4. Dr. Judith Pritchett – pritchettj1@michigan.gov
 5. Dr. Pamela Pugh – pughp@michigan.gov
 6. Dr. Mitchell Robinson – robinsonm36@michigan.gov
 7. Ms. Nikki Snyder – snyderne@michigan.gov
 8. Ms. Tiffany Tilley – tilleyt@michigan.gov
- **Share:** Share this information and encourage others to get engaged too.
- **Speak:** Speak During Public Comment at a State Board of Education meeting. Key upcoming dates are:
 - **October 14, 2025:** Next SBOE Meeting
 - **November 13, 2025:** SBOE Meeting Where Vote Is Expected

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