

Dear Parent or Guardian:

HIV/AIDS is one of the most serious health problems Americans have ever faced. It has no cure, and education is the only way we can help our students protect themselves from the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Our school will begin to teach your child about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The New York State Education Department and the New York City Department of Education have mandated that HIV/AIDS education be provided for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. This mandate states that HIV/AIDS instruction must be age-appropriate and address the nature of the disease, the methods of transmission, and methods of prevention. Lessons focus on developing an understanding of communicable diseases, ways to live a healthy life, and how to identify community resources that can help enhance the quality of life.

State Regulations require that all students attend lessons on the nature of the disease and methods of transmission. However, parents or legal guardians have the right to ask that their child not participate in the lessons dealing with methods of prevention. These lessons are labeled "Prevention." Parents or legal guardians who do make such a request must file with the principal of their child's school a written request that the child not receive such instruction, and assure that the pupil will receive such instruction at home.

An HIV/AIDS advisory council composed of Panel on Educational Policy members, community representatives, parents, teachers, and supervisors has thoroughly reviewed and approved the curriculum and related materials to be used. The curriculum has also been reviewed and approved by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Encourage your child to speak with you about HIV/AIDS. You might wish to point out newspaper or magazine articles about HIV/AIDS issues that you can discuss together. Doing so can help you reinforce your child's awareness of how HIV is transmitted, and present opportunities for you and your child to discuss how abstaining from sexual intercourse and alcohol and other drug use is the most appropriate and effective way for children to protect their health and their futures.

We welcome your involvement at school. For example, parents are needed on high school HIV/AIDS teams and to coordinate PTA presentations about HIV/AIDS. Speak to your child's teacher, parent coordinator, or me about how you can support HIV/AIDS lessons.

If you have any questions regarding this program or would like to review HIV/AIDS curriculum materials, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,
Principal

Please attend a Parent Meeting about the updated HIV/AIDS Curriculum at

Place:

Date:

Time:

HIV/AIDS lessons will be delivered in classrooms from

Date:

through

Date: