

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District

K-12 Human Health, Reproduction, and Sexuality Education Committee's Program Recommendations

May 9, 2001

"Comprehensive health education teaches students to use fundamental health concepts to assess risks, to consider potential consequences, and to make health enhancing decisions." (Guiding Principle from the MA Comprehensive Health Framework, October, 1999)

The K-12 Human Health, Reproduction, and Sexuality Education Committee began its work in January 2000. In addition to giving two reports to the school committee, the K-12 curriculum committee has also held two public forums (5/23/00 & 1/23/01) to share its draft recommendations and solicit feedback from the Hamilton and Wenham communities. An April 30, 2001, press release from the Curriculum Director explained how the committee processed the feedback it received. It is with great pride that our K-12 curriculum committee now presents these final recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools.

In addition to reviewing the state's Comprehensive Health Framework (approved by the Board of Education in February 2000) and other districts' curricula, the committee reviewed a variety of literature and research on the topic. The committee decided to use the state's learning standards as a framework for its work and report. Therefore, this report is organized K-12 by the various strands of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework (Growth and Development, Reproduction and Sexuality, Family Life, Interpersonal Relations, Disease Prevention and Control). The numbered and bolded subheadings are the state's learning standards for each grade level and strand. Under each standard, we have briefly described our current program's strengths or inadequacies in meeting the particular standard, and where needed we have made recommendations. The state's health standards are not mandatory; they are suggested guidelines based on a thorough review of best practice research by a variety of professionals in the health field. Our K-12 curriculum committee believes that these guidelines provide a prudent framework for making recommendations that would strengthen our current program to better meet the health needs of all our students while also being sensitive to different family values.

If the recommendations are approved, as we hope they will be, staff training will be provided where needed and new programs will be piloted and implemented in the following school year. New curricula will be phased in over the next several years so that students will not miss any part of our new program. A follow up community forum/report is tentatively planned for the spring of 2002.

The following committee members, to whom we owe a debt of gratitude, served on the respective grade level subcommittees:

Elementary School/Grades K-5:

Beth Blanchard (kindergarten teacher), **Molly Brandt** (4th grade teacher), and **Sue Cooke** (elementary school principal), **Paula Gesmundo** (elementary parent and Health Advisory Council member), **Rene LaForce MacDonald** (elementary parent), and **Dr. Michael Woods** (elementary and middle school parent, pediatrician, and Health Advisory Council member).

Middle School/Grades 6-8:

Joanne Baker, RN, LCCE (Winthrop parent), **Karen Godfrey** (middle school Life Skills teacher and Health Advisory Council member), **Dr. Rebecca O'Brien** (Winthrop parent, pediatrician/adolescent medicine specialist), **Denise Scarpa**, BS, RN (middle school parent), and **Dr. Michael Woods** (middle school parent, pediatrician, and Health Advisory Council member).

High School/Grades 9-12:

Jean Pietrantonio, MS, RN (high school and middle school nurse), Cliff Mello (high school Health Science Department Chair and teacher), Gordon Anaple (community representative and Health Advisory Council member), Dr. John Abramson (district physician and Health Advisory Council member), and Ann Butterworth (high school parent).

Committee Chairpersons: Jean Jones, K-12 Health Coordinator
Alec Wyeth, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Students will learn the basic characteristics of physical growth and development, including body functions and systems throughout the life cycle, and will acquire skills to promote and maintain positive growth and development. (MA Comprehensive Health Framework, October, 1999)

Grades K-5 Body Systems: Through the study of body systems students will

1.1 Name the external and internal parts of the body and the body systems (nervous, muscular, skeletal, circulatory, respiratory, endocrine, and excretory systems). [Note: the reproductive system is included in the Reproduction and Sexuality strand.]

• ***Current Program***

Body systems are taught as complete units with the exception of the nervous system and reproductive systems:

Grade K: Senses

Grade 1: Introduction To Human Body Systems

Grade 2: Hearing/Seeing, Eye and Ear

Grade 3: Bones and Muscles, Skeletal System

Grade 4: Digestive System

Grade 5: Circulatory and Respiratory Systems

Kids and Co.- Personal Safety Program

• ***Recommendation***

We recommend that the nervous system be taught at each grade level as it relates to all other body systems. We also recommend that the names of correct anatomical terms (penis, vagina, buttocks, breasts) be used as part of K-5 Kids and Co. curriculum. This language will supplement the language currently used -- "private body parts covered by a bathing suit."

1.2 Identify behaviors and environmental factors that influence functioning of body systems.

• ***Current Program***

We have identified behaviors and environmental factors as addressed in Wellness standard 4.4. The elementary curriculum also addresses the impact at risk behaviors have on other body systems. For example, during the grade 3 bones and muscles unit, the importance of wearing a bike helmet is stressed.

• ***Recommendation***

Continue with present program.

1.3 Identify appropriate accommodations and aids for people with physical disabilities.

• ***Current Program***

Certain physical disabilities are related to the body systems taught at the specific grade levels. For example, blindness is addressed as part of the eye unit in grade 2, and asthma is addressed as part of the respiratory system unit in grade 5.

- **Recommendation**

The committee recommends we continue with the present program and that issues of physical disabilities, including accommodations, be identified and addressed at each grade level and taught in relation to the appropriate body systems.

Grades 6-8 Body Systems:

1.6 Identify the stages of the human life cycle (from prenatal through adulthood).

- **Current Program**

Stages of the human life cycle are not currently addressed within the current grades 6-8 curriculum.

- **Recommendation**

Reintroduce concepts of human life cycle begun in standard 4.1 (grade 5) and expand into prenatal development and maturation by the end of grade 8 within the Life Sciences curriculum.

1.7 Explain the function of human body systems and how body systems work together.

- **Current Program**

Some body systems, i.e., digestive, circulatory, and skeletal, in that order, are currently addressed in the science curriculum at grade 7 as time allows. Integration of body systems is not currently addressed.

- **Recommendation**

Students need to have a thorough knowledge of all body parts and systems in order to be able to care for themselves in a healthy manner. We recommend that the study of all body systems be incorporated into the middle school science curriculum, including further investigation of the endocrine, exocrine, and nervous systems.

1.8 Describe the influence of health habits on growth and development.

- **Current Program**

The Life Skills, Physical Education, Science, and Adolescent Issues for Middle Schoolers (AIMS) curricula all provide content in this area. Nutrition, exercise, tobacco, alcohol and other drug use, peer pressure, including media influences, and refusal skills are aspects addressed in curricula.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

1.9 Apply skills that increase immediate peak functioning of body systems (vigorous exercise, eating nutritious foods, adequate rest)

- **Current Program**

The Life Skills, Physical Education, and Science curricula provide content in this area.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

Grades 9-12 Body Systems:

1.11 Describe the impact of behavior and environment on failure of body systems (nervous, muscular, skeletal, circulatory, respiratory, endocrine, and excretory systems).

- **Current Program**

This standard is currently presented in many high school classes, including, Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Psychology, and Senior Decisions. This content is also discussed in Health Science, Child Development, and Life Management classes.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

Grades K-5 Life Cycle: Through the study of the life cycle students will

1.4 Distinguish the characteristics of living and non-living organisms.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in our K-5 science curriculum.

- **Recommendation**

Continue with present curriculum.

1.5 List the stages in the basic growth process of living organisms (fertilization, growth, reproduction, and death).

- **Current Program**

Stages in the basic growth process are addressed in our K-5 life science curriculum with the exceptions of fertilization and reproduction.

- **Recommendation**

In order to complete students' understanding of the life cycle, we recommend that each grade level include the stages of fertilization and reproduction. The following life science units are introduced: grade K: frogs and birds; grade 1: plants; grade 2: trees and organisms in the tide pool; grade 3: insects and mammals; grade 4: plants; and grade 5: whales.

Grades 6-8 Life Cycle:

1.10 Define genes and the concept of heredity.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in grades 7 and 8 science curricula.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

Grades 9-12 Life Cycle:

1.12 Describe the growth patterns and body changes within human beings throughout the life cycle (from prenatal through late adulthood), including critical periods in growth and development.

- **Current Program**

Addressed in Child Development, Biology, Health Sciences, and Nutrition and Fitness.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

1.13 Describe how both heredity (including congenital factors) and the environment influence growth and development.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Biology, Child Development, and Environmental Sciences, briefly addressed in Anatomy and Physiology, and very briefly in Nutrition and Fitness class.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

REPRODUCTION AND SEXUALITY

Students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to make effective personal decisions that promote their emotional, sexual, and reproductive health. (MA Comprehensive Health Framework, October, 1999)

Grades K-5 Development: Through the study of development, students will

4.1 Identify the components, functions, and processes of the reproductive system.

- **Current Program**

There is no curriculum at the elementary level that addresses this standard.

- **Recommendation**

Grade 5 students will be introduced to the human reproductive system in a series of two to three presentations taught by physicians or health professionals in same-gender classes. (See standard 4.2 regarding puberty.)

4.2 Identify the physical changes as related to the reproductive system during puberty.

- **Current Program**

Grade 5 students receive an overview of growth and development, which focuses on changes to one's body during puberty. It consists of a 2-hour presentation, with boys and girls in separate classes, by local physicians or health professionals and is followed by a question and answer period.

- **Recommendation**

Because puberty is now occurring at an earlier age, the committee recommends that there be two introductory presentations at grade 4, taught by physicians and health professionals. They would be held in same-gender classes and be developmentally appropriate for girls and boys. The grade 5 presentations will review the information presented in grade 4 and relate it to the reproductive system. All presentations will continue to be held in same-gender classes and be developmentally appropriate for girls and boys.

4.3 Define sexual orientation using the correct terminology (such as heterosexual, and gay and lesbian).

- **Current Program**

If students use any of these terms in a derogatory manner, the issue is addressed immediately in a manner consistent with our present code of conduct.

- **Recommendation**

We recognize the diversity of families and interpersonal relationships that children do and will encounter throughout their lives. We expect that our children will acknowledge and understand that many family structures and interpersonal relationships occur in our society. We recommend that we develop guidelines for K-5 teachers to refer to in class discussions and when issues of family structures and relationships are raised. We plan to continue to approach gay, lesbian, and homosexual issues in terms of basic human rights and respect for individuals regardless of their differences. While we will not formally introduce sexual orientation using the correct terminology (heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, and gay) as part of our curriculum, teachers will be prepared to respond to individual students' questions and to inappropriate use of such terminology.

Grades 6-8 Development:

4.5 Recognize the emotional and physical changes as related to the reproductive system during puberty.

- **Current Program**

Emotional and physical changes of puberty and the reproductive system are discussed during classes that occur in the current Life Skills curriculum: personal health (grooming and hygiene, self image, the influence of advertising on body image) in grade 6; individual growth and development (including techniques for handling anger) and sexual harassment in grade 7; peer pressure, sexual harassment/dating violence, HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted infections, and adolescent stress management are discussed in grade 8. In the grade 7 science curriculum, the process of reproduction as a characteristic of living things is included; however, in the current middle school curriculum there is no specific discussion of the biology of human reproduction.

- **Recommendation**

The current Life Skills and Health Sciences curriculum covers standard 4.5 embedded within several classes. Further review of the biology of puberty and the reproduction system will need to be added to the current curriculum. The emotional aspects of puberty will also be further developed. Students in grade 6 will review reproductive anatomy and routine physiologic processes, including ovulation and spermatogenesis, and introduce the physiology of conception, defining such terms as erection and ejaculation. By the end of grade 8, students should have a basic knowledge of the human male and female reproductive systems: including anatomy (with correct terminology) and physiology (pubertal changes, spermatogenesis, menstruation, ovulation, conception). Abstinence will continue to be stressed as the only 100% reliable method of pregnancy prevention and for most STI prevention.

Grades 9-12 Development:

4.11 Identify the stages of the male and female reproductive systems over the life cycle.

- **Current Program**

The anatomy and physiology of the male and female reproductive systems are currently being taught in the ninth grade Health Science classes. The physiology of the production of all reproductive fluids is explained as well as the union of sperm and ovum. The female cycle is explained as well as the time of ovulation and the potential for pregnancy. Emotional aspects of the monthly cycle are discussed, addressing potential mood changes as hormonal levels change.

- **Recommendation**

We recommend that we incorporate a video explaining female and male anatomy and physiology in grade 9 Health Science classes. We will review signs and symptoms of pregnancy. We recommend that this information be reviewed and assessed at the sophomore, junior, and senior levels to assure retention. Physiologic changes of menopause are to be included in grade 11 Health Science classes.

4.12 List the signs of pregnancy.

- **Current Program**

Signs of pregnancy are included in Child Development curriculum (an elective for juniors and seniors).

- **Recommendation**

Include the material under standard 4.11 in the presentation to all grade 9 students in Health Science classes.

4.13 Describe the effectiveness and consequences of various pregnancy, HIV, and STI prevention methods, including abstinence.

- **Current Program**

Abstinence is the only 100% reliable method for the prevention of pregnancy and most STI's. A discussion of HIV as an STI is included in 9th grade Health Science classes. Birth control is not currently included in the curriculum but is discussed on an ad hoc basis.

- **Recommendation**

Abstinence from sexual intercourse will continue to be taught as the only 100% effective way to prevent pregnancy and most STI's. In Grade 9 information about prevention of disease and pregnancy will be presented. This will include

1. the physical and emotional risks and consequences of non-intercourse sexual activity, including oral sex and masturbation,
2. the risk of acquiring STI's in non-intercourse sexual activity including HIV, herpes, gonorrhea, chlamydia, as well as other infections,
3. the emotional risks and consequences of sexual intercourse
4. the various methods of birth control including abstinence, condoms, birth control pills, IUD, Diaphragm, Depo-provera injection, sympto-thermal method, vaginal sponge and spermicides, "morning after pills." The health risks of each method will be discussed.
5. the risk of pregnancy due to failure to use contraception, failure rates of each of the above contraceptive methods (including the actual rates of improper usage and omission), and sexual assault (increased in the context of drug and/or alcohol use), and
6. the risk of acquiring STI's during intercourse (see the above list) and the methods of protection from disease (monogamous relationship, condom use, avoiding risky sexual practices such as anal intercourse).

Acknowledging changing needs and maturity levels, this material will be reviewed in grades 10 and 11 Health Science classes and in grade 12 Senior Decisions. Refusal skills will continue to be developed and emphasized (building on the grades 6-8 curriculum) at the Grade 9 level through the use of instructional material, role playing and appropriate theatrical performances (when available). In each of the following years, refusal skills will be re-addressed with respect to increasing maturity, increasing pressure to engage in sexual activity, and the increasing prevalence of sexual activity at each subsequent grade level.

4.14 Identify possible determinants of sexual orientation and analyze the weight of each in light of available research.

- **Current Program**

Sexual orientation is addressed in grades 9, 10, and 11 Health Science class and in grade 12 Senior Decisions. Classes include discussion of heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual orientations.

- **Recommendation**

Because of the lack of research consensus regarding the determinants of sexual orientation, we will not identify possible determinants. We do not and will not endorse any particular lifestyle or orientation, but resources are available for supporting all students' needs. We will recognize the diversity of families and

interpersonal relationships that students do and will encounter throughout their lives. We will continue to approach alternative lifestyle issues in terms of respect for individuals regardless of their differences and maintaining a safe environment for all students throughout their high school experience. We also will use language that is respectful and inclusive of all students regardless of their sexual orientation.

Grades K-5 Wellness:

4.4 Recognize that diet, exercise, rest, and avoidance of risk behaviors such as smoking, drinking, and other substance use contribute to the health of a mother and fetus.

- ***Current Program***

These issues are addressed in our K-5 Physical Education classes, with the exception of the relationship between these behaviors and the mother and fetus. Smoking is addressed in the respiratory system unit in grade 5. The risks of smoking, drinking, and other substance abuse are introduced in the Respect and Responsibility curriculum in grades 4 and 5.

- ***Recommendation***

The committee recommends that we continue with our present program. In addition, we recommend that the existing nutrition units in grades 2 and 4 address body image, diet, and exercise. The grade 5 introductions to reproduction should present information that the mother's health choices, such as smoking, have a direct impact on the fetus.

Grades 6-8 Wellness:

4.6 Explain the benefits of abstinence, postponing sexual behavior, and setting limits on sexual behavior.

- ***Current Program***

The current middle school Life Skills and Health Science curriculum addresses the benefits of abstinence, and postponing sexual behavior within many of the current classes: grade 6, self-image and influence of advertising on body image; grade 7, sexual harassment; and grade 8, peer pressure, sexual harassment/dating violence, and HIV/AIDS education.

- ***Recommendation***

We support the current curriculum and support ongoing review of well-evaluated curricula particularly those that emphasize abstinence, the emotional aspects of sexual feelings, refusal skills, parental involvement, and the negative consequences of early sexual behavior. The entire committee clearly supports abstinence as the most appropriate message for all of our students. The effects of media influences on peer norms will be discussed. Recent reports of students at this age engaging in sexual behaviors without understanding the consequences and risks highlight the need to discuss these areas in detail at the 8th grade level.

4.7 Describe short and long term consequences of sexuality-related risk behaviors and identify barriers and supports for making health-enhancing decisions.

- ***Current Program***

Short and long-term consequences of sexuality-related risk behaviors and barriers such as peer pressure and the media are addressed in the current Life Skills and Health Sciences curriculum (see standards 4.6, 4.8, and 4.9). Students are supported in making health-enhancing decisions by directing them to a variety of resources, including their parents, adjustment counselors, and the school nurse, as well as members of the teaching staff, community, and clergy.

- **Recommendation**

The committee seeks to strengthen the parents' role as their child's primary sexuality educators. We recommend continuing to offer support, literature, and educational programs for students and parents as new topics are incorporated into the curriculum.

4.8 Describe the behaviors and methods for pregnancy prevention, including abstinence.

- **Current Program**

The current curriculum is abstinence based. While condoms are discussed as prevention for sexually acquired infections including HIV/AIDS, pregnancy prevention is not currently taught in the middle school except as may come up on an ad hoc basis. Students in grade 8 are provided with support service numbers.

- **Recommendation**

As indicated by the Hamilton-Wenham Youth Risk Behavior Survey (1999), by January of grade 9, 30.4% of males and 17.1% of females have engaged in sexual intercourse at least once. We recommend that students in the middle school continue to receive a strong abstinence message as the most effective method for pregnancy and most STI prevention. The negative consequences of early sexual behavior will continue to be emphasized (see strand 4.6). General categories of contraception, including abstinence, barrier, and chemical methods, including their failure rates, will be included in the grade 8 curricula.

4.9 Define the types of sexually transmitted infections (STI's), including HIV/AIDS, and how they are prevented.

- **Current Program**

STI's, particularly HIV/AIDS, are taught, and condom use is discussed as a means for helping to prevent infections. Abstinence is presented as the best way to prevent most STI's.

- **Recommendation**

By the end of grade 8, students will be more aware of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and their long-term risks to health and fertility. Students need consistent information that all types of sexual behaviors place them at a higher risk for STI's (e.g., oral sex may be incorrectly perceived as "safe"). Abstinence will continue to be emphasized as the only method to protect oneself from acquiring many STI's. Condoms, for example, do not provide protection against certain STI's such as Human Papilloma Virus (Genital Warts).

4.10 Identify sexual discrimination and harassment.

- **Current Program**

Sexual harassment and discrimination is addressed at all three grade levels in the Life Skills and Health Science curriculum in the violence prevention units. Current events and media events are also discussed as they arise.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

Grades 9-12 Wellness:

4.15 Explain the importance of examination of both genders for HIV and STI's before conception and the risks and precautions of delivery when HIV and STI's are present.

- **Current Program**

In our grade 9 Health Science classes and in the Child Development course, we currently teach the issues of HIV and STI's, risks of multiple and casual partners, risks during pregnancy, and transmission during delivery.

- **Recommendation**

We will continue with the current program, and, to assure retention, we recommend that this information be reviewed and tested in the sophomore and junior Health Science classes and in grade 12 Senior Decisions classes.

4.16 Describe proper prenatal care and identify types of birth defects

- **Current Program**

This information is covered in Child Development classes, an elective for grades 11 and 12, reaching 10% of the students.

- **Recommendation**

This information should be presented in grade 9 Health Science classes along with standard 4.13 and revisited in grades 10, 11, and 12. We will continue to present this information in Child Development classes at grades 11 and 12. The importance of seeking prenatal care as soon as pregnancy is known and the risks to the unborn baby of STI's, licit and illicit drugs, smoking, and alcohol will be emphasized.

4.17 Explain the importance of communication and setting limits in a sexual relationship.

- **Current Program**

In grade 9 Health Sciences class we facilitate role plays where students practice assertive behaviors and techniques in various situations including sexual relationships. We also discuss the importance of communication in relationships throughout one's life. This latter topic is also discussed in Child Development (grades 11 and 12) and Senior Decisions (grade 12, all seniors).

- **Recommendation**

We recommend that we continue with the current program and that these issues be revisited during grades 10 and 11 Health Science classes. For example, we should include a session on how student relationships have changed since freshman year, with a focus on sexual pressure and non-sexual dating activities, and how to break up or intervene in a forceful sexually pressured relationship of a friend or fellow student.

4.18 Identify and distinguish among types and degrees of sexual risk (pregnancy, sexual assault, STI's including HIV/AIDS).

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in grade 9 Health Sciences. Birth control is not currently part of the curriculum but is frequently discussed on an ad hoc basis. Sexual assault is addressed as part of the self-defense program in grades 9 and 11 Health Science class.

- **Recommendation**

Abstinence from sexual intercourse will continue to be taught as the only 100% effective way to prevent pregnancy and most STI's. Information about disease and pregnancy prevention through the use of protection/birth control will be presented in grade 9 and reviewed in grades 10 and 11 in Health Science classes and in grade 12 Senior Decisions. The risks of improper usage and failure rates of each method will be presented at each grade level in grades 9, 10, and 11 Health Science classes and grade 12 Senior Decisions. The emotional consequences of sexual relationships will be discussed.

The risk of conception resulting from failure to use contraception, failure of contraceptive method, or sexual assault will also be discussed. The options available in the situation of unplanned and/or unwanted pregnancy are 1) carry the fetus to term and keep the baby, 2) carry the fetus to term and put the baby up for adoption, or 3) terminate the pregnancy by legal abortion. The emotional, social and physical consequences of each option will be presented. There will also be discussion about the spectrum of ethical opinions regarding each option, and students will be advised to discuss these issues with family members, health professionals, teachers, and clergy.

Refusal skills will be reintroduced and emphasized at grade 9 and reemphasized in grades 10, 11, and 12. Refusal skills are an essential component of sexuality education in the high school curriculum for the preservation of both the emotional and physical well being of the student.

4.19 Evaluate the impact of HIV/AIDS on the community, medical resources, and family.

- **Current Program**

Not currently addressed as a separate topic.

- **Recommendation**

We recommend that the impact of HIV on the community, medical resources, and family be discussed when HIV and STI prevention methods are introduced. Our goal is to have an HIV-positive guest speaker address the impact of HIV / AIDS on the community, medical resources, and family in grade 9 Health Science classes. This standard will be revisited in grades 10 and 11 Health Science classes, and Senior Decisions in grade 12.

4.20 Identify resources available for treatment of reproductive health problems.

- **Current Program**

Students are encouraged to go to their parents and family, school nurse, and / or family doctor. A list of reproductive health care resources is available in the nurse's office.

- **Recommendation**

We recommend that all students be told that a list of reproductive health care resources is available in the nurse's office so that any student can readily access support when needed. Resources representing a spectrum of approaches will be provided:

1. school based
 - nurses
 - teachers
 - guidance counselors, health coordinator, school psychologist, or adjustment counselor
2. community based
 - clergy
 - doctors
 - organizations (e.g., Health Quarters, Catholic Charities)

FAMILY LIFE

Students will gain knowledge about the significance of the family on individuals and society, and will learn skills to support the family, balance work and family life, be an effective parent, and nurture the development of children.

Grades K-5 Functions and Purpose: Through the study of functions and purpose students will

6.1 Describe different types of families, addressing membership and social influences, and the functions of family members.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in our grade 1 Families unit. Also, different types of families are themes addressed in our literature and social studies units in grades K-5.

- **Recommendation**

The committee supports the continuation of the current program. In addition the committee recommends that literature selections be updated to include diverse family structures.

6.2 Describe factors, such as character traits of individuals and life events that can strengthen families.

- ***Current Program***

Character traits of individuals are addressed in the Respect and Responsibility curriculum in grades 4 and 5.

- ***Recommendation***

The committee recommends continuation of the current program.

Grades 6-8 Functions and Purpose:

6.5 Describe how the functions, purposes, and responsibilities of family members change with life events.

- ***Current Program***

These concepts are currently not addressed.

- ***Recommendation***

We recommend these concepts be incorporated into the Life Skills curriculum.

6.6 Explain the family life cycle and recognize that raising a child is one of the most important functions of a family.

- ***Current Program***

These concepts are currently not addressed.

- ***Recommendations***

We recommend these concepts be incorporated into the Life Skills curriculum.

Grades 9-12 Functions and Purpose:

6.9 Explain the functions, purposes, and social significance of family from various historical periods, including modern times.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is currently addressed in electives: Life Management and Child Development. Each class reaches about 10% of the student population. It is also discussed in grade 9 Health Science curriculum and through standard 7.12.

- ***Recommendation***

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

6.10 Identify the traits of a healthy family (such as responsibility, communication, trust, loyalty, respect, commitment, love, affirmation, and self-reliance) and explain the interdependence and independence of family members.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is currently addressed through standard 7.12, in our Healthy Relationships unit in grade 9 Health Science class and in the Life Management elective (reaching about 10% of the student population).

- ***Recommendation***

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

Grades K-5 Supports:

6.3 Identify whom to talk with about family problems and successes.

- ***Current Program***

The K-5 Kids and Co. curriculum identifies trusted adults, especially parents, who can provide support and help.

- ***Recommendation***

The committee recommends continuation of the current program.

Grades 6-8 Supports:

6.7 Describe those one can trust or turn to for help when needed, such as a support system that can include relatives, friends, neighbors, community organizations, and faith-based groups.

- ***Current Program***

Various support systems are discussed in the current Life Skills curriculum and the AIMS (Adolescent Issues for Middle Schoolers) program. See also standard 4.7.

- ***Recommendations***

The committee supports the development of further resources for students and their families. See recommendations in standard 4.7.

Grades 9-12 Supports:

6.11 Identify steps for getting support or help, including identifying resources for families whose members have special health needs.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- ***Recommendation***

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

Grades K-5 Parenting:

6.4 Identify what parents do to provide a safe, healthy environment for their children.

Not addressed by this committee

Grades 6-8 Parenting:

6.8 Describe ways in which relationships among parents and children change during adolescence, and compare peer and parental influences.

- ***Current Program***

Peer and societal influences are discussed extensively in the Life Skills Health Sciences curriculum throughout the middle school years.

- ***Recommendations***

This committee supports the current curriculum. In addition, we recommend the continued development of other methods to foster communication between parents and children, for example, more Dialogue Nights and Life Skills web site development.

Grades 9-12 Parenting:

6.12 Identify the childrearing skills (including emotional maturity to nurture children and knowledge of child development stages) and the financial resources needed for parenting.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- **Recommendation**

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

6.13 Evaluate various types of discipline parents might use with children of different ages.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- **Recommendation**

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

6.14 Describe the consequences of teen parenting from the perspectives of the teen mother, teen father, and the parents of the teens.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- **Recommendation**

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

6.15 Identify desirable character traits (such as love, respectfulness, generosity, kindness, and forgiveness) and describe the development of good character, including the role of parents and family in the moral development of children.

- **Program**

This standard is addressed in the Healthy Relationships unit in grade 9 Health Science class and through standards 7.10 and 7.11. It is also addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

6.16 Describe considerations relevant to becoming a parent (including the various ways of becoming a parent such as foster parenting, adoption, and step parenting).

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- **Recommendation**

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

6.17 Describe parental practices that encourage literacy in young children.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Child Development, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population.

- **Recommendation**

Recommendations for meeting this standard more completely were not considered by this committee.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Students will learn that relationships with others are an integral part of the human life experience and the factors that contribute to healthy interpersonal relationships and will acquire skills to enhance and make many of these relationships more fulfilling through commitment and communication. (MA Comprehensive Health Framework, October, 1999)

Grades K-5 Communication: *Through the study of communication, students will*

7.1 Explain why communication is essential in human relationships and identify people from whom children can learn how to communicate, such as family members, friends, community members, and members of faith-based groups.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in the K-5 Kids and Co. program, K-5 class meetings, and grades 4 and 5 Respect and Responsibility curriculum.

- **Recommendation**

The committee recommends continuation of the current program.

7.2 Apply both verbal and non-verbal communication skills to develop positive relationships and improve the social environment of the school.

- **Current Program**

This standard is also addressed in Kids and Co., K-5 class meetings, and grades 4 and 5 Respect and Responsibility curriculum.

- **Recommendation**

The committee recommends continuation of the current program.

Grades 6-8 Communication:

7.5 Apply attentive listening, feedback, and assertiveness skills to enhance positive interpersonal communication.

- **Current Program**

These issues are addressed in the current Life Skills curriculum and within the AIMS program.

- **Recommendations**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

Grades 9-12 Communication:

7.10 Identify techniques for handling anger and resolving conflicts in the family, friendships, and the workplace, including seeking help from professional and community organizations and faith-based groups.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed through standards 4.17 and 4.20 and in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.11 Contrast the emotional impact on long-term relationships of positive communication (such as active listening, praise, and humor) with negative communication (such as teasing, name calling, bullying).

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class and through standard 4.17.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.12 Describe the influence of the larger social group on individual conduct (such as giving comfort, solving problems, and controlling deviant behavior through enforcing laws and the development of good character in the members of society).

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.13 Explain the importance of communication in setting limits in a sexual relationship.

See standard 4.17 of Reproduction and Sexuality strand.

Grades K-5 Peer Relationships: Through the study of peer relationships, students will

7.3 Describe the concept of friendship and contrast qualities that strengthen or weaken a friendship, including the importance of sound character in interacting with others.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in class meetings, grades 4 and 5 Respect and Responsibility curriculum, and classroom group discussions facilitated by elementary adjustment counselors.

- **Recommendation**

The committee recommends continuation of the current program. In addition, we recommend the Positive Peer Interaction Program be expanded in all K-3 classrooms.

7.4 Describe the concepts of prejudice and discrimination.

- **Current Program**

We have a limited program that addresses such issues as they come up in class meetings, as part of Martin Luther King Day, or as part of an assembly program.

- **Recommendation**

We recommend that a K-5 committee be formed to develop curriculum in which issues of tolerance vs. discrimination will be addressed.

Grades 6-8 Peer Relationships:

7.6 Explain how peer pressure influences choices and apply strategies for managing negative peer pressure and encouraging positive peer pressure.

- **Current program**

This standard is addressed throughout the Life Skills and AIMS curricula in the middle school.

- **Recommendations**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.7 Recognize the positive contribution of character traits (such as tolerance, honesty, self discipline, respectfulness, and kindness) to relationships, which include understanding and respecting individual differences, and the detrimental effect of prejudice (such as prejudice on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, or religion) on individual relationships and society as a whole.

- **Current Program**

Discussed in the Life Skills and Health Science curriculum and in the AIMS program. Prejudice is also addressed in the grade 7 Civics curriculum and the grade 8 Justice Unit.

- **Recommendations**

We support the current curriculum, and will continue to approach alternative lifestyle issues in terms of respect for individual differences.

Grades 9-12 Peer Relationships:

7.14 Explain the purpose of friendship in different stages of the life cycle and describe how friends can support one another in making healthy decisions.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.15 Recognize and identify the concept of friendship without romantic involvement and how friendship may develop into romantic relationships.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

Grades 6-8 Romantic Relationships:

7.8 Describe the purpose of dating and acceptable dating attitudes (such as respect) and appropriate conduct.

- ***Current Program***

Relationships are addressed in the Life Skills and the AIMS curricula at all three grade levels, including units on Sexual Harassment in grades 6-8, a unit on Violence Prevention at grade 7, and Dating Violence in grade 8.

- ***Recommendations***

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.9 Explain the benefits of abstinence, postponing sexual behavior, and setting limits on sexual behavior.

See standard 4.6.

Grades 9-12 Romantic Relationships:

7.16 Explain the importance of responsibility and character traits such as love, respectfulness, generosity, kindness, and forgiveness, in committed relationships.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is addressed in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class and in Child Development and Life Management (electives at grades 9-12).

- ***Recommendation***

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

7.17 Describe commitment in casual and serious relationships.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is addressed in our grade 9 Healthy Relationships unit in Health Science class and in Life Management and Child Development (electives for grades 9-12).

- ***Recommendation***

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Students will learn the signs, symptoms, and treatment of chronic and communicable diseases, and will gain skills related to health promotion, disease prevention, and health maintenance. (MA Comprehensive Health Framework, October, 1999)

Grades K-5 Prevention: *Through the study of prevention, students will*

8.1 Describe how the body fights germs and disease naturally and with medicines and immunization.

- ***Current Program***

Good hygiene is emphasized in all K-5 classrooms. Grade 1 has a specific unit on hygiene.

- **Recommendation**

The committee recommends continuation of the current program. In addition, we plan to utilize all-school assemblies to reinforce these concepts, including "universal precautions."

Grades 6-8 Prevention:

8.5 Identify ways individuals can reduce risk factors related to communicable and chronic diseases.

- **Current Program**

Communicable diseases as they relate to sexuality education are currently addressed in the Life Skills curriculum in grade 8 (HIV education and STI's).

- **Recommendation**

Students should know basic concepts of disease prevention and understand the implications of their own health habits for themselves as well as others in the community. The committee supports the current program and has recommended some additions in regards to STI prevention. These are outlined in standards 4.7-4.9.

8.6 Describe the importance of early detection in preventing the progression of disease.

- **Current Program**

Communicable diseases, including signs, symptoms, and early detection, as they relate to sexuality are addressed in the Life Skills curriculum in grade 8 (HIV education and STI's).

- **Recommendation**

The committee supports the current program with the added information detailed in standard 4.9.

Grades 9-12 Prevention:

8.13 Explain how the immune system functions to prevent and combat disease.

- **Current Program**

This standard is addressed in Anatomy and Physiology, an elective, and Health Science curriculum in grade 9.

- **Recommendation**

We support the current program and make no recommendations.

8.14 Identify positive health behaviors that reduce the risk of disease.

- **Current Program**

This standard is partially addressed in Health Science curriculum in grades 9, 10, and 11 and in grade 12 Senior Decisions.

- **Recommendation**

See standard 4.13.

8.15 Learn how to use effective physical self-examination procedures and at what age they become necessary.

Not addressed by this committee.

8.16 Demonstrate how to discuss procedures and test results with health care providers.

Not addressed by this committee.

Grades K-5 Signs, Causes, and Treatment:

8.2 Identify the common symptoms of illness and recognize that being responsible for individual health means alerting caretakers to any symptoms of illness.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is not addressed in our present program.

- ***Recommendation***

The school nurse will present an annual assembly to the students in each school regarding this standard. In addition, we recommend that non-contagious diseases related to body systems be incorporated into existing life science curriculum (e.g., lung cancer during the respiratory unit).

Grades 6-8 Signs, Causes, and Treatment:

8.7 Explain the need to follow prescribed health care procedures given by parents and health care providers.

- ***Current Program***

These concepts, as they relate to sexuality education, are addressed in the Life Skills curriculum in grade 8 (HIV education and STI's).

- ***Recommendation***

The committee supports the current curriculum with the addition of topics detailed in standard 4.9.

8.8 Describe how to demonstrate safe care and concern toward ill and disabled persons in the family, school and community.

- ***Current Program***

Students in the middle school receive instruction on caring for all in our society through a variety of disciplines, including the Community Service projects embedded within the Life Skills curriculum.

- ***Recommendation***

Not addressed by this committee.

Grades 9-12 Signs, Causes, and Treatment:

8.17 Describe the leading causes of death for different age groups, symptoms of common diseases among youth, the importance of early diagnosis, and the need for active involvement in the treatment and management of disease and chronic health problems.

Not addressed by this committee.

8.18 Analyze the interaction between genetics and disease.

- ***Current Curriculum***

This standard is briefly addressed in Biology, grade 10, and in Anatomy and Physiology, an elective.

- ***Recommendation***

Not addressed by this committee.

Grades K-5 Health Maintenance:

8.3 Apply skills to prevent and control the spread of disease, including those that help promote cleanliness (such as correct hand washing, regular bathing, and washing clothes).

- **Current Program**

Good hygiene is emphasized in all K-5 classrooms. Grade 1 has a specific unit on hygiene.

- **Recommendation**

The committee recommends that teachers continue to remind students of healthy choices in hygiene.

8.4 Identify tooth functions and causes of tooth health and decay, and apply proper dental health skills (such as choosing healthy tooth snacks, brushing and flossing).

Not addressed by this committee.

Grades 6-8 Health Maintenance:

8.9 Discuss how cleanliness and good grooming show consideration for self and others, and ways to promote cleanliness.

- **Current Program**

These concepts are addressed within the Life Skills curriculum in grade 6 in the Growth and Development units.

- **Recommendation**

Not addressed by this committee.

8.10 Describe the relationship between overexposure to the sun and skin cancer.

- **Current Program**

These concepts are addressed in the grade 6 Life Skills curriculum and in the grade 7 Safety and Injury Prevention units.

- **Recommendation**

Not addressed by this committee.

8.11 List the factors contributing to tooth decay, diseases of the mouth, and preventive measures.

- **Current Program**

These concepts are addressed in the Life Skills curriculum in the Nutrition/Fitness units.

- **Recommendation**

Not addressed by this committee.

8.12 Describe the influence that rest has on physical functioning (recovering from fatigue, restoring energy), personal requirements for sleep, and methods for getting adequate sleep.

- **Current Program**

These concepts are addressed in the Life Skills curriculum in the Nutrition/Fitness Units.

- **Recommendation**

Not addressed by this committee.

Grades 9-12 Health Maintenance:

8.19 Explain the prevention and control of common communicable infestations, diseases, and infections.

- ***Current Program***

This standard is addressed in grade 9 Health Science curriculum through standards 4.15 and 4.19. It is also addressed in Life Management, an elective reaching about 10% of the student population, and in grade 10 Biology.

- ***Recommendation***

Implement all recommendations made above.