

## **A Narrative: How a few volunteers approached a school board**

The issue addressed was Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE)

1. Two volunteers came to CPL and asked what they could do about stopping CSE and if we would help them. A CPL board member met with them to craft a 3-minute speech for the public comment period of their school board meeting.

If you've never been to a school board meeting, most have their meetings posted online or at least have their agenda online. It would be a good idea to see how the meeting is run. For most, the public comment section is near the beginning of the meeting and you can leave afterwards. The board members will not make any comments or ask any questions of you. You are simply there to make the board members and public aware of an issue of which you are concerned. The more composed you can be, the better.

Our volunteers were able to find a few neighbors and fellow church members to come to the meeting and stand behind them during the speech. Everyone wearing the same color shirt helps the group to stand out. Most wore red since many had the red "No Xrated Materials in Schools" t-shirts. We also had CPL "ProtectKids" buttons for the people standing with us. One person spoke and another person handed out copies of pictures from the *It's Perfectly Normal* book including a chart showing the different levels of age appropriateness for sex education. The speech should cover:

- a. State that you are concerned parents and grandparents and what you are concerned about.
  - b. State action points you would like the school board and superintendent to take, i.e., contact their legislators, vote against CSE mandate, keep local control. State that you do not want CSE in our schools, stick to basic biology, protect children from harm.
  - c. Video the 3-minute public comment.
2. After the school board meeting, we planned to call the superintendent; however, the next day the assistant superintendent's assistant called our speaker to find out more of what she wanted them to do. They had 3 people on a conference call with our speaker. The director of curriculum and 2 others. They told her she could come in and take a look at all of the

materials the school district uses for sex education. She made an appointment so the 3 of us, could go together.

3. The appointment was with the director of curriculum. We studied the CSE analysis tool to identify the 15 harmful elements of CSE before the meeting. We wrote down page numbers and quotes from the text or videos with elements that were listed in the CSE analysis tool.

We were given a list that had the names of the textbooks and the DVDs that they show to the high school students. It is a semester Health class that they take one time in the 4 years. In 8th grade, they are given the decision of whether to take 2 different types of sex education when they get to high school. One addresses abstinence until marriage and the other doesn't, although the names of both courses have the word abstinence in them. We didn't see abstinence anywhere in the book.

The 4th and 5th grade curriculum were different. The children only have a 1-2 day class each year and no textbook. The director showed us the video that the students see, which is online, but with controlled access. The video sexualizes children, shows clitoris, ready to make grown up decisions, talks about emotions being out of control rather than focus on self-control, says "probably" not ready for a baby, promotes masturbation.

4. Here is a list of questions that we asked. We called the nurse later since the director said that she had no idea how issues are handled in the nurse's office.
  - a. Who are the sex education teachers? What is the name of the class? How many days of the year is it taught? Which grades have a set class? Are other grades just a day or two?
  - b. Which textbooks are used? Name of curriculum? Is a slide presentation given, can we see it? Can we see the handouts given in class?
  - c. Do they have guest educators come in to the classroom? What are their names?
  - d. Does Planned Parenthood ever send educators to be guest teachers?
  - e. Are there any posters in the schools with Planned Parenthood on them? What do they say?
  - f. What happens when a girl comes into nurses' office and thinks she is pregnant?
  - g. Does the nurses' office refer students to Planned Parenthood for abortions or other services?

- h. Which schools celebrate pride month, rainbow day? What kind of activities are done? What kind of books are read? What happens to kids that don't want to participate in these celebrations? What happens to kids that bully the kids that opt out?
- i. Which young adult books are read in classes? Can we get a list of the names of those young adult books that are recommended? (Most young adult books have inappropriate themes: <https://readaloudrevival.com/132/>)

**Other specific questions, taken from the CSE Harmful Elements Analysis Tool, we had to observe for ourselves using it as a checklist while reviewing the curriculum.**

- j. Does it desensitize children to sexual things?
  - k. Does it teach consent to children?
  - l. Promote anal and oral sex?
  - m. Promote Homosexual/bisexual behavior?
  - n. Promote Sexual pleasure?
  - o. Promotes solo or mutual masturbation?
  - p. Promotes condom use in inappropriate ways?
  - q. Promotes premature sexual autonomy without providing consequences of early sexual activity?
  - r. Fails to establish abstinence as the expected standard?
  - s. Promotes transgender ideology?
  - t. Promotes contraception/abortion to children?
  - u. Promotes peer-to-peer sex ed or sexual rights advocacy?
  - v. Undermines traditional values?
  - w. Undermines parents or parental rights?
  - x. Refers children to harmful resources?
5. We filled in the CSE analysis tool after the meeting with as many details as we could get. <https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/curricula-tool/>
6. Found a website with a focus on abstinence as a contrast to sex education class which is Abstinence in name only. [https://general.utpb.edu/fac/eldridge\\_j/West\\_Demo/Making\\_Life\\_Choices.htm](https://general.utpb.edu/fac/eldridge_j/West_Demo/Making_Life_Choices.htm)

7. Our game plan with the other 2 volunteers. One called the district nurse to ask her questions. We split the schools into thirds and each of us are working on contacting the principals of those schools to ask whether they participate in a Rainbow day or pride month and what activities are done if they do. Plan to speak again at the next school board meeting, work on writing 3-minute script together to share what we found.
8. We planned with a friendly school board member to let her know what we found during our curriculum review. She advised us on the next few opportunities to talk to the school board and realized the next work session is when they will be discussing the legislative priorities. She recommended we attend the work session as observers and, at the next board meeting before the work session, ask the school board to add keeping local control instead of statewide mandate as their top 5 legislative priorities. There will be a listening session with the school board where we will be able to share more details and have an unrecorded discussion with the board.
9. The friendly school board member agreed that having a non-confrontational attitude during the public comment period goes over well. Our goal should be to keep the door open for future communication.

She advised us on important points for our next speech. We were thankful for the opportunity to review the materials; however, we did find some items that concerned us and would most likely concern other parents, especially those with a religious background. We appreciate that it's called abstinence based and Abstinence until Marriage. The curriculum does have some good parts. However, in order to meet the standards set in the letter to parents, we would encourage more transparency by posting the online video for 4th and 5th graders so parents can watch it from home, rather than creating a barrier for some parents to have access to the video by having to come into school. Also, all of the handouts and other materials should also be online for parents to review. This is a very important and personal topic that parents should be encouraged to be involved in as much as possible. She also gave us a tip that if we need to say more than 3-minutes worth, we could have more than one person speak and each would get 3 minutes. They just limit it so they don't have many people saying the same thing.