

On September 1, 2010, section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* comes into force. This section requires school boards to provide parents with notice where “courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises ... include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation.” Where a parent makes a written request, teachers shall exempt the student, without academic penalty, from such instruction, course of study, educational program or use of instructional material.

Sturgeon schools offer the following courses that Alberta Education has identified as containing outcomes that require notification under section 11.1:

- Career and Life Management (CALM) - human sexuality
- Health and Life Skills, Grades 7, 8 and 9 – human sexuality
- Health, Grades 4, 5 and 6 – human sexuality

All Sturgeon schools currently provide information to parents/guardians, prior to the introduction of the topics, to allow them to make an informed decision on their child’s participation in the human sexuality segments of the health programs. Parents/guardians then indicate, in a written form, their decision to exclude their child from the human sexuality segments of the program.

It is not anticipated that the passage of section 11.1 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* will require any change in the school division’s current practice. Parents with concerns should address these first with their child’s teacher; then with the principal; and then, if necessary, with division officials.