



MAYWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Striving for Excellence, Achieving Success

www.maywoodtigers.org

Mark Bejot

Superintendent

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June 3, 2021

To the Nebraska State Board of Education:

Please accept this Letter of Opposition, which has been approved by the Maywood Public Schools Board of Education, concerning the proposed initial draft of the Nebraska Health Education Standards.

Typically, the Nebraska Health Education standards focused on Physical Education and basic nutrition standards. After reading all sixty pages of the proposed standards, I wish to thank all the teachers, administrators, health professionals and Family & Consumer Science personnel that worked together developing the proposed standards.

During my thirty plus years of teaching and learning, I have had the joy and pleasure of working in all school districts from Class A through D2 as well as alternative education in Kansas. Having learned and grown with students and parents, I have experienced the importance of developing strong relationships with students and parents as we work together to address the unique learning needs of each individual student.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed legislators, legislate increased social and academic demands upon educators and schools addressing societal and family issues. Somewhere in this process well intentioned people are forgetting that schools are a product of the environment in which they exist. I view a number of these proposed standards as placing societal and family burdens on educators. Specifically, the Human Growth & Development standards at every level place undue responsibility upon education "to fix" societal issues. Furthermore, we believe that many of the human sexuality standards are necessarily the responsibility of parents, families, churches and communities to teach not schools.

According to the introduction section of the proposed health standards it states, "Standards describe what students are expected to know and be able to do..." It is concerning to the Maywood Board of Education and myself that the state of Nebraska would expect students to be taught ideological materials and opinions. HE.3.7.2b "Demonstrate ways to promote dignity and respect for people of all genders, gender expressions, and gender identities, including other students, their families members, and members of the school community." HE.5.7.2.a basically says the same expectations now addressing sexual orientation. These kinds of discussions at third and fifth grade are not age appropriate and parents should decide when and how to discuss these topics.

The proposed standards state that everyone has different beliefs and are influenced by outside factors. Standard HE 5.7.1.c states that culture, media and other factors influence perceptions and beliefs. Standard HE.6.7.1.a states that people/families have different cultural beliefs when it comes to Human Growth & Development. Our concern is that the direction you are going is asking districts to teach specific belief systems that fail to align with everyone's belief system. These types of educational

experiences and knowledge should come from each student's parent/guardian, not the public educational institutions. Another belief system violation is found in HE.6.7.1.e that states schools are to identify factors that are important in deciding whether and when to engage in sexual behaviors. We ask the State Board of Education to eliminate any and all specific teachings that are influenced by different circumstances as state in your own standards.

Another concern is that different families have different timelines about the appropriateness of certain material for their children. For the state to determine the specific grade level when elementary students will be taught the names of genitalia or the workings of human sex, sets school districts and families up for failure to make an individual decision about the appropriate time for such conversations based on their own child's personal development and the family's value system. I would ask that you please consider allowing families to make the best personal choices for their own children as to when to have discussions about human sexuality, as we feel these conversations are best placed in the home.

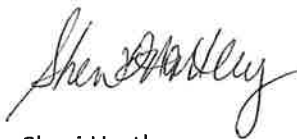
I want to thank you for your time and attention to our concerns regarding the proposed Nebraska State Health Standards. The Maywood Board of Education is asking that you refuse the standards as written and request a new set of health standards that avoid putting specific teachings in place that will discriminate against all other belief systems by not including everyone's viewpoint. We also ask that you support educating children in critical core standards that make every student either college or career ready.

Sincerely,



Mark Bejot
Superintendent of Schools
Maywood Public Schools

Sincerely,



Sheri Hartley
President of the Board

Sincerely,



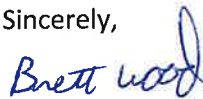
Marty Schurr
Vice-President of the Board

Sincerely,



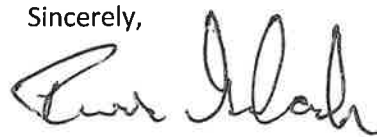
Barb Fritsche
Secretary of the Board

Sincerely,



Brett Woods
Treasurer of the Board

Sincerely,



Russ Gerlach
Board Member

Sincerely,



Darren Sellers
Board Member