



## **Statement of Support: 2020 New Jersey's Student Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education**

Every five years, the New Jersey Department of Education examines and revises standards for all curriculum areas that instruct teachers on what students should know by the end of each grade level. With the 2014 Student Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education (SLS-CHPE) set to expire at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, new, more comprehensive standards are required. Current 2014 SLS-CHPE do not cover all of the categories listed in the National Sexuality Education Standards, which serve as a model template for sex education curricular areas. The 2020 SLS-CHPE meets these requirements and were designed to fulfill the needs of each student in terms of self-care knowledge and abilities, effective, polite, and secure communication with others, and comprehending the implications of health choices.

The Latino Action Network Foundation is an organization dedicated to the socioeconomic empowerment of Latino communities throughout New Jersey. We are committed to ensuring that all New Jersey students receive the high-quality education they deserve. [Approximately 30% of K-12 students in New Jersey are Hispanic or Latino](#), yet students of color are more likely to get inadequate sex education. [Black and Hispanic males are less likely than white males to learn about safe sex topics including sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, or birth control](#). To help bridge the gap, we are in support of our partners at the Thrive NJ Coalition and believe that having discussions on good health and sexual education in educational settings will help to overcome stigma and work to eliminate health inequalities for Latino children.

We strongly support 2020 NJSLS-CHPE standards, and strongly support comprehensive sex education. Recent criticisms of comprehensive sex education have prompted calls to limit it, including reducing discussions about gender identity and sexual orientation in schools; however, such discussions are necessary for fostering inclusive and safe environments for children. [Sex education teaches critical skills such as healthy communication, boundary setting, and emotional literacy, as well as providing developmentally appropriate, medically accurate information and answers to young people's questions about their bodies and relationships in a safe, nondiscriminatory, harassment-free environment](#). Every student in New Jersey deserves to go to a school that reflects who they are as individuals, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, etc., and encourages them to succeed both inside and outside of the classroom.

Thank you, NJ State Board of Education, for standing with the students of New Jersey and adopting the NJ Student Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical education in June of 2022.

Saray Ramos, LANF Health Justice Coordinator- sarayr@lanfoundation.org