

SENATE BILL 1936

By Southerland

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
relative to education.

WHEREAS, effective health education does help students increase their health knowledge and improve their health skills and behaviors and that effective health education even helps students do better in their other studies. In one study, the reading and math scores of third and fourth grade students who received comprehensive health education were significantly higher than those who did not receive health education; and

WHEREAS, students who actively participated in an effective health education program also engaged in fewer of the risky behaviors targeted by the program; and

WHEREAS, middle school students who received the Michigan Model developed a stronger resistance to using alcohol and other drugs; and

WHEREAS, students who received a two-year social decision-making and problem solving program in elementary school showed more pro-social behavior and less antisocial and self-destructive behaviors when followed up in high school four (4) to six (6) years later; and

WHEREAS, the American public agrees that health education is critical. Adults in a nationally representative survey identified performance standards they thought were critical for high school graduation. Ten (40 percent) of the 25 critical standards identified by this representative group were health-related; and

WHEREAS, poor health behaviors are usually established during childhood, persist into adulthood, are inter-related, and are preventable. In addition to causing serious health problems, these behaviors also contribute to the educational and social problems that confront the nation, including failure to complete high school, unemployment, and crime; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive health education, as part of a Coordinated School Health Program, can have a positive impact on the academic and life success of Tennessee students; and

WHEREAS, it is recommended, that local school districts use the national standards and performance indicators as a guide, the state of Tennessee would mandate the following characteristics of an effective comprehensive health education; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49 Chapter 6, Part 10, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

49-6-1028. The office of coordinated school health shall recommend the Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum to local education agencies. Comprehensive Health Education shall be integrated through existing classes of guidance, physical education, classroom teach and other appropriate professionals as approved through the office of coordinated school health of the department of education. All local education agencies shall provide Comprehensive Health Education for fifty (50) hours per year in a manner that is integrated throughout the year. The office of coordinated school health shall design and disseminate performance indicators concerning the Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009, the public welfare requiring it.