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Sex ed: Boards should heed parents

A new survey shows that parents overwhelmingly agree that sex education is needed in Mississippi schools. That should be a guide for state school boards.

A Mississippi State University study found that 92 percent support age-appropriate sex education. Most parents believe that sex ed should begin in middle school and should address the basics of reproduction, birth control and where to obtain birth control. They also support discussions of sexually transmitted diseases,. Parents also want discussions of the importance of abstinence.

Policy-makers and school officials in Mississippi have been slow to embrace full programs of sex education. But the Legislature has approved a bill requiring districts to adopt a plan of either abstinence or abstinence-plus programs. School officials should not be reluctant to offer abstinence-plus, which will provide vital information teens needs.

Mississippi has the highest rate of teen births, and ties at the top for sexually transmitted disease.

Parent want better sex education in schools. All school districts should see that teens have information they need to make

responsible decisions.

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