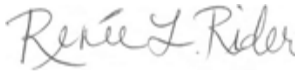





June 2016

To: BOCES District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public Schools
Principals of Public and Non-Public Schools
Charter School Leaders

From: Renee L. Rider 
Assistant Commissioner, Office of Student Support Services

Peter Swerdzewski 
Assistant Commissioner, P-12 Assessment, Standards & Curriculum

Subject: Modernization of Health Education Curriculum Law

This memorandum announces the *Health Education Standards Modernization Supplemental Guidance Document: An Instructional Resource Packet for Heroin and Opioids* developed to assist school districts to meet requirements of modernizing health education instruction by including heroin and opioid content within the alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs curricula. Paragraph a of subdivision 4 of section 804 of the Education Law, as amended by Chapter 181 of the laws of 2000, was amended in response to the increase in heroin and opioid abuse in New York State and across the nation.

When updating health education curriculum, school districts should ensure that it is grade level appropriate and aligned to the New York State Health Education Learning Standards. These Learning Standards, the Health Education Guidance Document and the new supplemental guide for heroin and opioids, along with additional resources for schools can be found at the New York State Education Department's Health Education Website <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealtheducation/>.

As part of a multi-pronged and coordinated State effort, the supplemental guide was created in partnership with the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services <http://www.oasas.ny.gov/> whose expertise provided critical evidence-based information, and the NYS Department of Health AIDS Institute <https://www.health.ny.gov/> which has provided valuable knowledge on Opioid Overdose Prevention Programs. Preventing drug abuse among students is essential; therefore, the Department will continue providing statewide communication on the dangers of heroin and opioids. Additional statewide resources can be found at <http://www.combatheroin.ny.gov/resources>.

Related questions may be directed to the Office of SSS at (518) 486-6090 or studentsupportservices@nysed.gov and/or Office of Curriculum & Instruction at (518) 474-5922 or emscurric@nysed.gov.