



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)
516 West Loockerman St., Dover, DE 19904
302-739-4553 (voice) 302-739-6126 (fax) <http://www.gacec.delaware.gov>

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 31, 2019

TO: The Honorable Members of the Delaware General Assembly

FROM: Ann C. Fisher, Chairperson
GACEC

RE: **Senate Bill No. 78 (Consent Training in School Health Education Programs)**

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed **Senate Bill No. 78**. This legislation proposes to include a component on consent and healthy relationships in health education curriculum for grades 7-12 beginning in 2020. School districts and charter schools will be obligated to provide age appropriate evidence-informed instruction on the meaning of consent and respecting other people's boundaries. The bill also includes reporting requirements, both to the DOE and to the Governor and legislature. Council **endorses** this initiative as an important step in developing skills for Delaware teens with disabilities.

Consent is defined as "unambiguous, voluntary and freely given agreement by all participants in each physical act in the course of sexual activity and excludes lack of verbal or physical resistance resulted from the use of force, threat of force or placing another in fear, as well as history of prior dating or relationship, from the definition of consent.

Well thought out training can assist teens in developing skills to develop healthy relationships and to avoid relationships and behaviors that can be harmful. People with disabilities are statistically much more likely to be victims of sexual assault. Robust sex education is one of the strategies to help teens with disabilities avoid victimization.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of our endorsement. Please feel free to contact me or Wendy Strauss at the GACEC office should you have any questions.