



NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Niskayuna High School 1626 Balltown Road Niskayuna, New York 12309

Phone (518) 382-2511 x21760

Fax (518) 382-1964

Lawrence Gillooley

*Director of Health, Physical Education
& Athletics*

lgillooley@niskyschools.org

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Niskayuna Central School District offers two courses during the middle school years that combine to satisfy the New York State Board of Regents mandate for one-half year of health education at the middle school level. During the sixth grade year, all Niskayuna Middle School students take a ten week course in Health Education. During the eighth grade year, all Niskayuna Middle School students take another ten week course in health education. Students also receive six booster lessons for Project Alert (Drug Prevention Program) during the seventh grade as part of the health education experience.

On Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at 7:00pm, parents of all 6th and 8th grade students in middle school at Niskayuna (both Iroquois and Van Antwerp) will have the opportunity to review the middle school curriculum with the middle school health education staff in the auditorium at Van Antwerp Middle School. The schedule on October 12, 2011 will include the showing of the sixth grade video on Family Life from 7:00pm-8:00pm. The Health Education Staff will then explain the program and answer questions from 8:00pm until 9:00pm to both sixth and eighth grade Parents/Guardians.

This video entitled "What Kids Want to Know About Sex and Growing Up" is produced by the Children's Television Workshop. The video lasts 55 minutes and will be shown as part of the program on October 12th. The video has been used in all sixth grade health classes and has been well received by students and parents. It is recommended that parents, particularly those who have students going through the middle school for the first time, attend this meeting and preview the video. The program will also provide information about the opt-out option parents have for the Family Life portion of the health curriculum.

The teachers will discuss curriculum content, activities and resources used to implement the Health Education Curriculum at the middle school level. These units include all of the areas covered in the New York State Health Guidance Document. You will have an opportunity to hear how teachers approach such subjects as family life, problems of adolescence, mental health, sexually transmitted disease, development of good interpersonal relations, and substance abuse prevention.

The Niskayuna School District follows the Board of Regents requirements to allow parents to provide instruction on the methods of prevention of an HIV infection at home. Forms for parents to exercise this option are available in the middle school principal's office and from the Assistant Superintendent's Office. Approval for parents to exercise this option comes from the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Deb Shea. Forms must be filed at least seven days in advance of removing a child from instruction. The district would like you to have an opportunity to ask questions about this lesson before you decide if it is appropriate for your child. Your comments and suggestions on the entire curriculum are welcome.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Gillooley