

TAKE ACTION



NEW JERSEY'S SEX ED REPORT CARD

School Official Meeting Toolkit



Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey

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Contents

Introduction	3
Guide to Toolkit	4
How to Set Up a Meeting	5
Sample Meeting Request	6
Meeting Tips	7
After Your Meeting	9
Talking Points	10

Disclaimer: Participants in this campaign are acting as volunteers and not as authorized representatives of PPAFNJ.



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Introduction

At Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey, we share your vision for the world. We are fighting for a world of equity, care, education, and activism – a world where reproductive rights are basic human rights, where access to health care and education doesn't depend on who you are or where you live, and where everyone is able to live free from discrimination.

This toolkit was put together to help volunteers take action as we work together to increase access and resources for sex education in schools across New Jersey.

This toolkit is designed to provide the tools you need to be a powerful advocate for sex education. Through this campaign, you can help a coalition of NJ advocacy organizations determine what's working well with sex education in our state, and where we can join together to make important investments.

Here's a summary of what you'll be able to do to take action in this campaign:

1. Visit **SexEdNJ.org** and spread the word about this campaign.
2. Ask each school in your community to complete the School Survey at **SexEdNJ.org/Surveys**. The results of this survey will be released in a public report that will highlight where great things are happening, and where additional resources for sex education should be allocated.
3. Ask parents/guardians you know to complete the Parent/Guardian Survey at **SexEdNJ.org/Surveys** so we can get their perspective on current sex education efforts.
4. Encourage youth you know to complete the Teen Survey at **SexEdNJ.org/Surveys** so we hear directly from them about what's helpful in their school sex education program and what additional information they really need.
5. Secure a copy of your school and/or school district sex education policy and curriculum and upload it in the Report Back Form at **SexEdNJ.org/Volunteer-Toolkit**.
6. Find out which guest speakers and organizations are approved speakers on sex education at your school and what process is followed for reviewing and approving these presentations. Let us know what you find in the Report Back Form at **SexEdNJ.org/Volunteer-Toolkit**.

We can only get this done with your help. In this toolkit, you'll find a guide for setting and running a meeting with a school board member or school administrator, asking for a copy of the curriculum, and instructions for reporting back to us so we know how your grassroots efforts are going.

Join us in taking action for increased investments in sex education in New Jersey!

Guide to Toolkit

Remember: Your goal is to get a meeting with a school board member or school official and find out key information about sex education in your local community. This information includes:

1. Receiving a copy of the **local sex education curriculum** to take home for review.
2. Obtaining a list of **approved external speakers** for sex education classes, and a process or guidelines for how guest speakers are approved.
3. Securing **support from school leaders** to ensure the sex education survey is completed.

In order to support your meeting(s), we've put together the following:

1. Suggestions for **how to set up a meeting** and **how to prepare for the meeting**.
2. **Sample questions** to ask in your meeting to get the answers you need.
3. An online **report-back form** (located at SexEdNJ.org/Volunteer-Toolkit) where you can tell us all about your meeting, upload a copy of the curriculum, and share any other relevant information you obtained. We also want to know if you didn't have success getting a meeting. This will help us as we gather and analyze data for our upcoming report. **Follow up is the key to success!**
4. **Supporting information** (talking points) on sex education so you can answer questions you might receive on your advocacy journey.

How to Set Up A Meeting

First, you need to identify who the **best person to meet with** is within your school district. For example, is it a school principal, the head of the physical education department, or a particular health teacher?

Then, determine if you have an existing relationship that can help make that connection. Do you have a friend who is a health teacher at a nearby school? Is your cousin on their district's school board? **If you have a connection or relationship with someone, prioritize setting up a meeting with them.**

If you don't know someone connected to a school district or school board, **find out who is on your local school board and how to reach out to them.** Web searches should help you find contact information!

Then, follow these steps to set up a meeting:

1. **Email Info@SexEdNJ.org** to take responsibility for gathering this information in your community. We want to connect you to other volunteers in your area so you can collaborate.
2. **Submit an email request for a meeting to the person you have identified.** Don't forget to include who you are, where you live, why you'd like to meet with them, and your contact information.
3. **Follow up with a phone call 1-2 days later**, or with another email 2-3 days later if you can't find a phone number.
4. **If you get a response, great!** Find a meeting time that works for both of you. Then, confirm that time again with them the day before you meet.
5. **If you don't get a response** after a few follow-up attempts, find someone else to reach out to.
6. **Don't give up!**



Sample Meeting Request

Dear [NAME OF SCHOOL CONTACT],

My name is [YOUR NAME]. I'm a [voter and/or parent with a child currently in/who previously attended] [NAME OF SCHOOL].

I'd love to schedule a meeting with you to get your help with gathering some information on the family life and health education program in our schools. Do you have 30 minutes for a meeting with me and a few other community members this week? We are available on [insert two different options]. Do either of those times work for you? If not, please let us know if another time is better for your schedule.

Thank you,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR CITY]

[YOUR PHONE NUMBER]



Meeting Tips

Here's what to do once your meeting is set up.

Make an Agenda

Put together your plan for how you want your meeting to run! Here is a sample agenda you can follow.

1. **Introductions:** Introduce yourself, and anyone else in the meeting with you. Make sure to mention if you have a connection with the person you are meeting with. Do you work with their partner or spouse, or are they best friends with a family member? Connections like this can make people feel at ease and meetings run smoother.
2. **Share why you're there:** Share why you're interested in meeting with the school representative that day: What makes you passionate about sex education? Why does sex education matter? What are you hoping to accomplish?
3. **Gather information:** Explain that you are part of a coalition effort to gather information on sex education across the state for a report on what's working well and where schools need additional resources. Then, ask the decision maker what they know about sex education in the school(s) they work with, and what they think is going great and where they'd like more resources and support.
4. **Listen** to the representative's responses.
5. **Make your "asks":** Ask for these commitments from the decision maker:
 - a. Can you provide a copy of the school or district's sex education policy and curriculum? If not, who else can help us access that information?
 - b. Can you provide a list of approved sex education guest speakers and the process for approving external speakers/organizations?
 - c. Will you ensure your school completes the sex education survey on SexEdNJ.org so your community's great programs are included in a report on what's working well and where additional resources are needed?
 - d. What do the schools/district need to effectively teach sex education? How can we help with more training, funding, or other resources?

6. **Thank the representative:** Always thank someone for taking the time to meet with you, even if they don't have the answers you're looking for.
7. **Take a group photo** with you, the representative, and anyone else with you!

Designate Roles

If you're able to gather a few folks to join you, here are several important roles you can assign to make sure that you're as successful as possible:

- **Chair:** Someone who is in charge of making sure the meeting runs smoothly and ensures all asks are delivered and discussed.
- **Notetaker:** Somebody who takes notes during the meeting to ensure you remember any commitments and follow up items suggested by participants.
- **Thank You Note Writer:** It's important to follow up from your meeting and thank the individual(s) who met with you. One meeting attendee should take on the role of writing a thank you card and/or email.
- **Photographer:** Always capture a photo of the meeting group! One person in attendance should plan to take a photo at the end of the meeting with sex education advocates and school officials.

Listen, Listen, Listen

Pay close attention to the answers you're getting after you make your asks, so that you know what the person you're meeting with can or cannot help you with.

Stay Focused

When meeting with decision makers, it's easy to spend a whole meeting chatting. You don't want to wander off topic or end the meeting before you have a chance to make your ask. Remember why you're there and keep the agenda on track.

After Your Meeting

Now that you've met with decision makers at your local school or district, it's time to let Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey staff know how your meeting went. This way, we can track grassroots efforts across the state and capture the picture of what sex education looks like in our communities.

Post-meeting follow-up, with whomever you met with and with PPAFNJ, is super important! Here's what you should do:

1. **Scan a copy** of the curriculum if you received one so you have it handy in PDF or image form! This way, it'll be easy to submit to PPAFNJ and you have a digital copy just in case.
2. **Fill out the meeting report form at SexEdNJ.org/Volunteer-Toolkit** to let us know the outcome of your meeting. There's a space on the form where you can upload the PDF or image file of the curriculum, but if you can't get it uploaded, you can let us know on the form and we'll work to get it from you.
3. **Send a thank you note** to whomever you met with to thank them for their time. A little thanks goes a long way!
4. **Upload your group photo:** After obtaining permission to take a photo and use on social media at the meeting, upload and share your photo to showcase your engagement with school decision makers. **Use the hashtag #SexEdNJ.**

Meeting Report Back Form:
SexEdNJ.org/Volunteer-Toolkit

**Thank you for being an advocate for
comprehensive sex education for all of
New Jersey's young people!**



Talking Points for Your Meetings

What is the NJ Sex Education Report Card Campaign?

A coalition of parents, community members, and statewide advocacy organizations are gathering information from all schools in the state to create a public report on sex education in NJ. We know lots of great education is being provided, but we also know that this is sometimes an uncomfortable topic. We want to identify areas where schools, administrators, teachers, and parents need more resources and support. Our goal is to use this report to set a statewide plan and get you the additional investment dollars and tools you need. The report will include general trends and recommendations on potential areas for additional investment based upon the overall responses to this survey.

Which schools are being sent this survey?

All schools (public and private) in New Jersey have been mailed a postcard and are receiving emails and phone calls inviting them to participate in the survey. Can you help us follow up with them?

How will the information in the survey be used? Will details from my school be attributed to me?

Answers to the school survey on SexEdNJ.org will contribute to an analysis of sex education across New Jersey. While we hope schools will complete the full survey, we expect folks will skip questions that don't apply or where they don't have the information requested at this time.

Responses will be compiled into a statewide report to help teachers, school administrators, elected officials, and community partners determine areas where additional support and investments could be helpful. The report will include general trends and recommendations on potential areas for additional investment based upon the overall responses to this survey.

The public report will not include the respondents' names or contact information, nor will information be attributed to you or your school in the public report without permission. For example, the report editors may follow up to say, "We want to highlight the great sex ed your school is doing. Is it okay for us to share this publicly? You can

absolutely say no, although we hope you will want to share information so others can replicate great ideas.”

Do schools need to fill out the entire survey?

While we hope schools will complete the full survey, we expect folks will skip questions that don't apply or where they don't have the information requested at this time.

Why are we asking for a copy of the school curriculum and invited speakers?

New Jersey has a *lot* of school districts, which makes for a lot of diversity in curricula. We are trying to find out the themes and trends in sex education programs across the state. Gathering curricula and lists of guest speakers will let us see which school districts are alike and which are different. It's also good to know which schools want to bring in well-respected speakers but currently cannot, or which ones need new resources and tools for educators. The report can help direct investment in these areas.

If you have any questions send them to: Info@SexEdNJ.org.