

## House approves education bill that includes sex-ed rules

Associated Press

April 28, 2008

The Minnesota House passed an education policy bill 85-45 Monday after debating the level of control the state should exert over public schools, especially when it comes to sex education.

Legislators decided to let local leaders keep full power over when school starts. They also voted to compel districts to have "age-appropriate" lessons on abstinence, contraception and sexually transmitted diseases.

Early in a debate that stretched into the night, House members defeated a proposal that would have barred districts from making the school day any shorter than it is this year.

House Minority Leader Marty Seifert, R-Marshall, had tried to tack the timekeeping measure onto the bill. He said the school day is eroding even though students are expected to learn more. The amendment failed 72-59.

By a 79-53 vote, the DFL-led House added the requirement that districts adopt sex-ed curriculum no later than the 2011-12 school year. The programs must emphasize abstinence but also confront diseases and unintended pregnancies, as well as FDA-approved methods for preventing both.

The provision gives parents the chance to pull their children from sex-ed classes, which would be offered in middle school through high school.

ASSOCIATED PRESS