

Judge: Abstinence-only curriculum is not sex ed

By Bob Egelko, San Francisco Chronicle

California's sex-education law prohibits school districts from indoctrinating students on the need to remain celibate before marriage or teaching them that abstinence is the only safe way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, a judge has ruled.

The decision by Fresno County Superior Court Judge Donald Black applies only to the 40,000-student Clovis Unified School District. But as the first ruling to interpret California's 11-year-old law on sex education and disease prevention, it should put schools on notice that "young people need complete, accurate health information required by law," said attorney Phyllida Burlingame of the American Civil Liberties Union, which took part in the suit.

"This is the first time that abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula have been found to be medically inaccurate," Burlingame said Monday.

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