Opt-Out Letter for Curricular Content, Sex Education, Surveys, Alternative Pronoun Use, and Counseling Services in Massachusetts Public Schools

How to submit this opt-out letter:

These instructions are designed to assist you as a parent in successfully submitting the following opt-out notification. These instructions should not be included with your opt-out request to the school. The opt-out letter you will send to your school is on pages 2-3 of this document.

1. Copy and paste the content of the opt-out letter into your desired document format or the body of an email, changing the highlighted sections to reflect your family's information.
2. If you do not wish to opt out of all the areas listed, remove any sections that do not apply to your request and renumber the remaining requests appropriately.
3. Send the opt-out letter to the school Principal. We recommend e-mail, but you may also use certified mail, fax, or any other method whereby delivery can be confirmed.
4. When sending your letter, ask for the school to acknowledge receipt and specify that you want them to keep a copy in your child's school records (the cumulative file). While receiving a response from the district will increase your confidence that your child will be opted out as your letter states, your letter should be considered legally binding from the date that it was delivered to the school regardless of whether the school district has acknowledged it.
5. Encourage your children to report to you any attempts to compel them to participate in classes or activities for which you have requested them to be opted out.
6. Resubmit a copy of this opt-out letter for each child when you enroll them for the next school year.

Other notes regarding this opt-out letter:

- If you have already submitted an opt-out form this year and you wish to replace it with this letter, in your communication with the district state that "this opt-out letter replaces any existing opt-out form on file."
- Some school districts have their own opt-out form that they request that you use. Because most school opt-out forms do not contain all the topics listed in this letter, we recommend submitting this letter instead. If the district requests that you use their form after receiving your letter, see this article for instructions on how to navigate such a request: Opting Out of LGBTQ Content
- 4 of the 6 opt-out requests in this letter reference a religious objection. If you are not religious but wish to use this letter, contact the Massachusetts Liberty Legal Center for additional guidance at www.malibertylegal.org.
- If you use this letter and the school district does not opt your child out, contact the MLLC as stated above.

Letter template: Copy and paste the remainder of this document into your desired document program or the body of an email.

[Insert Date]

Dear [principal name],

Our child, [name], is very excited for the [insert year, i.e. 2026-2027] school year. We are writing to notify you that we will be exercising our right to opt our child out from the following:

1. **Sex Education.** Please exempt our child from all lessons, events, school assemblies or other instructional activities and programs which cover sex education or human sexuality issues, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A. Please also notify me in advance when such lessons, events, activities, etc. are scheduled.

2. **LGBTQ Content.** Please exempt our child from lessons, events, school assemblies or other instructional activities and programs which normalize or promote LGBTQ identities, relationships, or lifestyles, pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Mahmoud v. Taylor*. Please also notify me in advance when such lessons, events, activities, etc. are scheduled. The school's views on these issues conflict with our religious beliefs and instructing our child on these topics at school would therefore violate our religious beliefs and our fundamental parental rights.

3. **Library Materials.** Please do not allow our child to access any library materials, including materials in a classroom library, that feature sex education or LGBTQ content as specified above.

4. **Surveys.** Please exempt our child from any surveys, whether formal or informal, that ask about our child's sexual orientation, gender identity, mental health, religion, political beliefs, sexual behavior, drug use, family issues, or racism or racial attitudes, pursuant to the PPRA, 20 U.S. Code § 1232h. Please notify me in advance about any such surveys.

5. **Pronouns.** Please do not use an alternate name or pronouns for our child to reflect a different gender identity at school. Doing so would violate our religious beliefs and our fundamental parental rights.

6. **Counseling.** Please do not instruct or permit my child to meet with a guidance counselor or other mental health-related staff without my express advance permission. Allowing my child to receive

mental health interventions without my consent would violate our religious beliefs and our fundamental parental rights.

As we are sure you know, state law also requires that no student shall be penalized by reason of any exemptions allowed by law, for example by denying him or her course credit. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education further advises that, "In order to ensure that all students receive the structured learning time due them, the school should make efforts to accommodate the exempted student in another class, assign an alternative educational project, or provide the student with a directed study period for the duration of the exemption." See Commissioner of Education's April 7, 1997 "Advisory Opinion on the Parental Notification Law."

Thank you for understanding our position and for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this letter, you can contact us at [phone number] or [email]. We are looking forward to a great school year!

Respectfully,

[Insert parents' names]