



GEORGIA WISE 2022-2023 EVALUATION REPORT

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential (GCAPP) is a statewide nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the overall health and well-being of young people in Georgia to ensure a more powerful future for all. **The Working to Institutionalize Sex Education or WISE program** is a national initiative that supports school districts in implementing quality sex education, thereby paving the way for institutionalizing sex education. GCAPP serves as the lead agency for Georgia WISE.

Each year, GCAPP evaluates Georgia WISE to identify successes, challenges and lessons learned. In the 2022-2023 school year, GCAPP was successful in **training 196 teachers and school administrators and reaching nearly 90,000 students with comprehensive sex education***. Findings indicate that teachers gained valuable knowledge and skills and were able to successfully implement CSE. Results also suggest that students increased their knowledge, attitudes and intentions towards delaying sexual behavior.

*Note: The number of students reached is based on the number of students in the grades where CSE is taught (5th-9th grades, varies by district) across the districts served.

PROJECT FINDINGS

In the 2022-2023 school year, Georgia WISE:



Reached **89,365**
students



Trained **185**
teachers & 11 administrators



Supported CSE in **231**
schools in 10 districts

GCAPP continued making significant progress towards building infrastructure for school based CSE by actively working in 10 school districts which includes three charter/private schools across six priority counties.

STRATEGY 1. SCAN AND ENGAGE

Strategy Area 1 focuses on identifying potential new district partners, developing relationships with key stakeholders in identified districts and working to increase knowledge and support for CSE among key stakeholders, assess the level of readiness for CSE implementation and increase district partners' ability to develop effective strategies to select and implement age-appropriate, evidence-based curricula that fit with community mores and values.

In 2022-2023, GCAPP signed memorandum of understandings (MOU's) with two charter schools and one new county, who will begin implementation in the 2023-2024 school year. Additionally, GCAPP trained and began working with Twiggs County this year.



GCAPP team members participated in a number of statewide advocacy efforts including the Sex Education Collaborative, the Sex Education Policy Action Council, and the Resilient GA Education and Training Committee. GCAPP's Vice President for Programs and Training serves as the Chair of the Georgia Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Advocacy Committee and provides monthly reports on current policy issues and recommends policies that GA SOPHE should support. Selected team members attended the Healthy Teen Network Conference in October 2022 and the North Carolina Sex Education Conference in May 2023.

STRATEGY 2. DESIGN

Strategy Area 2 focuses on engaging key stakeholders in a review of current sex education policies and the adoption of more comprehensive policies and on building greater infrastructure and support for CSE throughout Georgia. In 2022-2023, after a year working to educate and engage a range of key Georgia legislators, a Republican House member introduced HB 822, which would amend Georgia law to require that sex education taught in schools be medically accurate and age appropriate. Four additional Republican sponsors and one Democrat signed the bill, and it was assigned to the House Education Committee.

GCAPP staff and legislative consultants used county level data about adolescent health and wellbeing to educate legislators. STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) and HIV rates have been rising rapidly in many Georgia counties, especially in rural areas. Most Georgia legislators were not only alarmed by this information about their districts but also understood the connection between the emphasis on abstinence only sex education in most Georgia schools and the increase in STI and HIV rates. GCAPP is continuing to meet with key legislators throughout Georgia to encourage and build support for HB 822.

STRATEGY 3. IMPLEMENT

Strategy 3 focuses on building teachers' capacity to implement CSE with fidelity and quality in the 2022-2023 school year. To assess improvements in capacity, GCAPP collects and analyzes data from participating teachers, district coordinators and students and uses findings to improve upon program implementation and sustainability. In the 2022-2023 school year:

- GCAPP trained a total of 185 school-based staff and 11 administrators.
- Teachers reported increased capability and comfort level implementing CSE.
- *FLASH and the Rights, Respect and Responsibility (3 R's)* were implemented in 231 schools in ten different districts.
- A total of 89,365 students throughout GA were eligible to receive CSE.
- Student pre-post data indicates increases in knowledge about abstinence, anatomy, STDs, HIV, effective communication and healthy relationships and improvements in attitudes, intentions and motivation to negotiate sexual behavior and take preventive action.
- Teacher focus group data indicates that teachers feel that the selected curricula meet the needs of students and that they are comfortable and capable of implementing CSE.

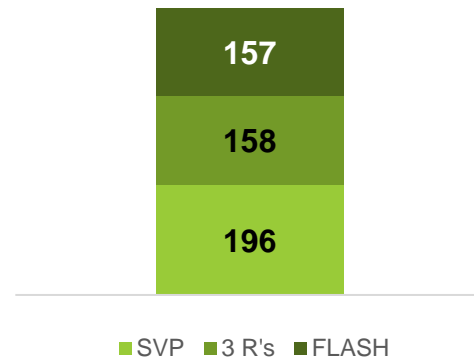
A summary of key findings from teacher training evaluation and student pre-post-test data is below. While CSE was implemented in 231 schools, the number of students for whom we have pre and post survey data is only 2,105. As a result, findings may not be representative of those served.

TRAINING EVALUATION FINDINGS

In 2022-2023, GCAPP trained 185 teachers and 11 administrators (196 total) in the FLASH curriculum, the Rights, Respect and Responsibility (3 R's) curriculum and sexual violence prevention (SVP) in three individual schools (Galloway and International Community School) and seven different school districts – Bibb, Bulloch, DeKalb, Dougherty, Savannah-Chatham, Twiggs and Walton counties.

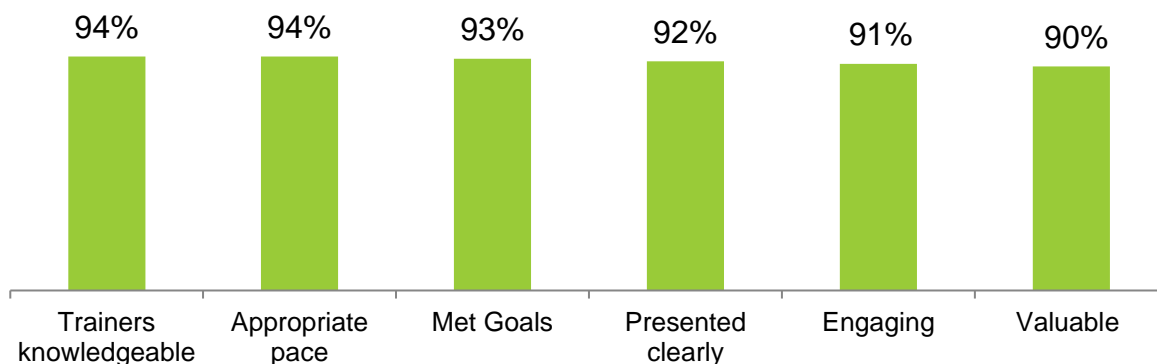
Upon completion of each of the trainings, participants were asked to provide feedback on the training and describe their knowledge and skills gained. Training evaluation data from 137 of the 196 individuals trained was collected (70% response rate).

Figure 1. Teachers/Administrators Trained



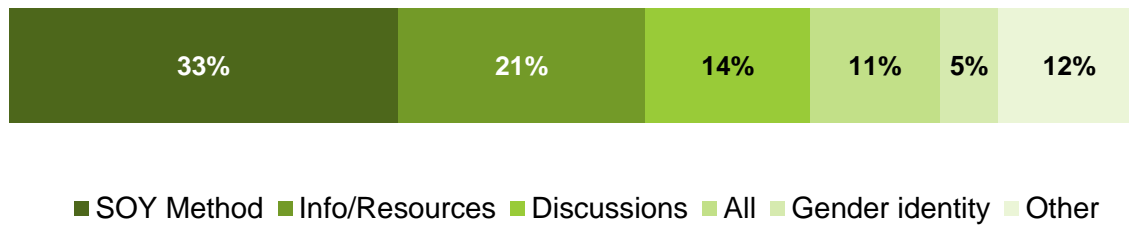
Over half of evaluation participants identified as Black while 43% identified as White. Only one respondent identified as Hispanic/Latino. Just over 40% teach/work in high schools while 30% teach/work in middle schools. The remaining 28% work in elementary schools. One-third of respondents had attended a GCAPP training previously. Evaluation findings indicate that participants liked the training and felt they gained valuable knowledge and skills.

Figure 2. Percent that Strongly Agreed/Agreed that Training was Useful (n=137)



When asked what aspects of the training were most useful, one-third of participants shared that the SOY method of answering difficult questions was the most useful. Just over 10% of participants reported that all aspects of the training were helpful while 14% noted the discussions with peers and the presenters were most useful. Others appreciated the information received and the resources such as the curricula, statistics and the website.

Figure 3. Most Useful Aspects of Training (n=112)



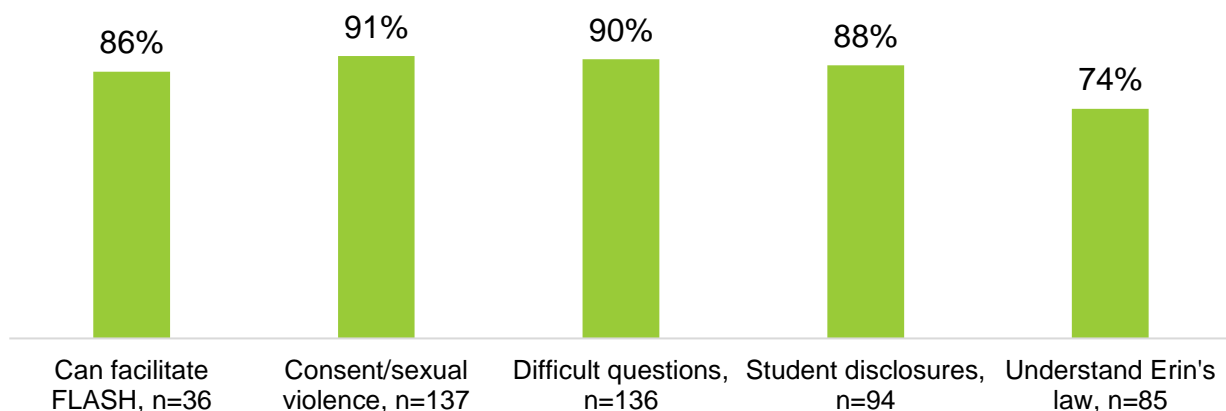
When asked what aspects of the training were least useful, **83%** of participants indicated that the training was useful and did not have any least useful aspects. Nine participants did not like some of the content (e.g. anatomy, legal information, human trafficking, etc.). Three participants noted that the training was too long and two did not like the breakout sessions.

Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with one or more of the following statements relating to knowledge and skills built during the training:

- I understand how to use and facilitate the FLASH curriculum.
- I understand the basics of consent and sexual violence.
- I am confident I can answer difficult questions.
- I can respond appropriately to student disclosures.
- I understand Erin's law.

The chart below presents the percent that strongly agreed and/or agreed with these statements. Nearly all participants reported feeling equipped with the knowledge and skills to teach sex education and to answer difficult questions and respond appropriately to student disclosures.

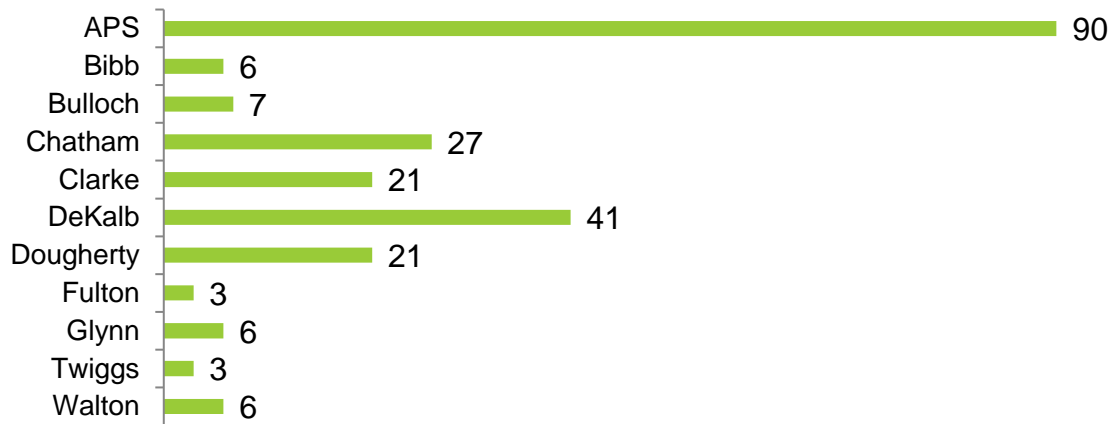
Figure 4. Percent of Participants with Knowledge and Skills Built during Training



IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

CSE is currently being implemented in 231 schools throughout GA. Implementation was maintained in legacy school districts and WISE was implemented in three new schools in one new district (Twiggs).

Figure 5. Number of Schools Implementing per District



STUDENT CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND INTENTIONS

Pre and post-test data from approximately 644 middle and 1461 high school students from APS, Bibb, Bulloch, DeKalb and Dougherty County Schools was analyzed to assess changes in students' knowledge, attitudes, and intentions. Surveys assessed knowledge using a variety of questions about abstinence, anatomy, pregnancy, puberty, HIV and STI's. Questions varied by district, grade level and content. To determine changes in knowledge, the percentage of questions answered correctly was calculated and compared. The figures below present the total knowledge scores before and after implementation for all students for whom we have pre-post data. Knowledge among middle and high school students increased, with Bulloch middle schools and DeKalb high schools exhibiting the largest increase in knowledge. **Overall, middle and high school students exhibited fairly high levels of accurate knowledge of key concepts delivered after participating in the curriculum in all districts.**

Figure 6. Change in Knowledge among Middle School Students by District, n=644

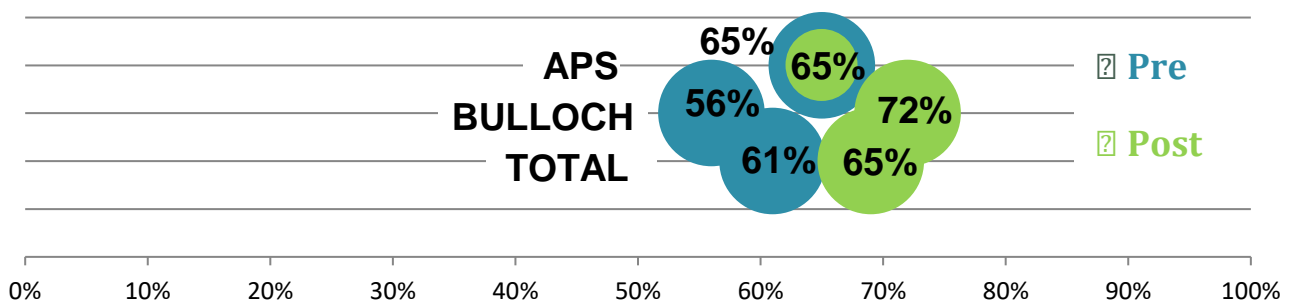
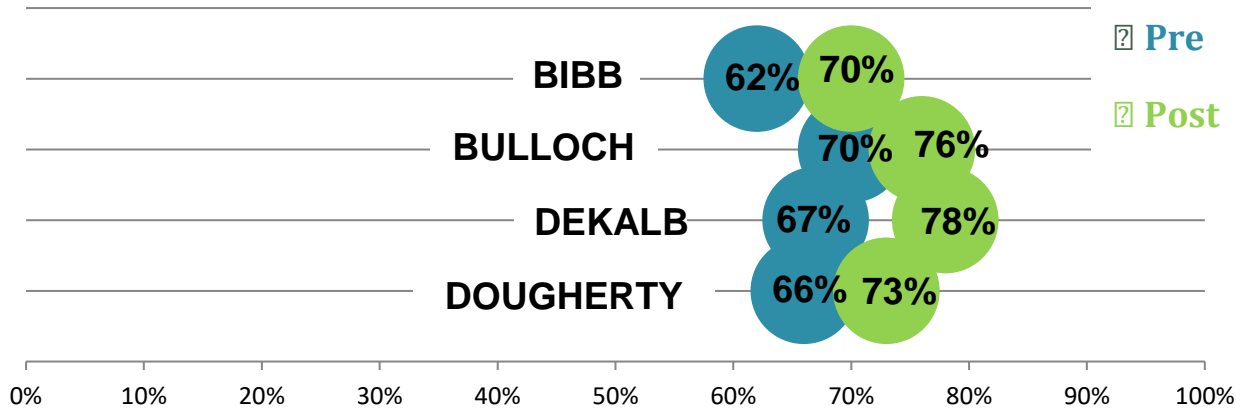


Figure 7. Change in Knowledge among High School Students by District, n=1461



Surveys assessed students’ attitudes towards sexual negotiation using the following questions and five-point Likert scales (e.g. strongly agree to strongly disagree).

1. I would be comfortable saying "no" to someone pressuring me to have sex.
2. If a person does not have sex with their partner, they will likely break up with them.
3. A person who has had sex can choose to abstain (meaning not have sex) again.

The figures below present students’ attitudes before and after implementation for all middle and high school students for whom we have pre and post data. The data depicts the percentages that either strongly agreed/agreed or strongly disagreed/disagreed with each of these statements. Among middle and high school students, there was a slight increase in attitudes overall post-implementation.

Figure 8. Change in Attitudes, Middle School Students from APS and Bulloch, n=644

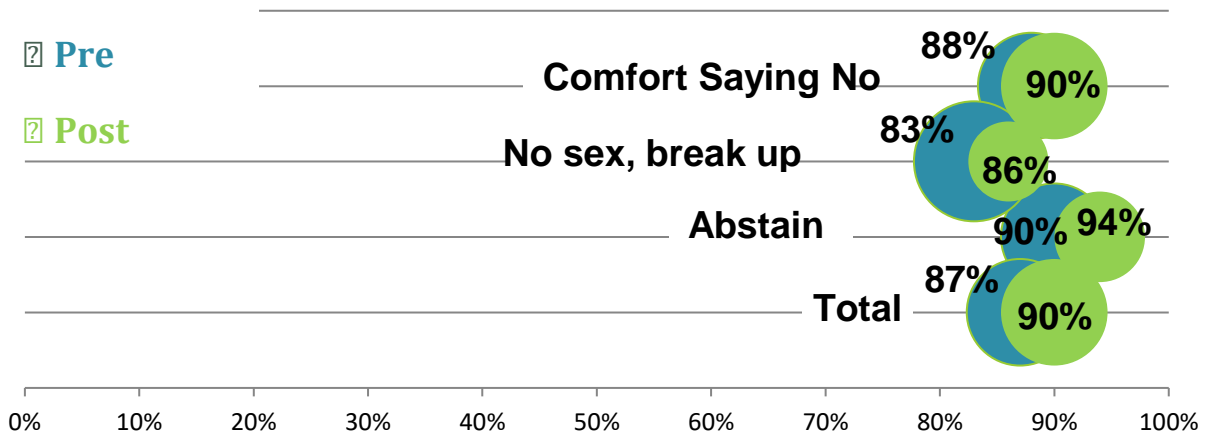
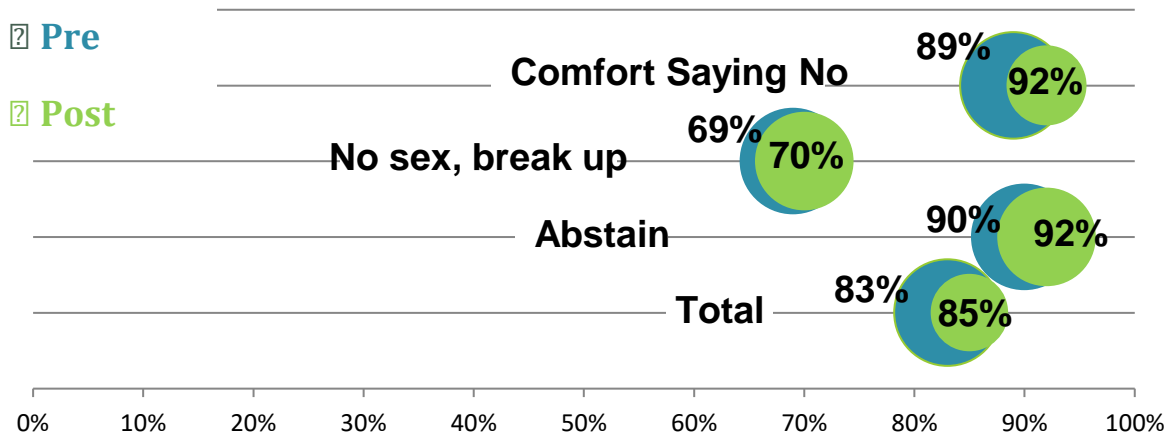


Figure 9. Change in Attitudes, High School Students from APS, Bibb, Bulloch, DeKalb, Dougherty n=1461

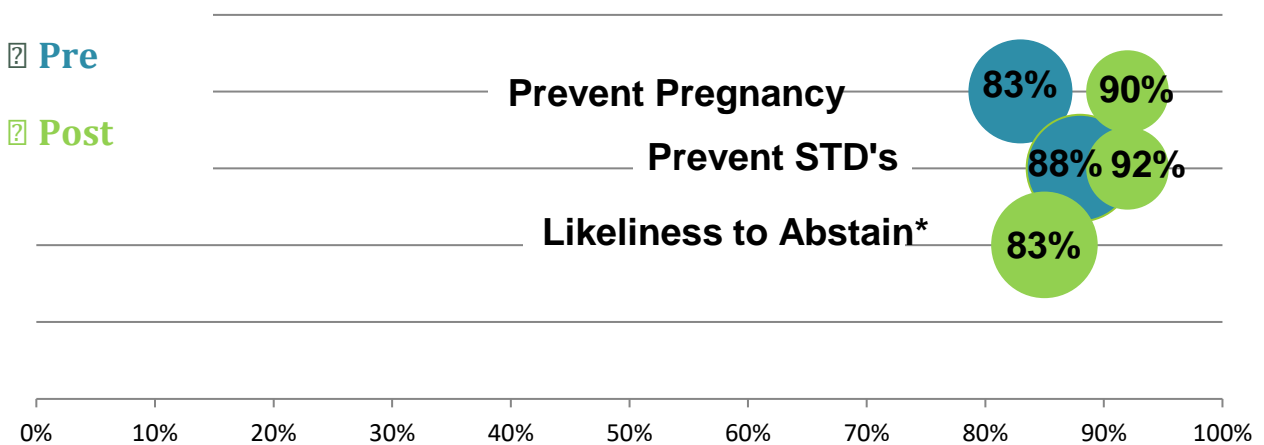


Surveys assessed students' intentions regarding sexual behavior using the following questions and Likert scales (e.g. strongly agree to strongly disagree):

1. I feel motivated to avoid getting pregnant or getting someone pregnant at this time in my life.
2. I feel motivated to avoid getting or spreading an STD at this time in my life
3. After this class, I am more likely to abstain from having sex.

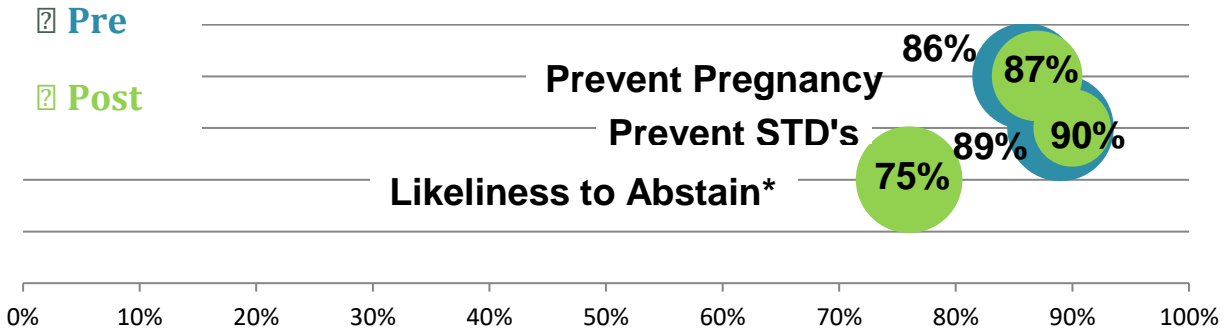
The figures below present students' intentions before and after implementation for all middle and high school students for whom we have pre and post data. The data depicts the percentages that strongly agreed/agreed with each of these statements. Intentions among both middle and high school students were already fairly high and changed slightly from pre to post. The majority of students agreed that they were more likely to abstain after the class, with fewer high school students reporting that they were likely to abstain.

Figure 10. Change in Intentions, Middle School Students from APS and Bulloch n=644



*Post only

Figure 11. Change in Intentions, High School Students from APS, Bibb, Bulloch, DeKalb, Dougherty, n=1461



*Post-only

Students provided feedback on the lessons with most reporting that they enjoyed the lessons and had no suggestions for improvement. Several students would like to see more interactive activities and engaging discussions while others wanted more comprehensive information and “*real life scenarios.*” Students reported gaining valuable information from the classes. One student shared that they learned about “*not having sex and if you do decide to have sex and are not ready for pregnancy or anything, use a condom.*”

DISTRICT PROFILES

To assess the effectiveness of the training and technical assistance provided to school districts, the evaluator conducted focus groups with APS and Bibb County teachers, a survey with Bulloch County teachers and interviews with District coordinators in APS, Bibb, Bulloch and Savannah-Chatham counties in May 2023.

Findings suggest that teachers were able to implement CSE effectively, that they feel the selected curricula meet students’ needs and that GCAPP provides useful and high-quality training and technical assistance. One teacher shared that “*implementation was easier than expected*” and another noted that “*the more you teach it, the more comfortable you get. The only thing that changes is participation from students.*”

Several teachers reported that students need sex education. As one teacher shared, “*I have always believed it was important and I believe that even more strongly having taught it.*” Another agreed, “*I have always been in favor of teaching sex education. Students have a lot of misinformation about the topic, and it is helpful to be able to correct some of their misinformation.*”

Results also indicate that teachers need more time to implement the programs with fidelity and that they would like to be able to address students’ questions about certain topics more thoroughly. Teachers would like more resources and support to implement human trafficking lessons. One shared that they would like “*refresher trainings, especially for new people.*”



District coordinators were very satisfied with GCAPP’s support and technical assistance. As one shared, *“I know GCAPP is there, and I have them as a resource. Anything I ask, they do. I appreciate that.”* Another agreed and stated, *“I hear this from other coordinators who use GCAPP, praised GCAPP for how accessible and helpful they are. They always provide what they need. They’re always willing to help. GCAPP provides a lot of valuable services not just to educators but also to parents and students.”*

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from the evaluation of GA WISE indicate that while the adoption and implementation of comprehensive sex education policies and programs has increased throughout the state, the need to continue to advocate for and provide support for CSE is great.

STRATEGY 1. SCAN AND ENGAGE

GCAPP is currently actively working in 10 school districts in six priority regions. In 2022-2023, GCAPP signed agreements with three charter schools and with one new district who will implement in the 2023-2024 school year. GCAPP should:

- Continue to leverage existing relationships to cultivate new partnerships.
- Continue to identify and assess district readiness and guide additional new districts towards CSE implementation beginning with the mandated sexual violence prevention.

STRATEGY 2. DESIGN

GCAPP is poised to advocate for statewide adoption of HB 822, which would amend Georgia law to require that school-based sex education be medically accurate and age appropriate. GCAPP should:

- Continue to develop and participate in statewide and national partnerships and advocate for CSE throughout the state.
- Continue to meet with key legislators throughout Georgia to encourage and build support for HB 822.

STRATEGY 3. IMPLEMENT

In the 2022-2023 school year, **GCAPP trained 196 teachers and administrators in evidence-based curricula.** After receiving this training, **teachers provided students with comprehensive sex education curricula.** Evaluation data indicates that teachers gained increased knowledge and skills and that the curricula were effective in increasing students’ knowledge and increasing their intentions and motivation to take preventive action. To ensure continued effectiveness of teacher training and implementation, GCAPP should:

- Continue to use evaluation data to make improvements to the implementation process.
- Continue to capitalize on demand for the mandated sexual violence prevention and human trafficking programs and provide existing and new district partners with these curricula.