

ERIN'S LAW MANDATES SEXUAL ABUSE CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS

Erin's Law was originally passed in 2011 and allowed school boards to implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children. Now Governor Quinn has signed into law a new requirement to teach sexual abuse prevention to pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade students.

On January 24, 2013, Governor Quinn signed an amended "Erin's Law" into effect immediately ([P.A. 97-1147](#)). Erin's Law makes two changes in current law to promote sexual abuse prevention education. First, the *Comprehensive Health Education Act* was amended to require schools to provide age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve. Previously, the law only required sexual assault awareness education in secondary schools.

In addition, Erin's Law amended the Illinois *School Code* to provide that in-service training programs on sexual abuse awareness and prevention may now count as continuing professional development activity to renew a teaching certificate.

Erin's Law grew out of a report from the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children or the "Erin's Law Task Force" issued in May 2012. Both the task force and the law are named after Erin Merryn, a child sexual abuse victim and activist.

Please contact Pam Swanson with questions concerning Erin's Law.

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Section 6 - Instruction

Curriculum

Policy 6:60

Curriculum Content

The curriculum shall contain instruction on subjects required by State statute or regulation as follows:

1. In kindergarten through grade 8, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) reading, (c) other communication skills, (d) science, (e) mathematics, (f) social studies, (g) art, (h) music, and (i) drug and substance abuse prevention.

2. In grades 9 through 12, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) writing intensive course, (c) science, (d) mathematics, (e) social studies including U.S. history, (f) foreign language, (g) music, (h) art, (i) driver and safety education and (j) vocational education.

Students otherwise eligible to take a driver education course must receive a passing grade in at least 8 courses during the previous 2 semesters before enrolling in the course. The Superintendent or designee may waive this requirement if he or she believes a waiver to be in the student's best interest. The course shall include classroom instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue. Automobile safety instruction covering traffic regulations and highway safety must include instruction on the consequences of alcohol consumption and the operation of a motor vehicle. The eligibility requirements contained in State law for the receipt of a certificate of completion from the Secretary of State shall be provided to students in writing at the time of their registration.

3. In grades 7 through 12, as well as in interscholastic athletic programs, steroid abuse prevention must be taught.

4. In grades 4 through 12, provided it can be funded by private grants or the federal government, violence prevention and conflict resolution must be stressed, including: (a) causes of conflict, (b) consequences of violent behavior, (c) non-violent resolution, and (d) relationships between drugs, alcohol, and violence.

5. In grades 3 or above, the curriculum contains a unit on Internet safety, the scope of which shall be determined by the Superintendent or designee.

6. In all grades, character education must be taught including respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship in order to raise students' honesty, kindness, justice, discipline, respect for others, and moral courage.

7. In all schools, citizenship values must be taught, including: (a) patriotism, (b) democratic principles of freedom, justice, and equality, (c) proper use and display of the American flag, (d) the Pledge of Allegiance, and (e) the voting process.

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[6:280 Grading and Promotion](#)

[6:290 Homework](#)

[6:340 Student Testing and Assessment Program](#)

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MILLBURN DISTRICT 24

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8. In all grades, physical education must be taught including a developmentally planned and sequential curriculum that fosters the development of movement skills, enhances health-related fitness, increases students' knowledge, offers direct opportunities to learn how to work cooperatively in a group setting, and encourages healthy habits and attitudes for a healthy lifestyle. Unless otherwise exempted, all students are required to engage daily during the school day in a physical education course. For exemptions and substitutions, see policies 6:310, *Credit for Alternative Courses and Programs*, and *Course Substitution*, and 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Activity*.

9. In all schools, health education must be stressed, including: (a) proper nutrition, (b) physical fitness, (c) components necessary to develop a sound mind in a healthy body, and (d) dangers and avoidance of abduction. The Superintendent shall implement a comprehensive health education program in accordance with State law.

10. In all schools, career/vocational education must be taught, including: (a) the importance of work, (b) the development of basic skills to enter the world of work and/or continue formal education, (c) good work habits and values, (d) the relationship between learning and work, and (e) if possible, a student work program that provides the student with work experience as an extension of the regular classroom. A career awareness and exploration program must be available at all grade levels.

11. In grades 9 through 12, consumer education must be taught, including: financial literacy; installment purchasing; budgeting, savings, and investing; banking; simple contracts; income taxes; personal insurance policies; the comparison of prices; homeownership; and the roles of consumers interacting with agriculture, business, labor unions, and government in formulating and achieving the goals of the mixed free enterprise system.

12. In all schools, conservation of natural resources must be taught, including: (a) home ecology, (b) endangered species, (c) threats to the environment, and (d) the importance of the environment to life as we know it.

13. In all schools, United States history must be taught, including: (a) the principles of representative government, (b) the Constitutions of the U.S. and Illinois, (c) the role of the U.S. in world affairs, (d) the role of labor unions, and (e) the role and contributions of ethnic groups, including but not limited to, the African Americans, Albanians, Asian Americans, Bohemians, Czechs, French, Germans, Hispanics (including the events related to the forceful removal and illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens during the Great Depression), Hungarians, Irish, Italians, Lithuanians, Polish, Russians, Scots, and Slovaks in the history of this country and State.

In addition, all schools shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on Constitution Day, each September 17, commemorating the September 17, 1787 signing of the Constitution. However, when September 17 falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, Constitution Day shall be held during the preceding or following week.

14. In grade 7 and all high school courses concerning U.S. history or a combination of U.S. history and American government, students must view a Congressional Medal of Honor film made by the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, provided there is no cost for the film.

15. In all schools, the curriculum includes a unit of instruction on the Holocaust and crimes of genocide, including Nazi atrocities of 1933-1945, Armenian Genocide, the Famine-Genocide in Ukraine, and more recent atrocities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan.

16. In all schools, the curriculum includes a unit of instruction on the history, struggles, and contributions of women.

17. In all schools, the curriculum includes a unit of instruction on Black History, including the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the

vestiges of slavery in this country, as well as the struggles and contributions of African-Americans.

18. In all schools offering a secondary agricultural education program, the curriculum includes courses as required by 105 ILCS 5/2-3.80.

19. In all schools, instruction during courses as determined by the Superintendent or designee on disability history, awareness, and the disability rights movement.

LEGAL REF.:

*5 ILCS 465/3 and 465/3a.
20 ILCS 2605/2605-480.
Public Law 108-447, Section 111 of Division J.
105 ILCS 5/2-3.80(e) and (f), 5/27-3, 5/27-3.5, 5/27-5, 5/27-6, 5/27-7, 5/27-12,
5/27-12.1, 5/27-13.1, 5/27-13.2, 5/27-20.3, 5/27-20.4, 5/27-20.5, 5/27-21,
5/27-22, 5/27-23, 5/27-23.3, 5/27-23.4, 5/27-23.7, 5/27-23.8, 5/27-24.2, 435/
and 110/3.
625 ILCS 5/6-408.5.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.420, 1.430, and 1.440.*

CROSS REF.: *6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:70 (Teaching About Religions), 7:190 (Student Discipline); 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Activity)*

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Instruction

Curriculum Content

The curriculum shall contain instruction on subjects required by State statute or regulation as follows:

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2. In grades 9 through 12, subjects include: (a) language arts, (b) writing intensive course, (c) science, (d) mathematics, (e) social studies including U.S. history, (f) foreign language, (g) music, (h) art, (i) driver and safety education, and (j) vocational education.

Students otherwise eligible to take a driver education course must receive a passing grade in at least 8 courses during the previous 2 semesters before enrolling in the course. The Superintendent or designee may waive this requirement if he or she believes a waiver to be in the student's best interest. The course shall include classroom instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue. Automobile safety instruction covering traffic regulations and highway safety must include instruction on the consequences of alcohol consumption and the operation of a motor vehicle. The eligibility requirements contained in State law for the receipt of a certificate of completion from the Secretary of State shall be provided to students in writing at the time of their registration.

3. In grades 7 through 12, as well as in interscholastic athletic programs, steroid abuse prevention must be taught.
4. In kindergarten through grade 12, provided it can be funded by private grants or the federal government, violence prevention and conflict resolution must be stressed, including: (a) causes of conflict, (b) consequences of violent behavior, (c) non-violent resolution, and (d) relationships between drugs, alcohol, and violence.
5. In grades kindergarten through 12, age-appropriate Internet safety must be taught, the scope of which shall be determined by the Superintendent or designee. The curriculum must incorporate policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks* and, at a minimum, include: (a) education about appropriate online behavior, (b) interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and (c) cyberbullying awareness and response.
6. In all grades, character education must be taught including respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship in order to raise students' honesty, kindness, justice, discipline, respect for others, and moral courage.
7. In all schools, citizenship values must be taught, including: (a) patriotism, (b) democratic principles of freedom, justice, and equality, (c) proper use and display of the American flag, (d) the Pledge of Allegiance, and (e) the voting process.
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625 ILCS 5/6-408.5.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.420, 1.430, and 1.440.
Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 108-447, Section 111 of Division J.
Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, Pub. L. No. 110-385, Title II, 122 stat. 4096 (2008).
47 C.F.R. §54.520.

CROSS REF.: 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 6:70 (Teaching About Religions), 7:190 (Student Discipline); 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Activity)