



Oregon Network of
Child Abuse
Intervention
Centers

Updated 9/18/15

What is Erin's Law?

In 2015, the Oregon legislature passed SB 856, also known as Erin's Law. Effective immediately, Erin's Law requires the development and adoption of child sexual abuse prevention programs for students in kindergarten through 12th grade in all Oregon public schools. Recommendations for curriculum have yet to be identified, but SB 856 sets certain guidelines about what should be taught. Oregon is the 24th state to pass a version of Erin's Law.

Did Oregon already require sexual abuse prevention education in schools?

Yes. ORS 339.400 requires school districts and other defined 'education providers' to train employees on identification and prevention of sexual abuse, and to develop and implement training on sexual abuse prevention for students at least once per year. This information has commonly been taught to students as part of standard human sexuality education. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) provides professional training to school personnel regarding sexual health, health relationships, and mandatory reporting.

What's different about Erin's Law?

While previous statute applied to all education providers in Oregon, Erin's Law requirements apply only to public schools. The new requirements provide further standards for sexual abuse prevention instruction, including more detailed curriculum requirements than previous statute, a more frequent schedule of instruction (four times per school year as opposed to one or two under previous statute), and an evaluation component with measurable outcomes. Erin's Law also requires a professional training component for administrators, teachers, and other school personnel regarding communicating these topics to students, and a parental involvement component to inform parents about the characteristics of sexual predators and provide instruction on how to discuss these topics with their children.

How will the new requirements be funded?

At this time, no new funding has been made available for school districts to meet the requirements of Erin's law. At least one bill has been introduced at the federal level that would provide funding for states passing Erin's law.

What are the next steps for implementation?

All public school districts in Oregon should be working to update their current curriculum to meet the new requirements. ONCAIC is working to learn more about what ODE is doing to support districts in making these changes, and opportunities for how child abuse intervention centers can support these efforts. We also hope to be involved in the decisions around recommended curriculum. We will provide more information as it becomes available.

Questions? Please contact Katharine Flug at coordinator@childabuseintervention.org.