

*Information Concerning Erin's Law  
Cullman County Schools*

# Cullman County Schools

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MR. SHANE BARNETTE  
SUPERINTENDENT

September 16, 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Governor Robert Bentley signed Erin's Law (Act 2014-456) in June 2015. This law requires that all public schools in Alabama establish a child sexual abuse prevention and instructional program for students in Grades PreK-12. This program is required to have lessons that are developmental and age appropriate in avoiding and recognizing abuse. In accordance with this law, our school system, like all of those in Alabama must comply. Please feel free to speak to the principal and/or counselor at your child's school with any questions or concerns you may have regarding this issue.

Sincerely,



Shane Barnette  
Cullman County Schools Superintendent

1 HB197  
2 164817-1  
3 By Representative Collins  
4 RFD: Education Policy  
5 First Read: 10-MAR-15

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8 SYNOPSIS: Currently, there is no particular K-12  
9 curriculum to educate students on sexual assault  
10 and abuse. This bill would require such a  
11 curriculum known as "Erin's Law".  
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13 A BILL  
14 TO BE ENTITLED  
15 AN ACT  
16

17 To adopt "Erin's Law" in Alabama: to adopt  
18 guidelines for K-12 instructional courses on how to recognize  
19 and avoid child sexual abuse and to provide for an age  
20 appropriate curriculum in public schools on avoiding child  
21 sexual abuse.

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

23 Section 1. (a) The Legislature recognizes that Erin  
24 Merryn was raped and molested for six and a half years by a  
25 neighbor and a family member. She began a crusade her senior  
26 year of high school in 2004 to end the silence and shame

1 around sexual abuse. Erin's Law has been adopted in a number  
2 of states to help address the problem of child sexual abuse.

3 (b) The intent of Erin's Law is to shatter the  
4 silence and stigma around child sexual abuse, and to educate  
5 children and empower them to recognize and to report abuse.

6 (c) The Legislature finds that without a specific  
7 initiative like Erin's Law, schools generally fail to give  
8 young students adequate awareness and a voice in this issue.

9 Section 2. (a) The State Board of Education shall  
10 adopt guidelines for a child sexual abuse prevention  
11 instructional program. The guidelines shall:

12 (1) Educate children in grades pre-kindergarten  
13 through 12 in public schools on child sexual abuse prevention  
14 through age appropriate curriculum through role plays,  
15 discussions, activities, and books.

16 (2) Give children the knowledge and encouragement to  
17 speak up and tell if anyone has ever touched them  
18 inappropriately, rather than keep it a secret.

19 (3) Educate children on safe touch, unsafe touch,  
20 safe secrets, and unsafe secrets, and how to get away from an  
21 abuser and report an incident immediately.

22 (b) All K-12 public schools shall establish a child  
23 sexual abuse prevention instructional program for students in  
24 grades consistent with subsection (a). The content of  
25 instruction shall be at the discretion of the local board;  
26 provided that at minimum, the instruction shall include each  
27 of the following:

1           (1) Techniques to teach children to recognize child  
2 sexual abuse, equip them with skills to reduce their  
3 vulnerability, and encourage them to report the abuse.

4           (2) At least four sessions of instruction to  
5 reinforce the concepts learned in the program.

6           (3) Sessions conducted at least annually, building  
7 on skills learned in the previous years.

8           (4) Developmentally appropriate instruction for each  
9 grade level.

10          (5) Involvement of students as active learning  
11 participants, and include discussions, modeling, and role  
12 playing.

13          (6) A capacity to be delivered by a wide range of  
14 personnel and professionals, including teachers, school  
15 counselors, outside agency prevention educators, and the like;  
16 provided that the personnel and professionals should have a  
17 thorough knowledge of child sexual abuse, including how to  
18 respond appropriately to child sexual abuse disclosures.

19          (7) An evaluation component with measurable  
20 outcomes.

21          (8) Instruction that is culturally sensitive and  
22 adaptable for use within varying school contexts, including  
23 age, race, and special needs.

24          (9) An evidence-based curriculum, to the extent  
25 possible.

26          (10) A professional training component for  
27 administrators, teachers, and other school personnel on

1 talking to students about child sexual abuse prevention,  
2 effects of child sexual abuse on children, handling of child  
3 sexual abuse disclosures, and mandated reporting.

4 (11) A component that encourages parental  
5 involvement within the child sexual abuse prevention program.  
6 This component shall inform parents about child sexual abuse  
7 topics, including characteristics of offenders, grooming  
8 behaviors, and how to discuss this topic with children.

9 Section 3. This act shall take effect on July 1,  
10 2015.