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121 Saxton Street
Patchogue, NY 11772

Parent Square Notification for Elementary School Parents

September 9, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Once again, we will be implementing Erin's Law as required by New York State. **Erin's Law**- mandates the teaching of child sexual abuse and exploitation prevention to students in grades K-8 in *all* public schools. Erin's Law is named for Erin Merryn, a sexual abuse survivor, author, and advocate. Erin's Law is intended to help children, teachers, and parents in New York State public schools identify warning signs of sexual abuse, and to provide awareness, assistance, referral, or resources for children and families who are victims of child sexual abuse or exploitation.

Each grade level has specific objectives that are required to be taught each year. The objectives include age-appropriate instruction on defining the wide range of behaviors and experiences related to understanding that their body is theirs, unsafe touches, safe and unsafe secrets, personal boundaries, online safety, and finding a safe adult if confronted with a potentially unhealthy or unsafe situation. You can find a recording of a presentation regarding these objectives from last year [here](#) (located on the district website under "Parents" and go to "Health Safety and Wellness", then "Erin's Law").

The school social worker and school psychologist in each building will be providing the instruction, beginning in September 2024 through November 2024, depending on the building schedule. **The New York State Mandate does not allow for parents to opt their children out of the lessons presented.**

The NYS Education Department has developed a resource grid that parents and guardians can easily access to help better discuss some of these topics with your children, as well as gain a better understanding of what Erin's Law is and how it is intended to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation. Please visit <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/erins-law-family-resources.pdf>.

For any questions, please contact me at ccandela@pmschools.org or 631-687-6440.

All the best,
Carolyn Candela
Director of Social Emotional Learning