

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 45th Legislature (1995)

HOUSE BILL NO. 1975

By: Smith (Dale)

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 1991, Sections 10-105, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 1994, 10-106 and 10-109 (70 O.S. Supp. 1994, Section 10-105), which relate to truancy; clarifying language relating to certain fines; modifying definition of truancy; modifying certain notice; modifying list of persons who can detain a truant for certain purposes; amending 10 O.S. 1991, Section 1101, as last amended by Section 3, Chapter 290, O.S.L. 1994 (10 O.S. Supp. 1994, Section 1101), which relates to children; modifying definition; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 1991, Section 10-105, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 1994 (70 O.S. Supp. 1994, Section 10-105), is amended to read as follows:

Section 10-105. A. It shall be unlawful for a parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child who is over the age of five (5) years, and under the age of eighteen (18) years, to neglect or refuse to cause or compel such child to attend and comply

with the rules of some public, private or other school, unless other means of education are provided for the full term the schools of the district are in session or the child is excused as provided in this section. One-half (1/2) day of kindergarten shall be required of all children five (5) years of age or older unless the child is excused from kindergarten attendance as provided in this section. A child who is five (5) years of age shall be excused from kindergarten attendance until the next school year after the child is six (6) years of age if a parent, guardian, or other person having custody of the child notifies the superintendent of the district where the child is a resident by certified mail prior to enrollment in kindergarten, or at any time during the first school year that the child is required to attend kindergarten pursuant to this section, of election to withhold the child from kindergarten until the next school year after the child is six (6) years of age. A kindergarten program shall be directed toward developmentally appropriate objectives for such children. The program shall require that any teacher employed on and after January 1, 1993, to teach a kindergarten program within the public school system shall be certified in early childhood education. All teachers hired to teach a kindergarten program within the public school system prior to January 1, 1993, shall be required to obtain certification in early childhood education on or before the 1996-97 school year in order to continue to teach a kindergarten program.

B. It shall be unlawful for any child who is over the age of sixteen (16) years and under the age of eighteen (18) years, and who has not finished four (4) years of high school work, to neglect or refuse to attend and comply with the rules of some public, private or other school, or receive an education by other means for the full term the schools of the district are in session.

Provided, that this section shall not apply:

1. If any such child is prevented from attending school by reason of mental or physical disability, to be determined by the board of education of the district upon a certificate of the school physician or public health physician, or, if no such physician is available, a duly licensed and practicing physician;

2. If any such child is excused from attendance at school, due to an emergency, by the principal teacher of the school in which such child is enrolled, at the request of the parent, guardian, custodian or other person having control of such child;

3. If any such child who has attained his or her sixteenth birthday is excused from attending school by written, joint agreement between

a. the school administrator of the school district where the child attends school, and

b. the parent, guardian or custodian of the child.

Provided, further, that no child shall be excused from attending school by such joint agreement between a school administrator and the parent, guardian or custodian of the child unless and until it has been determined that such action is for the best interest of the child and/or the community, and that said child shall thereafter be under the supervision of the parent, guardian or custodian until the child has reached the age of eighteen (18) years; or

4. If any such child is excused pursuant to subsection C of this section.

C. A school district shall excuse a student from attending school for the purpose of observing religious holy days if before the absence, the parent, guardian, or person having custody or control of the student submits a written request for the excused absence. The school district shall excuse a student pursuant to this subsection for the days on which the religious holy days are

observed and for the days on which the student must travel to and from the site where the student will observe the holy days.

D. It shall be the duty of the attendance officer to enforce the provisions of this section. Any parent, guardian, custodian, child or other person violating any of the provisions of this section, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and ~~upon conviction thereof~~ shall be punished by a fine of not less than Five Dollars (\$5.00) nor more than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00) for the first offense, not less than Ten Dollars (\$10.00) nor more than Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) for the second offense, and not less than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00) nor more than One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) for each subsequent offense. Each day the child remains out of school after the written warning has been given or the child has been ordered to school by the juvenile court may constitute a separate offense. At the trial of any person charged with violating the provisions of this section, the attendance records of the child or ward may be presented in court by any authorized employee of the school district.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 1991, Section 10-106, is amended to read as follows:

Section 10-106. It shall be the duty of the principal or head teacher of each public, private or other school in the State of Oklahoma to keep a full and complete record of the attendance of all children at such school and to notify the attendance officer of the district in which such school is located of the absence of such children from the school together with the causes thereof, if known; and it shall be the duty of any parent, guardian or other person having charge of any child of compulsory attendance age to notify the child's teacher concerning the cause of any absences of such child. It shall be the duty of the principal or head teacher to notify the parent, guardian or responsible person of the absence of the child for any part of the school day, unless the parent,

guardian or other responsible person notifies the principal or head teacher of such absence. Such attendance officer and teacher shall be required to report to the school health officer all absences on account of illness with such information respecting the same as may be available by report or investigation; and after investigation of all facts relating to the absence of any child or children from such school, the attendance officer shall, if justified by the circumstances, promptly give ~~written warning~~ to the parent, guardian or custodian of any child who has not complied with the provisions of this article warning either in person, orally or in writing to the last-known address, that the attendance of such child is required at some public, private or other school as herein provided. If within five (5) days after the warning has been received, the parent, guardian or custodian of such child does not comply with the provisions of this article, then such attendance officer shall make complaint against the parent, guardian or custodian of such child in a court of competent jurisdiction for such violation, which violation shall be a misdemeanor. If a child is absent without valid excuse four (4) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period, ~~the parents shall be notified. If the child or~~ is absent from school without valid excuse for ~~fifteen (15)~~ ten (10) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period ~~without a valid excuse~~, the attendance officer shall immediately report such absences to the district attorney in the county wherein the school is located for juvenile proceedings pursuant to Title 10 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 1991, Section 10-109, is amended to read as follows:

Section 10-109. A. An attendance officer, a police peace officer ~~employed by a police department which has entered into an agreement with a school district pursuant to Section 3 of this act,~~ or any school administrator or designee of the school administrator

who is employed by the school, may, except for children being home schooled pursuant to Section 10-105 of the Oklahoma Statutes, temporarily detain and assume temporary custody of any child subject to compulsory full-time education, during hours in which school is actually in session, who is found away from the home of such child and who is absent from school without lawful excuse within the school district that such attendance officer, police officer or school official serves.

B. Any person temporarily detaining and assuming temporary custody of a child pursuant to this section shall immediately deliver the child either to the parent, guardian, or other person having control or custody of the child, or to the school from which the child is absent without valid excuse, or to a nonsecure youth service or community center servicing the school district.

C. The temporary custody or detention provided by this section shall be utilized as a means of reforming and returning the truant students to school and shall not be used as a pretext for investigating criminal matters. The temporary custody or detention herein provided is a severely limited type of detention and is not justified unless there are specific facts causing an attendance officer or other authorized person to reasonably suspect that a truancy violation is occurring and that the person the officer intends to detain is a truant.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY 10 O.S. 1991, Section 1101, as last amended by Section 3, Chapter 290, O.S.L. 1994 (10 O.S. Supp. 1994, Section 1101), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1101. When used in this title, unless the context otherwise requires:

1. "Child" means any person under eighteen (18) years of age, except for any person sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years of age who is charged with any crime specified in subsection A of Section 1104.2 of this title, or any person thirteen (13), fourteen (14) or

fifteen (15) years of age who is charged with murder in the first degree pursuant to subsection B of Section 1104.2 of this title, or any individual who has been certified as an adult pursuant to Section 1112 of this title, or any individual against whom the imposition of judgment and sentence has been deferred for any crime specified in subsection A or B of Section 1104.2 of this title, any individual against whom the imposition of judgment and sentence has been deferred after certification as an adult pursuant to Section 1112 of this title; provided that any person under eighteen (18) years of age who is not convicted after being charged with a crime pursuant to Section 1104.2 of this title, or any individual who is not convicted after certification as an adult pursuant to Section 1112 of this title, shall continue to be subject to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court;

2. "Delinquent child" means a child who:

- a. has violated any federal or state law or municipal ordinance, except a traffic statute or traffic ordinance, any provision of the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Code or any lawful order of the court made pursuant to the provisions of Sections 1101 through 1505 of this title, or
- b. has habitually violated traffic laws or traffic ordinances;

3. "Child in need of supervision" means a child who:

- a. has repeatedly disobeyed reasonable and lawful commands or directives of his parent, legal guardian, or other custodian, or
- b. is willfully and voluntarily absent from his home without the consent of his parent, legal guardian, or other custodian for a substantial length of time or without intent to return, or

- c. is willfully and voluntarily absent from school for fifteen (15) or more days or parts of days within a semester or four (4) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period without a valid excuse as defined by the local school boards, if said child is subject to compulsory school attendance;
4. a. "Deprived child" means a child:
- (1) who is for any reason destitute, homeless, or abandoned, or
 - (2) who does not have the proper parental care or guardianship or whose home is an unfit place for the child by reason of neglect, cruelty, or depravity on the part of his parents, legal guardian, or other person in whose care the child may be, or
 - (3) who is a child in need of special care and treatment because of his physical or mental condition including a child born in a condition of dependence on a controlled dangerous substance, and his parents, legal guardian, or other custodian is unable or willfully fails to provide said special care and treatment, or
 - (4) who is a handicapped child deprived of the nutrition necessary to sustain life or of the medical treatment necessary to remedy or relieve a life-threatening medical condition in order to cause or allow the death of said child if such nutrition or medical treatment is generally provided to similarly situated nonhandicapped or handicapped children, provided that no medical treatment is necessary if, in the reasonable medical judgment of the attending physician, such

treatment would be futile in saving the life of the child, or

- (5) who is, due to improper parental care and guardianship, absent from school for ~~fifteen~~ ten (15) or more days or parts of days within a semester or four (4) or more days or parts of days within a four-week period without a valid excuse as defined by the local school boards if said child is subject to compulsory school attendance, or
- (6) whose parent or legal custodian for good cause desires to be relieved of his custody.

- b. (1) nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to mean a child is deprived for the sole reason the parent, guardian or person having custody or control of a child, in good faith, selects and depends upon spiritual means alone through prayer, in accordance with the tenets and practice of a recognized church or religious denomination, for the treatment or cure of disease or remedial care of such child.
- (2) nothing contained in this subparagraph shall prevent a court from immediately assuming custody of a child pursuant to Section 1107 of this title and ordering whatever action may be necessary, including medical treatment, to protect the child's health or welfare.

The phrase dependent and neglected shall be deemed to mean deprived;

5. "Child in need of mental health treatment" means a child in need of mental health treatment as defined by the Inpatient Mental Health Treatment of Children Act, Section 5-501 et seq. of Title 43A of the Oklahoma Statutes;

6. "Handicapped child" means any child who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the

major life activities of the child or who is regarded as having such an impairment by a competent medical professional;

7. "Department" means the Department of Human Services;

8. "Adjudicatory hearing" means a hearing to determine whether the allegations of a petition pursuant to the provisions of Section 1103 of this title are supported by the evidence and whether a child should be adjudged to be a ward of the court;

9. "Dispositional hearing" means a hearing to determine the order of disposition which should be made with respect to a child adjudged to be a ward of the court;

10. "Preliminary inquiry" or "intake" means a mandatory, preadjudicatory interview of the child and, if available, his parents, legal guardian, or other custodian, which is performed by a duly authorized individual to determine whether a child comes within the purview of this chapter, whether other nonadjudicatory alternatives are available and appropriate, and if the filing of a petition is necessary;

11. "Facility" means a place, an institution, a building or part thereof, a set of buildings, or an area whether or not enclosing a building or set of buildings which is used for the lawful custody and treatment of juveniles and may be owned or operated by a public or private agency;

12. "Secure facility" means a facility which is designed and operated to ensure that all entrances and exits from the facility are subject to the exclusive control of the staff of the facility, whether or not the person being detained has freedom of movement within the perimeter of the facility, or a facility which relies on locked rooms and buildings, fences, or physical restraint in order to control behavior of its residents;

13. "Community-based" means a facility, program or service, or open group home or other suitable place located near the home or family of the child, and programs of community supervision and

service which maintain community participation in their planning, operation, and evaluation. These programs may include but are not limited to medical, educational, vocational, social, and psychological guidance, training, counseling, alcoholism treatment, drug treatment, transitional living, independent living and other rehabilitative services;

14. "Day treatment" means a program which provides intensive services to children who reside in their own home, the home of a relative, or a foster home. Day treatment programs include educational services and may be operated as a part of a residential facility;

15. "Group home" means a residential facility housing no more than twelve children with a program which emphasizes family-style living in a homelike environment. Said group home may also offer a program within the community to meet the specialized treatment needs of its residents;

16. "Transitional living program" means a residential program that may be attached to an existing facility or operated solely for the purpose of assisting children to develop the skills and abilities necessary for successful adult living. Said program may include but shall not be limited to reduced staff supervision, vocational training, educational services, employment and employment training, and other appropriate independent living skills training as a part of the transitional living program;

17. "Independent living program" means a program designed to assist a child to enhance skills and abilities necessary for successful adult living and may include but shall not be limited to minimal direct staff supervision and supportive services in making the arrangements necessary for an appropriate place of residence, completing an education, vocational training, obtaining employment or other similar services;

18. "Community residential center" means a residential facility for no more than twenty children which offers a range of services including personal and social services, and emphasizes normal group living, school attendance, securing employment, and general participation in the community;

19. "Institution" means a residential facility offering care and treatment for more than twenty residents. Said institution may:

- a. have a program which includes community participation and community-based services, or
- b. be a secure facility with a program exclusively designed for a particular category of resident;

20. "Mental health facility" means a mental health facility as defined by the Inpatient Mental Health Treatment of Children Act;

21. "Training school" means an institution maintained by the state exclusively for the care, education, training, treatment, and rehabilitation of delinquent children;

22. "Rehabilitative facility" means a facility maintained by the state exclusively for the care, education, training, treatment, and rehabilitation of children in need of supervision;

23. "Secure detention" means the temporary care of children who require secure custody in physically restricting facilities:

- a. while under the continuing jurisdiction of the court pending court disposition, or
- b. pending placement by the Department of Human Services after adjudication;

24. "Probation" means a legal status created by court order whereby a delinquent child is permitted to remain outside a Department facility directly or by contract under prescribed conditions and under supervision by the Department, subject to return to the court for violation of any of the conditions prescribed;

25. "Office" means the Office of Juvenile Affairs; and

26. "Board" means the Board of Juvenile Affairs.

SECTION 5. This act shall become effective July 1, 1995.

SECTION 6. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

45-1-5653

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