

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 46th Legislature (1997)

HOUSE BILL NO. 1413

By: Coleman

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 1991, Section 11-103.7, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 205, O.S.L. 1994 (70 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 11-103.7), which relates to early childhood education; clarifying language; 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 11-103.7, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 205, O.S.L. 1994 (70 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 11-103.7), is amended to read as follows:

Section 11-103.7 A. The State Department of Education shall develop standards for early childhood education programs for children who are at least four (4) years of age on or before September 1 of the ensuing school year. Each school district may offer to four-year-old children the opportunity to participate in an early childhood education program.

B. Such program shall:

1. Be directed toward developmentally appropriate objectives for such children, rather than toward academic objectives suitable for older children;

2. Be offered in addition to, rather than supplant, federally sponsored Head Start classes; and

3. Accommodate the needs of all children and families regardless of socio-economic circumstances.

C. The program shall require that any teacher employed by a public school to teach in such early childhood education program shall be certified in early childhood education.

D. A school district may offer such early childhood education program within the district, in cooperation with other districts, through the use of transfers as specified by law, or by contracting with a private or public provider of early childhood education programs. If the program is provided through contract with a private or public provider other than a school district, the contract may only be continued if each teacher serving the school on and after January 1, 1993, is certified in Early Childhood Education, except that all teachers, without such certification, hired by such provider prior to January 1, 1993, and serving in the school as an early childhood education teacher shall be required to obtain certification on or before the beginning of the 1996-97 school year. Any person who has been employed as an early childhood educator with the Head Start Program, has a child development associate degree (CDA) and has at least five (5) years of experience in such employment shall be certified in early childhood education for purposes of employment in the public schools of this state to teach in early childhood education for children four (4) years of age and younger; if such person is recertified in child development by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition within five (5) years prior to the expiration of the person's early childhood certificate that was issued by the State Board of Education, such person shall be granted a renewal certificate in early childhood education by the State Board of Education upon expiration of the early childhood certificate. Provided, private or

public providers shall meet such other standards required by law and by the State Board of Education.

E. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules ~~and regulations~~ to provide for the implementation of such program.

F. On and after the effective date of this section, the term "pre-kindergarten" shall mean early childhood education for purposes of this title.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. 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.

46-1-5373

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