

ENGROSSED SENATE
BILL NO. 797

By: Wilcoxson of the Senate
and
Dank of the House

[Parental School Choice Act - transportation stipend -
codification -
emergency]

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

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-201 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Parental School Choice Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-202 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

Except as otherwise provided in this act, the parent or guardian of an Oklahoma resident school child may choose, without regard for school district of residence, the school district in which the child or ward shall attend school.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-203 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

If a school child's parent or guardian makes no choice of a school district as provided in this act, the child shall attend school in the school district where the child is a resident or as otherwise provided by law.

SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-204 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Every district board of education shall announce its best estimate of the number of openings available to nonresident transfer students for the upcoming school year at the regular January board meeting.

B. On or before February 1 of each school year, a parent or guardian of a school child in this state may make application to a school district in which the child or ward is not a resident for permission to enroll the child or ward in that district's school as a transfer student for the next school year. The application shall be on a form promulgated by the State Board of Education and made available to parents through all public schools in this state.

C. Each application shall be stamped with the date received by the school district so that those students accepted as transfer students will be accepted in the order in which they applied based on criteria for accepting transfers adopted by the district to which application is made. Each applicant shall be assigned a sequential transfer number to ensure that applicants are considered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

D. Districts may deny transfers pursuant to this act which, together with resident district enrollment or other transfers or both, would cause the number of students in any class to exceed the limits set forth in Section 18-113.1 et seq. of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

E. If the application for permission to enroll is approved, the school district shall simultaneously assign the child to a school within the district.

F. A student who had been approved for a transfer one year shall have priority for being accepted as a transfer in the following year.

SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-205 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Notwithstanding the deadline for a transfer application made pursuant to Section 4 of this act, an emergency transfer from a child's resident school district to another school district may be made at any time.

B. For purposes of this section, an "emergency" means the destruction or partial destruction of a school building, the inability to furnish the grade of study the student is entitled to pursue, the inability to offer a subject a student desires to pursue, dissolution of school district, or the total failure of transportation facilities previously had or contemplated.

SECTION 6. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-206 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

Nothing in this act shall be construed as preventing the enrollment of any child in a school district to which the child moves during the course of the school year.

SECTION 7. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-207 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Permission to enroll pursuant to the Parental School Choice Act shall not be denied because of race, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, or socio-economic condition of the family.

B. Permission to enroll pursuant to the Parental School Choice Act may be denied by the district to which application is made by reason of the school district's lack of physical capacity or educational materials.

C. Permission to enroll pursuant to the Parental School Choice Act may be denied by the school board of the school district of the subject child's residence when the school district of which the

child is a resident is subject to a court-ordered desegregation plan unless the grade which the child is entitled to pursue is not offered in the child's resident school district. The State Board of Education shall annually provide to all school districts a list of school districts subject to court-ordered desegregation plans.

D. If permission to enroll is denied, the denying district shall state its reasons for refusal in writing and shall deliver the written statement to the applying parent or guardian.

SECTION 8. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 8-208 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The provisions of Section 8-101 et seq. of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall not apply to transfers of students pursuant to this act.

SECTION 9. This act shall become effective July 1, 1999.

SECTION 10. 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.

Passed the Senate the 10th day of March, 1999.

President of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the ____ day of _____, 1999.

Speaker of the House of Representatives