

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 22, 1999

Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 1592

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 1592 -- By EDDINS, ADAIR, COLEMAN and WELLS.

(Adult literacy - Center for the Study of Literacy and the Literacy Initiatives Commission – noncodification – emergency)

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 1, Chapter 393, O.S.L. 1992 (70 O.S. Supp. 1998, Section 8003), is amended to read as follows:

Section 8003. ~~A.~~ It is the intent of the Legislature that the Center for the Study of Literacy located at Northeastern State University be responsible for:

1. Establishment of a clearinghouse for the exchange of information and sharing of ideas regarding successful literacy programs and opportunities for funding;
2. In cooperation with the Department of Education and the Department of Libraries, provision of assistance for the writing of applications for grants related to literacy;
3. Establishment of a statewide directory of literacy programs and related services, sorted by county and cross-referenced with support services, with the Clearinghouse for Literacy responsible for gathering, maintaining and disseminating the referral directory; and
4. Establishment of a toll-free statewide literacy services referral system, as funds become available.

~~B. The State Department of Education, Adult and Community Educators; Private Industry Councils; Area Vocational Technical Schools; Department of Human Services; Department of Corrections; Oklahoma Employment Security Commission; Oklahoma Department of Libraries; community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and community-based organizations such as the Oklahoma Literacy Council shall be responsible for creation of a screening system for identification of persons most in need of assistance in becoming literate.~~

~~C. The Literacy Initiatives Commission in collaboration with the State Department of Education and the State Department of Libraries Literacy Office shall be responsible for:~~

~~1. Initiating a public awareness campaign to inform the public and private sector of literacy needs and available services;~~

~~2. Continuing and strengthening community-based pilot projects in both public and private sectors in urban and rural areas;~~

~~3. Continuing and strengthening programs for providing private sector employment incentives for unemployed and underemployed persons who complete appropriate literacy programs;~~

~~4. Development of a flyer to provide information regarding screening, assessment and referral resources at the state, regional and local levels;~~

~~5. Establishing the official definition for literacy in Oklahoma: The term "literacy" shall mean the ability to use such skills as reading, writing, speaking and computing, necessary to communicate and contribute effectively as family and community members, citizens, consumers and job holders, to continue the lifelong learning process;~~

~~6. Establishment of coordinated data gathering processes, including systems for tracing the progress of those having identified needs and the subsequent accomplishments in employment and education of persons completing literacy programs;~~

~~7. Development of strategies for the recruitment and training of greater numbers of volunteers, including college students, and for the focusing of volunteer efforts where needs are greatest;~~

~~8. Establishing Regional Literacy Coordinating Committees, using existing service delivery areas as geographical boundaries and following the membership pattern of the Literacy Initiatives Commission to coordinate literacy efforts under the guidance of the Literacy Initiatives Commission; and~~

~~9. Establishment of a Literacy Initiatives Commission coordinator to facilitate the Commission, with the Secretary of Education remaining as the Commission Chair.~~

~~D. The Department of Education in cooperation with the Department of Libraries Literacy Office shall be responsible for providing technical assistance to the Literacy Initiatives Commission.~~

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

The Oklahoma Department of Libraries shall, in cooperation with the State Department of Education, the Center for the Study of Literacy located at Northeastern State University, and the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority, as funds become available, conduct a comprehensive statewide literacy awareness campaign to inform functionally illiterate adults

about the availability of literacy and adult basic education services throughout the state and to recruit additional literacy volunteers.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

The State Department of Education shall, if funds are available, participate in the National Assessment of Adult Literacy to be conducted in the year 2002 by the National Center for Education Statistics. The purpose of the state's participation in this survey is to allow researchers to define the extent of adult literacy in Oklahoma and better describe the population of adults who are functionally illiterate. It will also enable researchers to develop baseline data regarding adult literacy that will be comparable to other states that participate in the survey.

SECTION 4. REPEALER 70 O.S. 1991, Sections 8001, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 111, O.S.L. 1994 and 8002 (70 O.S. Supp. 1998, Section 8001), are hereby repealed.

SECTION 5. 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.

COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND BUDGET, dated 2-18-99 -- DO PASS, As Coauthored.