STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 48th Legislature (2001)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1767 By: Winchester

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

(Children - the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act - requiring yearly audit - 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 640 of Title 10, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 640.1 of Title 10, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The purpose of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act is to ensure that all Oklahoma children will be healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed by the time they enter school. Specifically, the goals of the partnership are that families will nurture, teach and provide for their young children; that children will be born healthy and remain healthy; that families with young children will be able to find and afford high quality child care when needed; and that children enter school prepared to learn and continue to succeed.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 640.2 of Title 10, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created until July 1, 2007, in accordance with the Oklahoma Sunset Law, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board. The Partnership Board shall consist of thirty (30) members, as follows:

1. Six members who represent business or corporate entities located in Oklahoma, two to be appointed by the Governor, two to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and two to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

2. Four members who represent a charitable foundation, two to be appointed by the Governor, and two to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

3. Two members who are members of the clergy or represent a faith-based organization to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

4. One member who is a tribal representative selected from a list submitted by the Oklahoma Inter-Tribal Council to be appointed by the Governor;

5. One member who represents providers of child care services to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

6. One member who is a parent of a child under the age of six (6) years to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

7. One member who is a parent of a child with disabilities under the age of six (6) years to be appointed by the Governor;

8. One member who represents an organization of publicly-funded preschool programs and is experienced in collaborative community partnership development to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

9. One member who is a teacher in a public school and is certified in early childhood education to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

10. One member who serves as the Director of the Oklahoma Head Start Collaboration Project; and

11. Eleven members who represent state government as follows:

a. State Superintendent of Public Instruction,

b. State Commissioner of Health,

c. Commissioner of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services,

d. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce,

e. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries,

f. Director of the Department of Human Services,

g. Secretary of Education,

h. Administrator of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority,

i. Director of the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth,

j. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, and

k. Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

B. Members of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, or President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall serve initial terms as follows:

1. The members initially appointed by the Governor shall serve until November 1, 2003;

2. The members initially appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall serve until November 1, 2004; and

3. The members initially appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall serve until November 1, 2005.

C. As the terms of the initially appointed members expire, the terms of subsequently appointed members shall expire every four (4) years on November 1.

D. A vacancy in a position shall be filled in the same manner as regular appointments as provided in subsection A of this section.

E. The Chair of the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Education shall convene an organizational meeting of the Partnership Board no later than October 1, 2001, at which time members of the Board shall elect a chair and vice-chair. The presence of fifteen Partnership Board members shall constitute a quorum which shall be required before conducting any business. Any action of the Partnership Board must be approved by a majority of the members present.

F. The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board is authorized to hire staff to assist with the implementation of this act provided, the Board shall utilize existing agency staff resources, when feasible, prior to hiring permanent, full-time staff. The Board is also authorized to secure staff assistance by contractual arrangement and may enter into interagency agreements to facilitate the sharing of state agency staff whose duties and responsibilities could be carried out more efficiently and effectively via the Partnership framework.

G. Members of the Partnership Board shall receive no compensation for serving on the Partnership Board, but shall receive travel reimbursement as follows:

1. State agency employees who are members of the Partnership Board shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties by their respective agencies in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act; and

2. All other Partnership Board members shall be reimbursed by their appointing authority for travel expenses incurred in the

performance of their duties in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 640.3 of Title 10, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The responsibilities of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board shall be to ensure that:

1. There is leadership on early childhood education and care;

2. There is a voice for the needs of young children;

3. The public, especially parents, are educated about the benefits of and opportunities for early learning;

4. Oklahoma's diverse programs, services and initiatives are brought together to develop an effective, coordinated system for early childhood care and education;

5. Communities are empowered and engaged to develop and improve early childhood education and care at the local level;

6. Standards are identified, progress is evaluated and accountability is ensured in early childhood services and policy;

7. Private sector funding is leveraged;

8. Federal, state and local funds are coordinated with private revenue and funding opportunities for early childhood care and education initiatives are expanded;

9. Best practices are collected and promoted; and

10. An integrated, interagency information system capable of assisting the state and its communities assess strengths and needs, track progress and coordinate services for young children and their families is developed and managed.

B. The Partnership Board shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature no later than November 1 of each year. The report shall include the following:

1. Status and any results of the Partnership Board's effort to engage the public regarding the care and education of children under the age of five (5);

2. Status of health conditions of children under the age of five (5);

3. Availability and cost of quality child care for all children under the age of five (5) needing care outside their home;

4. Number, location and status of quality prekindergarten programs in the state;

5. Preparedness level of children entering kindergarten;

6. Detailed summary of proposals and programs funded in whole, or in part, by the Partnership; and

7. A report of full-time and part-time staff hired by the Partnership, including job responsibilities and salary levels, and a report of contract personnel and interagency agreements utilized by the Partnership.

SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 640.4 of Title 10, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board is authorized to establish the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Foundation to raise funds and to assist in the implementation of this act and the achievement of its goals.

B. The responsibility of the Partnership Foundation shall be to solicit money or property in the name of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board. In addition to funds received from the general public or other public or private sources, the Foundation may receive funds from state agencies at such times and in such amounts as may be appropriated by the Legislature or made available to the Foundation from state agencies from their sources of revenue.

C. Upon proper incorporation, the Foundation is authorized and directed to secure tax-exempt status under the appropriate provision

of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C., Section 501(c)).

D. No employee of the State of Oklahoma shall be a voting member of the Partnership Foundation. Furthermore, any member of the Partnership Foundation who may have a financial interest, either directly or indirectly, in an action under consideration by the Foundation shall disclose such interest and shall abstain from voting on said matter.

E. After incorporation, the Partnership Foundation shall make provision for a yearly audit and shall submit a copy of the audit to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and to the Chair of the Partnership Board.

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.

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