

CS for SB 1

THE STATE SENATE  
Monday, February 24, 2003

Committee Substitute for  
Senate Bill No. 1

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 1 - By: FISHER and RILEY of the Senate and PETERS of the House.

An Act relating to children; creating the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act; providing short title; stating intent, purposes, and goals; creating the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board; providing for membership organization and reimbursement of the Board; exempting members from dual-office-holding provisions; stating powers and duties of the Board; requiring annual report and specifying contents of report; designating Department of Human Services as lead agency; authorizing establishment of certain foundation; stating purpose of foundation; authorizing use of foundation revenues for certain purpose; prohibiting voting by certain members of foundation; and providing for codification.

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:

A. The Legislature recognizes that:

1        1. Parents have the right and the responsibility to provide for  
2 the health, education, and emotional well-being of their children,  
3 and it is the desire of the Legislature that all children be reared  
4 in nurturing homes with two involved parents who actively  
5 participate in the development of their young children;

6        2. This standard is not always possible and that the benefits  
7 of ensuring that children enter school ready to succeed can be  
8 substantial. Investing wisely during a child's early years can  
9 reduce the need for remediation, treatment, or crisis intervention  
10 programs in later years, and it is the desire of the Legislature  
11 that children be healthy, eager to learn, and ready to succeed by  
12 the time they enter school;

13       3. Children arrive at kindergarten with a variety of preschool  
14 and home experiences, along with varying levels of school readiness.  
15 Identifying children who may be at risk of school failure, making  
16 their caregivers aware of the value of quality preschool  
17 experiences, and providing, on a voluntary basis, these students  
18 with the skills essential for reducing inequalities in school  
19 readiness can help ensure that more children enter kindergarten  
20 ready to succeed; and

21       4. The state may not achieve the ninety-percent (90%) reading  
22 goal pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act without ensuring that

1 children enter school fully prepared to take advantage of reading  
2 instruction.

3 B. The Legislature further recognizes that, although the public  
4 and private sectors provide a number of excellent programs and have  
5 made significant investments in the children of this state, the  
6 benefits derived from these investments are not being optimized.  
7 Therefore better coordination of existing programs at the community  
8 and state levels is needed to increase their effectiveness and make  
9 them more cost-efficient.

10 C. It is the intent of the Legislature that the capacities of  
11 parents and communities be strengthened to meet the needs of  
12 families with young children who choose to participate by  
13 coordinating available resources and building new partnerships  
14 within communities that include parents, private businesses, faith-  
15 based and other charitable organizations, and other interested  
16 parties.

17 D. Coordination shall be accomplished by the establishment of a  
18 comprehensive public/private partnership and be implemented in  
19 cooperation with the state agencies represented on the Oklahoma  
20 Partnership for School Readiness Board created in Section 3 of this  
21 act.

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

4           A. There is hereby created until July 1, 2009, in accordance  
5 with the Oklahoma Sunset Law, the Oklahoma Partnership for School  
6 Readiness Board. The Board shall promote school readiness,  
7 supporting community-based efforts to increase the number of  
8 children who are ready to succeed by the time they enter school, and  
9 shall consist of representatives from the private and public sectors  
10 as follows:

11           1. Fifteen private sector representatives, two of whom shall be  
12 parents of children eight (8) years of age or younger, appointed by  
13 the Governor from a list submitted by an existing private-sector  
14 school readiness initiative that includes in its focus community  
15 mobilization and public engagement activities;

16           2. Two members of the House of Representatives, one to be  
17 appointed by the Speaker and one to be appointed by the Minority  
18 Leader;

19           3. Two members of the Senate, one to be appointed by the  
20 President Pro Tempore and one to be appointed by the Minority  
21 Leader;

1           4. To insure that existing resources are being utilized  
2 effectively, fourteen public sector representatives shall serve on  
3 the board as follows:

- 4           a. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, or  
5           designee,
- 6           b. State Commissioner of Health, or designee,
- 7           c. Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and  
8           Substance Abuse Services, or designee,
- 9           d. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, or  
10          designee,
- 11          e. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, or  
12          designee,
- 13          f. Director of the Department of Human Services, or  
14          designee,
- 15          g. Administrator of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority,  
16          or designee,
- 17          h. Director of the Oklahoma Commission on Children and  
18          Youth, or designee,
- 19          i. Director of the State Department of Rehabilitation  
20          Services, or designee,
- 21          j. Executive Director of the Oklahoma Educational  
22          Television Authority, or designee,

- 1 k. Director of the Department of Corrections, or
- 2 designee,
- 3 l. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Career and
- 4 Technology Education, or designee,
- 5 m. Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
- 6 Education, or designee, and
- 7 n. Cabinet Secretary with responsibility for education
- 8 agencies, or designee.

9 B. Members appointed by the Governor shall serve terms of four  
10 (4) years; provided, of those members initially appointed to the  
11 Board, eight members shall be appointed for two-year terms,  
12 beginning September 1, 2003, and seven members shall be appointed  
13 for four-year terms, beginning September 1, 2003, as designated by  
14 the Governor. Appointed members shall continue in office until a  
15 successor is appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall fill all  
16 vacancies in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

17 C. Legislative members shall serve at the pleasure of the  
18 appointing authority.

19 D. The Director of the Department of Human Services shall  
20 convene an organizational meeting of the Oklahoma Partnership for  
21 School Readiness Board prior to November 1, 2003, at which time  
22 members of the Board shall elect a chair, a vice-chair, and other

1 officers as needed. A majority of the members of the Board shall  
2 constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

3 E. Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for  
4 serving on the Board but shall receive travel reimbursement as  
5 follows:

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

10 2. Legislative members who are members of the Board shall be  
11 reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their  
12 duties in accordance with Section 456 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma  
13 Statutes from the legislative body in which they serve; and

14 3. Other Board members shall be reimbursed by the appointing  
15 authority for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their  
16 duties in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

17 F. Members of the Board shall be exempt from the dual-office-  
18 holding provisions of Section 6 of Title 51 of the Oklahoma  
19 Statutes.

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

23 A. The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board may:

1           1. Establish guidelines for the disbursement of funds received  
2 from any public or private source or otherwise made available to the  
3 Board for the purpose of supporting community initiatives that are  
4 consistent with the goals of the Oklahoma Partnership for School  
5 Readiness Act and direct such other expenditures as may be necessary  
6 in the performance of its duties;

7           2. Establish other guidelines as necessary to carry out the  
8 duties and responsibilities assigned to the Oklahoma Partnership for  
9 School Readiness Board;

10          3. Receive funds from any public or private source;

11          4. Enter into contractual agreements to assist with the  
12 administration of the Board and to provide technical assistance to  
13 communities upon request;

14          5. Appoint subcommittees which may include persons who are not  
15 Board members. Such persons shall not be entitled to compensation  
16 but may be reimbursed, upon approval by the Director of the  
17 Department of Human Services, for necessary expenses incurred in the  
18 performance of their duties in accordance with the State Travel  
19 Reimbursement Act; and

20          6. The Board shall ensure, to the greatest extent possible,  
21 that the needs and values of all parents are respected and protected  
22 and that voluntary participation is the basis for delivering all

1 school readiness programs. The Board shall act in ways which are  
2 sensitive to the diverse religious and other values of Oklahomans.

3 B. The responsibilities of the Oklahoma Partnership for School  
4 Readiness Board shall be to:

5 1. Conduct a thorough assessment of existing public and private  
6 programs to determine their effectiveness and to maximize the  
7 efficient use of current state funds;

8 2. Implement a public engagement campaign and establish a  
9 structure to facilitate communication between communities;

10 3. Provide leadership at the state level to encourage  
11 communities to develop and improve school readiness opportunities at  
12 the local level to encourage and empower local communities;

13 4. Encourage public and private programs, services, and  
14 initiatives to work together to provide coordinated, community-  
15 based, effective and cost-efficient programs;

16 5. Maximize the extent to which private sector funding is  
17 leveraged and federal, state, and local funds are coordinated with  
18 private funds;

19 6. Establish standards of accountability in school readiness  
20 programs and policy and recognize and promote the best practices;  
21 and

1           7. Submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature  
2 no later than November 1 of each year. The report shall include,  
3 but not be limited to, the following:

- 4           a. preparedness level of children entering kindergarten,
- 5           b. status and results of the effort of the Board to  
6 engage the public regarding the care and education of  
7 children under the age of five (5) years and of the  
8 efforts of the Board to develop and promote private  
9 sector programs and voluntary parental involvement,
- 10          c. detailed summary of community initiatives and programs  
11 funded in whole, or in part, by the Board,
- 12          d. availability and cost of quality child care for  
13 children under five (5) years of age needing care  
14 outside their home,
- 15          e. number, location, and status of quality pre-  
16 kindergarten programs in the state, and
- 17          f. percentage of third-grade students reading at or above  
18 grade level.

19           C. The Department of Human Services shall be the lead public  
20 agency for general administration and monitoring of programs and  
21 activities related to the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness  
22 Act.

1 D. Each of the following agencies shall make staff available to  
2 the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board for the purpose  
3 of providing professional consultation and staff support to assist  
4 in the implementation of this act:

- 5 1. State Department of Education;
- 6 2. State Department of Health;
- 7 3. Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services;
- 8 4. Department of Human Services; and
- 9 5. Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth.

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

13 A. There is hereby authorized the establishment of a not-for-  
14 profit school readiness foundation to raise funds and to assist in  
15 the implementation of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness  
16 Act and the achievement of the goals of the act.

17 B. Costs to underwrite implementation of the responsibilities  
18 of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board may be borne  
19 from revenues of the foundation.

20 C. The foundation created pursuant to this section may receive  
21 funds from any public or private source to carry out the purposes of  
22 this act, including, but not limited to, gifts or grants from any  
23 department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States or of

1 this state for any purpose consistent with the provisions of this  
2 act.

3 D. The foundation shall secure tax-exempt status under the  
4 appropriate provision of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue  
5 Code, 26 U.S.C., Section 501(c).

6 E. Any member of the foundation who may have a financial  
7 interest in an action under consideration by the foundation shall  
8 abstain from voting on such matter.

9 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, dated 2-17-03 - DO  
10 PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.