

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 49th Legislature (2003)

HOUSE BILL HB1511

By: Dank

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 1-109, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 236, O.S.L. 2002 (70 O.S. Supp. 2002, Section 1-109), which relates to the length of a school year; establishing a starting date of the school year; deleting certain school year length requirements; providing exceptions to the starting date for certain activities; allowing an exception for a school district upon approval of the State Board of Education; requiring submission of a request; limiting approval; directing the Board to adopt rules; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 6-101, which relates to teacher contracts; changing notification date for reemployment of a teacher for the next fiscal year; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 1210.508, which relates to the Oklahoma School Testing Program; changing date for the return of test results and reports; adding certain tests; deleting duplicative 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. 2001, Section 1-109, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 236, O.S.L. 2002 (70 O.S. Supp. 2002, Section 1-109), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1-109. A. A Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, a school year for all public schools in Oklahoma shall ~~consist of at least ten (10) months of four (4) weeks~~ begin on any day after September 1, during which time and school shall actually be in session and instruction offered for not less than one hundred eighty (180) days.

B. The provisions of subsection A of this section shall not prohibit a school district from:

1. Scheduling athletic or other extracurricular activities, contests or practices prior to September 1;

2. Scheduling in-service training programs or staff work days prior to September 1; or

3. Offering an extended school year according to the provisions of Section 1-109.1 of this title.

C. Five (5) days of the one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction may be used for attendance of professional meetings and teachers may be paid for a length of term in excess thereof, under conditions hereinafter outlined. Subject to district board of education policy or collective bargaining agreement, additional professional leave days may be granted for individual teachers to attend or participate in professional meetings, staff development training, or National Board certification portfolio development. During two (2) days of the additional professional days granted to teachers for National Board certification portfolio development, a substitute teacher shall be provided by the school district at no cost to the teacher.

D. A school district may authorize parent-teacher conferences to be held during a regular school day. Following such authorization by the school district, these conferences shall be counted towards a school day, as defined in Section 1-111 of this title, and included as part of the one hundred seventy-five (175) days of classroom instruction.

E. A school district may maintain school for less than a full term only when conditions beyond the control of school authorities make the maintenance of the term impossible and the State Board of Education has been apprised and has expressed concurrence in writing.

F. A school district may begin school prior to September 1 upon approval by the State Board of Education. The school district shall submit a request to the Board stating the reasons for an earlier starting date. The Board shall approve the request only upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances. The Board shall adopt rules

establishing criteria for implementing the provisions of this subsection.

~~B.~~ G. The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for an extended day schedule. The criteria shall:

1. Prescribe a lengthened school day within limits determined not to be detrimental to quality instruction; and

2. Ensure that the schedule is equivalent in annual hours of instruction to the one-hundred-eighty-day school year specified in subsection A of this section; and

3. Be consistent with the provisions of this section and Sections 1-110 through 1-112 of this title, but may result in fewer annual days of instruction.

The State Board of Education may authorize school districts to implement an extended day schedule for instruction pursuant to the criteria developed. The State Board of Education shall require the participating school districts to prepare a report of the impact of the extended day schedule.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 6-101, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101. A. Except as provided in subsection E of this section, no person shall be permitted to teach in any school district of the state without a written contract, except as provided herein for substitute teachers and except teachers of classes in adult education. The board of education of each school district, wherein school is expected to be conducted for the ensuing year, shall employ and contract in writing with qualified teachers for and in the name of the district. One copy of the contract shall be filed with the clerk of the board of education and one copy shall be retained by the teacher.

B. Except as otherwise provided by law, no board of education shall have authority to enter into any written contract with a teacher who does not hold a valid certificate issued or recognized

by the State Board of Education authorizing said teacher to teach the grades or subject matter for which the teacher is employed. Any board of education paying or authorizing the payment of the salary of any teacher not holding a certificate, as required herein, shall be adjudged to be guilty of a fraudulent expenditure of public funds and members voting for such payment shall be held jointly responsible for the return of the amount of any public monies thus expended, upon suit brought by the district attorney or by any interested citizen in the district where such funds have been expended.

C. It shall be the duty of the superintendent of schools under whose supervision teachers have been contracted to teach to certify to the treasurer of the contracting district the names of the teachers holding valid certificates with whom contracts have been made and the names of substitute teachers employed in accordance with law. Said treasurer shall not register any warrant issued in payment of salary to any teacher whose name is not included in such list and shall be liable on the official bond for the treasurer for the amount of any warrant registered in violation of the provisions of this section.

D. Whenever any person shall enter into a contract with any school district in Oklahoma to teach in such school district the contract shall be binding on the teacher and on the board of education until the teacher legally has been discharged from the teaching position or released by the board of education from the contract. Until such teacher has been thus discharged or released, the teacher shall not have authority to enter into a contract with any other board of education in Oklahoma for the same time covered by his original contract. If upon written complaint by the board of education in a district any teacher is reported to have failed to obey the terms of the contract previously made and to have entered into a contract with another board of education without having been

released from the former contract, the teacher, upon being found guilty of said charge at a hearing held before the State Board of Education, shall have such teacher's certificate suspended for the remainder of the term for which said contract was made.

E. A board of education shall have authority to enter into written contracts with teachers for the ensuing fiscal year prior to the beginning of ~~such the~~ year. ~~If, prior to April 10, a~~ A board of education ~~has not entered~~ shall have no later than June 1, to enter into a written contract with a regularly employed teacher or notified the teacher in writing by registered or certified mail that a recommendation has been made not to reemploy the teacher for the ensuing fiscal year, ~~and if, by April 25, such.~~ A regularly employed teacher has not notified shall have no later than June 25, to notify the board of education in writing by registered or certified mail that ~~such the~~ teacher does not desire to be reemployed in ~~such the~~ school district for the ensuing year, ~~such.~~ If the school district does not enter into a written contract with a regularly employed teacher or the school district or the teacher does not provide notice of nonreemployment by the deadlines provided for in this subsection, the teacher shall be considered as employed on a continuing contract basis and on the same salary schedule used for other teachers in the school district for the ensuing fiscal year, and such employment and continuing contract shall be binding on the teacher and on the school district.

F. Whenever a school district is engaged in contract negotiations with teachers employed by that school district after the school year has begun and the teachers are employed on a continuing contract basis, the school district shall, beginning at the first of the school year, pay the teachers any state-mandated salary increases and salary schedule increases to which each teacher is otherwise entitled.

G. No school district or any member of the board of education of a district shall be liable for the payment of compensation to a teacher or administrator under the provisions of any contract for the ensuing year, if it becomes necessary to close the school because of insufficient attendance, disorganization, annexation, consolidation, or by dispensing with the school according to law, provided, such cause is known or action is taken prior to July 1 of such ensuing year.

H. No school district or any member of a board of education shall be liable for the payment of compensation to any teacher or administrator for the unexpired term of any contract if the school building to which the teacher or administrator has been assigned is destroyed by accident, storm, fire, or otherwise and it becomes necessary to close the school because of inability to secure a suitable building or buildings for continuation of school. Teachers and administrators shall be entitled to pay for any time lost when school is closed on account of epidemics or otherwise when an order for such closing has been issued by a health officer authorized by law to issue the order.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 1210.508, is amended to read as follows:

Section 1210.508 A. 1. Contingent upon the availability of funding, beginning with the 2001-2002 school year and every school year thereafter, for purposes of comparison with the state criterion-referenced tests for student academic achievement at the elementary level, the State Board of Education shall cause a norm-referenced test to be administered to every student in the fourth-grade of the public schools who is a resident of or transferee into the district in which the student is enrolled. The test used shall be selected by the Board and shall measure specific skills represented by learner objectives. The student skills to be tested

at the fourth-grade level shall include reading, mathematics, and language arts.

2. Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year the State Board of Education shall cause a norm-referenced test to be administered to every student in the third grade of the public schools who is a resident of or transferee into the district in which the student is enrolled. The test used shall be selected by the Board and shall measure specific skills represented by learner objectives. The student skills to be tested at the third-grade level shall include reading, mathematics, and language arts. The third-grade norm-referenced test shall be administered every year thereafter, until the implementation of the third-grade criterion-referenced test provided for in paragraph 3 of subsection B of this section.

B. 1. The Board shall develop and administer a series of criterion-referenced tests designed to indicate whether competencies as defined by the State Board of Education which Oklahoma public school students are expected to have attained in grades five and eight in mathematics, science, reading and writing of English, history, constitution and government of the United States, geography, and the arts and for the subjects and grade levels specified in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this subsection have been achieved. Students who do not perform satisfactorily on the tests shall be remediated, subject to the availability of funding.

2. The Board shall administer criterion-referenced tests in the reading and writing of English, mathematics, science, United States history, Constitution and government, geography, and the arts to every student in the fifth- and eighth-grades who are residents of or transferees into the district in which they are currently enrolled.

3. Contingent upon the availability of funds appropriated for that purpose, the State Department of Education shall develop and field-test during the 2001-2002 school year a series of criterion-

referenced tests in reading/language arts, and mathematics for every student in the third-grade of the public schools who is a resident of or transferee into the district in which the student is enrolled. If the necessary funds are made available, the tests shall be implemented in the 2002-2003 school year and administered every year thereafter.

4. Each student who completes the instruction for the specified secondary level competencies, beginning with the school year listed in this paragraph and each school year thereafter, shall complete an end-of-instruction test for those competencies in order to graduate from high school. After the end-of-instruction tests are fully implemented all students will take the tests prior to graduation, unless otherwise exempt by law. The State Board of Education shall administer the criterion-referenced tests, to be implemented according to the following schedule:

Subject	Implementation
English II	2000-2001
United States History	2000-2001
Biology I	2002-2003
Algebra I	2002-2003

The end-of-instruction tests shall serve the purpose of the criterion-referenced tests as provided in paragraph 1 of this subsection. The English II end-of-instruction test shall, at a minimum, assess writing skills. Students shall be afforded the opportunity to retake the tests once prior to graduation. In order to provide an indication of the levels of competency attained by the student in a permanent record for potential future employers and institutions of higher education, school districts shall report the highest achieved state test performance index on the end-of-instruction tests on the student's high school transcript. Any student at the middle school level who completes the instruction in a secondary course specified in this paragraph may, upon the

student's request, be administered the appropriate end-of-instruction test. It is the intent of the Legislature that, following implementation of the secondary level end-of-instruction tests, the performance data and any available research shall be reviewed for consideration of additional consequences, including, but not limited to, high school graduation.

C. All criterion-referenced tests required by this section shall measure academic competencies in correlation with the curricular standards adopted by the Board pursuant to Section 11-103.6 of this title. The State Board of Education shall evaluate academic competencies to ensure such competencies reflect high standards, are specific, well-defined, measurable, challenging, and will prepare elementary students for next-grade-level course work and secondary students for post-secondary studies at institutions of higher education or technology center schools without the need for remediation in core curriculum areas. All academic competencies shall reflect the goal of improving the state average American College Testing (ACT) score. The State Department of Education shall annually evaluate the results of the criterion-referenced tests. The State Board of Education shall seek to ensure that data yielded from the tests required in this section are utilized at the school district level to prescribe skill reinforcement and/or remediation by requiring school districts to develop and implement a specific program of improvement based on the test results.

D. 1. All results and reports of the criterion-referenced test series required in subsection B of this section for grades three, five and eight and the norm-referenced tests required in subsection A of this section shall be returned to each school district prior to ~~May 1~~ June 1 of each year.

2. State, district, and site level results of all tests required in this section shall be disaggregated by ethnic group and gender. ~~All results and reports of the criterion-referenced test~~

~~series required in subsection B of this section shall be returned to the State Department of Education and to the Office of Accountability by June 15 of each year.~~ Each school site shall notify the student's parents of the school's performance levels in the Oklahoma School Testing Program as reported in the Oklahoma Educational Indicators Program at the end of each school year.

E. The State Board of Education shall be responsible for the development, field-testing, and validation of the criterion-referenced test series required in subsection B of this section. In the interest of economy the Board shall adapt criterion-referenced tests that have been developed by other states or are otherwise commercially available, or portions of such tests, to the extent that such tests are appropriate for use in the testing program to be administered to Oklahoma students.

F. The Board shall develop, administer, and incorporate as a part of the Oklahoma School Testing Program, other testing programs or procedures, including appropriate accommodations for the testing of students with disabilities as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), P.L. No. 101-476.

SECTION 4. This act shall become effective July 1, 2003.

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.

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