STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 49th Legislature (2004)

SENATE
RESOLUTION SR70 By: Wilcoxson

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution creating the Task Force on Reading Curriculum and Instruction; providing for appointment of members; providing for meetings and staff assistance; stating duties; requiring report to certain officials and setting deadline; prohibiting compensation of members; and authorizing reimbursement for travel expenses.

WHEREAS, one in five adults in Oklahoma is functionally illiterate; and

WHEREAS, 85% of juveniles appearing in court and 60% of prison inmates are functionally illiterate; and

WHEREAS, 33% of mothers receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children are functionally illiterate; and

WHEREAS, 75% of the chronically unemployed are functionally illiterate; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma fourth grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading scores have declined; and

WHEREAS, 70% of Oklahoma eighth graders and 74% of Oklahoma fourth graders score below the proficient level on the NAEP; and

WHEREAS, each year the number of illiterate teens in Oklahoma increases by 10 to 12%; and

WHEREAS, a significant achievement gap exists among various racial and socioeconomic subgroups.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 49TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

SECTION 1. A. There is hereby created until December 31, 2004, the Task Force on Reading Curriculum and Instruction. The task force shall consist of the following members:

1. One member of the Senate to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

2. One member of the Senate to be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

3. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, or designee;

4. The Chair of the Oklahoma Commission on Teacher Preparation, or designee;

5. The Director of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, or designee;

6. Two representatives of the business community to be appointed by the Chancellor of Higher Education;

7. One representative from the private sector who provides professional education to teachers in reading to be appointed by the Chancellor of Higher Education; and

8. The Chancellor of Higher Education who shall serve as chair of the task force.

B. The chair of the task force shall convene the first meeting on or before September 1, 2004. The task force shall meet at such times and places as deemed necessary to perform its duties as specified in this resolution. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chair. Staffing for the task force shall be provided by the staffs of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Senate. The State Department of Education and Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall provide information and assistance as requested by the task force.

C. The task force shall:

1. Evaluate how teacher preparation programs in this state teach prospective teachers to teach reading and to what depth

teachers are taught the knowledge and techniques of the five essential components of reading instruction;

2. Evaluate to what depth and level of rigor the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP) assesses prospective teachers in the five essential components of reading instruction;

3. Determine whether the level of competency required for certification is sufficient for the successful teaching of reading;

4. Examine the process and standards used by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation for accreditation of teacher preparation programs in the teaching of reading;

5. Determine whether reading specialists, principals, and curriculum directors select materials and methodologies that include the five essential components of reading instruction;

6. Determine whether classroom teachers are evaluated on utilization of the five essential components of reading instruction;

7. Study the implementation and evaluation of the Reading Sufficiency Act at the school site, district and state levels;

8. Analyze the results of the Reading Sufficiency Act in terms of improved student achievement, particularly as to whether fewer students in second and third grade and above are in need of reading remediation and intervention;

9. Determine the impact of the "Literacy First" professional development institute on reading achievement; and

10. Issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Chancellor of Higher Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Chair of the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation on or before December 31, 2004.

D. Members of the task force shall receive no compensation for serving on the task force, but may receive travel reimbursement as follows:

1. Legislative members of the task force may be reimbursed for their necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with Section 456 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes, from the legislative body in which they serve;

2. Nonlegislative members of the task force may be reimbursed by their respective agencies for their necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act; and

3. Other members of the task force may be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties by their respective appointing authorities in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

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