

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 50th Legislature (2006)

SENATE BILL 1515

By: Lawler of the Senate

and

Brannon of the House

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to agriculture; creating the Oklahoma Farm to School Program Act; providing short title; stating intent, purposes and goals; designating the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry as lead agency; providing for staffing; stating duties of executive director; requiring establishment of website; authorizing the Department to promulgate rules; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

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 5-60.1 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Farm to School Program Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-60.2 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Legislature recognizes that:

1. Farm to School Programs link schools and Oklahoma farms in order to provide schools with fresh and minimally processed farm commodities for inclusion in school meals and snacks, to help children develop healthy eating habits, and to improve Oklahoma farmers' incomes and direct access to markets; and

2. The benefits of Farm to School Programs often include activities that provide students with hands-on learning

opportunities, such as farm visits, cooking demonstrations, and school gardening and composting programs, and integrate nutrition and agriculture education into school curricula.

B. It is the intent of the Legislature that school districts encourage the implementation of the Oklahoma Farm to School Program which will emphasize the purchase of locally and regionally produced foods in order to improve child nutrition and strengthen local and regional farm economies.

C. A successful statewide Farm to School Program will require the resources, expertise, and collaboration of a variety of state agencies, including the State Department of Education, the State Department of Health, and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry, the Department of Human Services and a nonprofit agency that has experience in Farm to School Programs.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-60.3 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Department of Agriculture shall be the lead agency for the Program and shall employ an executive director to administer and monitor the programs and activities related to the Oklahoma Farm to School Program with the advice of and guidance of a nonprofit food policy council.

B. The following agencies shall make staff available to the Oklahoma Farm to School Program for the purpose of providing professional consultation and staff support to assist the implementation of this act:

1. Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry;
2. State Department of Health;
3. State Department of Education; and
4. Department of Human Services.

SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-60.4 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The duties of the executive director shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Identifying and promoting the critical components of individual Farm to School Programs and advising the agencies on needed actions and strategies to implement the Oklahoma Farm to School Program;
2. Establishing a partnership with public and nonprofit sources to implement a public engagement campaign and establish a structure to facilitate communication between farmers and school districts;
3. Providing leadership at the state level to encourage school districts to develop and improve school nutrition plans using locally grown farm fresh products;
4. Conducting workshops, training sessions, and technical assistance to school food services directors, personnel, farmers, and produce distributors and processors regarding the demand for and the availability of Oklahoma farm products; and
5. Developing a Farm to School Program website as provided for in Section 5 of this act.

SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-60.5 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry shall establish a Farm to School Program website for the State of Oklahoma. A direct link to the Farm to School Program shall be maintained on the State of Oklahoma Government website page.

B. The purpose of the Farm to School Program website shall be to assist schools and farmers in the coordination of fresh food procurement.

SECTION 6. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 5-60.6 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry is authorized to promulgate rules as necessary to carry out the provisions of this act.

SECTION 7. This act shall become effective November 1, 2006.

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