

EHB 2229

THE STATE SENATE
Monday, April 7, 2008

ENGROSSED

House Bill No. 2229

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 2229 - By: Cannaday, BigHorse and Pittman of the House and Garrison of the Senate.

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 24-152, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 83, O.S.L. 2007 (70 O.S. Supp. 2007, Section 24-152), which relates to Veterans Day and Celebrate Freedom Week; requiring certain content to be grade-appropriate; requiring rules adopted by the State Board of Education to establish different grade-appropriate content and rigor for required subjects; 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 24-152, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 83, O.S.L. 2007 (70 O.S. Supp. 2007, Section 24-152), is amended to read as follows:

Section 24-152. A. In order to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom on behalf of this country and the values on which this country was founded, the date of November 11 is hereby designated "Veterans Day", and the week in which November 11 falls is hereby designated "Celebrate Freedom Week" in and for the public schools of this state. In any year in which the date of November 11 is a Saturday or Sunday or classes are not in regular session, the public schools of this state shall observe the previous school day as "Veterans Day" as provided for in this section. For purposes of

1 this subsection, Sunday shall be considered the first day of the
2 week.

3 B. The board of education of each public school district shall
4 ensure that each school in its district will on Veterans Day conduct
5 and observe an appropriate program of at least one class period
6 remembering and honoring American veterans. In addition, schools
7 may choose, if scheduling allows, to have a one-minute moment of
8 silence beginning at 11:00 a.m. on November 11 of each year. The
9 benefit of such activity, in addition to honoring American veterans,
10 is to serve to educate students about the termination of World War I
11 at 11:00 a.m. on November 11, 1918, which was first recognized by
12 United States President Woodrow Wilson on the first anniversary of
13 the truce in a proclamation eulogizing fallen Allied soldiers and
14 referring to November 11 as Armistice Day.

15 C. By December 31, 2007, the State Board of Education shall
16 adopt rules which require each public school district in the state
17 to include, as a part of a social studies class, during Celebrate
18 Freedom Week or during another full school week as determined by the
19 board of education, grade-appropriate instruction concerning the
20 intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence
21 and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, in
22 their historical contexts. The religious references in the writings
23 of the founding fathers shall not be censored. The rules shall

1 require ~~the~~ appropriate grade level study of the Declaration of
2 Independence to include the study of the relationship of the ideas
3 expressed in that document to subsequent American history, including
4 the relationship of its ideas to the rich diversity of our people as
5 a nation of immigrants, the American Revolution, the formulation of
6 the United States Constitution, and the abolitionist movement, which
7 led to the Emancipation Proclamation ~~and~~, the women's suffrage
8 movement, and the civil rights movement and the passage of civil
9 rights legislation.

10 D. The rules adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant
11 to subsection C of this section shall establish different levels of
12 content and rigor of the subject matter required to be covered
13 during Celebrate Freedom Week that is appropriate for the different
14 grade levels and that meet state and national standards.

15 E. The rules adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant
16 to subsection C of this section shall also provide that during
17 Celebrate Freedom Week or another week of instruction selected by
18 the board of education, students in grades three through twelve
19 study and recite the text quoted below:

20 "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are
21 created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain
22 unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the
23 pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are

1 instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of
2 the governed."

3 ~~E.~~ F. Students may be excused from the recitation of the text
4 set forth in subsection D of this section, if:

5 1. The parent or guardian of the student submits to the school
6 district a written request that the student be excused;

7 2. As determined by the school district, the student has a
8 conscientious objection to the recitation; or

9 3. The student is the child of a representative of a foreign
10 government to whom the United States government extends diplomatic
11 immunity.

12 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2008.

13 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
14 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
15 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
16 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

17 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, dated 3-31-08 - DO
18 PASS.