

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 51st Legislature (2008)

3 HOUSE BILL 2229

By: Cannaday

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5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2001,
8 Section 24-152, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 83,
9 O.S.L. 2007 (70 O.S. Supp. 2007, Section 24-152),
10 which relates to Veterans Day and Celebrate Freedom
11 Week; requiring certain content to be grade-
12 appropriate; requiring rules adopted by the State
13 Board of Education to establish different grade-
14 appropriate content and rigor for required subjects;
15 providing an effective date; and declaring an
16 emergency.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

16 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 24-152, as
17 amended by Section 1, Chapter 83, O.S.L. 2007 (70 O.S. Supp. 2007,
18 Section 24-152), is amended to read as follows:

19 Section 24-152. A. In order to educate students about the
20 sacrifices made for freedom on behalf of this country and the values
21 on which this country was founded, the date of November 11 is hereby
22 designated "Veterans Day", and the week in which November 11 falls
23 is hereby designated "Celebrate Freedom Week" in and for the public
24 schools of this state. In any year in which the date of November 11

1 is a Saturday or Sunday or classes are not in regular session, the
2 public schools of this state shall observe the previous school day
3 as "Veterans Day" as provided for in this section. For purposes of
4 this subsection, Sunday shall be considered the first day of the
5 week.

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

18 C. By December 31, 2007, the State Board of Education shall
19 adopt rules which require each public school district in the state
20 to include, as a part of a social studies class, during Celebrate
21 Freedom Week or during another full school week as determined by the
22 board of education, grade-appropriate instruction concerning the
23 intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence
24 and the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, in

1 their historical contexts. The religious references in the writings
2 of the founding fathers shall not be censored. The rules shall
3 require, for the appropriate grade level, the study of the
4 Declaration of Independence to include the study of the relationship
5 of the ideas expressed in that document to subsequent American
6 history, including the relationship of its ideas to the rich
7 diversity of our people as a nation of immigrants, the American
8 Revolution, the formulation of the United States Constitution, and
9 the abolitionist movement, which led to the Emancipation
10 Proclamation and the women's suffrage movement.

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

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

21 "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are
22 created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain
23 unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the
24 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.

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