



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

2 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
3 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-121 of Title 70, unless there  
4 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

5 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Scientific  
6 Education and Academic Freedom Act".

7 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
8 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-122 of Title 70, unless there  
9 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

10 A. The Oklahoma Legislature finds that an important purpose of  
11 science education is to inform students about scientific evidence  
12 and to help students develop critical thinking skills they need in  
13 order to become intelligent, productive, and scientifically informed  
14 citizens. The Legislature further finds that the teaching of some  
15 scientific concepts including but not limited to premises in the  
16 areas of biology, chemistry, meteorology, bioethics and physics can  
17 cause controversy, and that some teachers may be unsure of the  
18 expectations concerning how they should present information on some  
19 subjects such as, but not limited to, biological evolution, the  
20 chemical origins of life, global warming, and human cloning.

21 B. The State Board of Education, district boards of education,  
22 district superintendents and administrators, and public school  
23 principals and administrators shall endeavor to create an

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1 environment within public elementary and secondary schools that  
2 encourages students to explore scientific questions, learn about  
3 scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills, and respond  
4 appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about  
5 controversial issues. Educational authorities in this state shall  
6 also endeavor to assist teachers to find more effective ways to  
7 present the science curriculum where it addresses scientific  
8 controversies. Toward this end, teachers shall be permitted to help  
9 students understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective  
10 manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of  
11 existing scientific theories pertinent to the course being taught.

12 C. The State Board of Education, a district board of education,  
13 district superintendent or administrator, or public school principal  
14 or administrator shall not prohibit any teacher in a school district  
15 in this state from helping students understand, analyze, critique,  
16 and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and  
17 scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories pertinent to  
18 the course being taught.

19 D. Students may be evaluated based upon their understanding of  
20 course materials, but no student in any public school or institution  
21 shall be penalized in any way because the student may subscribe to a  
22 particular position on scientific theories. Nothing in this  
23 subsection shall be construed to exempt students from learning,

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1 understanding and being tested on curriculum as prescribed by state  
2 and local education standards.

3 E. The provisions of the Scientific Education and Academic  
4 Freedom Act shall only protect the teaching of scientific  
5 information, and shall not be construed to promote any religious or  
6 nonreligious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a  
7 particular set of religious beliefs or nonbeliefs, or promote  
8 discrimination for or against religion or nonreligion. The intent  
9 of the provisions of the act is to create an environment in which  
10 both the teacher and students can openly and objectively discuss the  
11 facts and observations of science, and the assumptions that underlie  
12 their interpretation.

13 F. By no later than the start of the 2012-2013 school year, the  
14 State Department Education shall notify all district superintendents  
15 of the provisions of the Scientific Education and Academic Freedom  
16 Act. Each superintendent shall then disseminate to all employees  
17 within the district a copy of the provisions of the act.

18 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2012.

19 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
20 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby  
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UNDERLINED language denotes Amendments to present Statutes.  
**BOLD FACE CAPITALIZED** language denotes Committee Amendments.  
~~Strike thru~~ language denotes deletion from present Statutes.

1 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
2 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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4 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON COMMON EDUCATION, dated 02/23/2012  
5 - DO PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.

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