STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 54th Legislature (2013)

HOUSE BILL 2230 By: Dorman

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending Section 1, Chapter 318, O.S.L. 2012 (70 O.S. Supp. 2012, Section 1210.516), which relates to the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program; adding certain entities that are eligible for the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 1, Chapter 318, O.S.L. 2012 (70 O.S. Supp. 2012, Section 1210.516), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1210.516 A. The State Board of Education shall establish the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program. The purpose of the Program is to improve reading skills of children up through the fourth grade, as measured by mastery of the skills identified in the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS), by training and assisting private entities, as defined in subsection C of this section, to offer reading instruction to children before school, after school, on Saturdays and during summer periods.

B. The State Department of Education shall issue a request for proposals on or before October 1, 2012, and each October 1 thereafter for which the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program is funded, seeking applications for the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program. The Department shall review the applications for compliance with the established requirements.

C. Private entities eligible to submit applications for the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program shall include the following:

1. Nonprofit organizations or programs which are exempt from taxation pursuant to the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C., Section 501(c)(3);

2. Community-based programs, centers, organizations or services which maintain community participation or supervision in their planning, operation and evaluation; ~~and~~

3. Churches or religious organizations, associations, or societies or nonprofit organizations or programs operated, supervised or controlled by or in conjunction with a religious organization, association or society; and

4. Nonprofit tuition-free elementary schools established to meet the educational and social service needs of homeless children.

D. The State Board of Education may approve applications that meet the requirements set forth in this subsection and as established by the Board. Approved applications shall establish reading programs for children up through the fourth grade. The

reading programs may be offered before school, after school, on Saturdays or during summer periods. The reading programs shall offer reading instruction designed to enable the children to acquire the appropriate level reading skills and shall provide diagnostic assessments and measurement of reading skills to determine reading success. The reading program shall focus on the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

E. On or before December 1, 2012, and each December 1 thereafter for which the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program is funded, the Department shall forward applications that the Department has determined meet the requirements of this section to the Board. On or before February 1, 2013, and each February 1 thereafter for which the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program is funded, the Board shall award, through a competitive bid process, one or more grants to private entities to provide reading instruction programs through the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program. To the extent possible, grants shall be awarded on a statewide basis. The grant funding shall be used to provide the reading instruction program, provide employees and volunteers for the program and to purchase materials for the program.

F. In addition to the grant funding, the Department shall provide to the private entities awarded grants pursuant to this section the following:

1. Reading instruction training, academies or courses designed to train the private entity employees or volunteers in reading instruction and remediation strategies;

2. Resources and materials on reading instruction and remediation; and

3. Any other appropriate assistance.

G. The Board shall provide for independent evaluations of programs funded pursuant to this section.

H. Beginning June 30, 2013, and each year thereafter for which the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program is funded, the Board shall prepare and submit a report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate containing:

1. Descriptions of the reading programs approved and funded through the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program;

2. Number and amount of grants awarded;

3. Number of children served through approved programs; and

4. Achievement data for children served through approved programs.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2013.

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

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