# CORRECTED

**SENATE FLOOR VERSION**

February 9, 2015

SENATE BILL NO. 285 By: Ford

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 11-103.7, which relates to early childhood education programs; directing the State Board of Education to align standards for early childhood education programs with certain standards; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 11-103.7, is amended to read as follows:

Section 11-103.7. A. Each school district may offer to four-year-old children the opportunity to participate in an early childhood education program.

B. The State Board of Education shall promulgate standards for early childhood education programs for children who are at least four (4) years of age on or before September 1 of the ensuing school year. The standards shall include both half-day programs consisting of not less than two and one-half (2 1/2) hours per school day, and full-day programs of six (6) hours. The standards for all early childhood education programs shall require a certified teacher, as

specified in this section, to be present in the classroom for the length of the school day. Such program shall:

1. Be directed toward developmentally appropriate objectives for such children, rather than toward academic objectives suitable for older children;

2. Accommodate the needs of all children and families regardless of socioeconomic circumstances; and

3. Require that any teacher employed by a public school to teach in such early childhood education program shall be certified in early childhood education.

C. The superintendent of any school district providing classroom space or other school facilities for a federally sponsored Head Start program that is planning to make a material change in the arrangement, shall give notice to the director of the Head Start program at least seven (7) days prior to a school board hearing on the matter.

D. A school district may offer such early childhood education program within the district, in cooperation with other districts, through the use of transfers as specified by law, or by contracting with a private or public provider of early childhood education programs, or by contracting for classroom space with a licensed public or private child care provider based upon selection criteria established by the district. If the program is provided through contract with a private or public provider other than a school

district, the contract may only be continued if each teacher serving the school on and after January 1, 1993, is certified in early childhood education, except that all teachers, without such certification, hired by such provider prior to January 1, 1993, and serving in the school as an early childhood education teacher shall be required to obtain certification on or before the beginning of the 1996-97 school year. Any person who has been employed as an early childhood educator with the Head Start Program, has a child development associate degree (CDA) and has at least five (5) years of experience in such employment shall be certified in early childhood education for purposes of employment in the public schools of this state to teach in early childhood education for children four (4) years of age and younger; if such person is recertified in child development by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition within five (5) years prior to the expiration of the person's early childhood certificate that was issued by the State Board of Education, such person shall be granted a renewal certificate in early childhood education by the State Board of Education upon expiration of the early childhood certificate. Provided, private or public providers shall meet such other standards required by law and by the State Board of Education.

E. If an early childhood program is provided by a private or public provider pursuant to a contract as authorized in this section, the contract shall address the requirements for

implementing the residency program for resident teachers as required in Section 6-195 of this title. Teachers employed by a private or public provider in an early childhood education program provided through contract with a public school district shall receive in salary and/or fringe benefits amounts not less than the amounts specified in the schedule set forth in Section 18-114.7 of this title.

F. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules to provide for the implementation of such program.

G. An early childhood education program may be offered jointly by school districts that have formed interlocal cooperative agreements pursuant to Section 5-117b of this title.

H. The term "pre-kindergarten" shall mean early childhood education for purposes of this title.

I. Following adoption of the subject matter standards pursuant to Section 11-103.6a of this title, the State Board of Education shall align the standards for early childhood education programs with the newly adopted standards.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2015.

COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
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