

Bill Summary
2nd Session of the 57th Legislature

Bill No.:	SB 1539
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Floor Substitute (FS)

The FS for SB 1539 modifies membership of the State Textbook Committee effective April 1, 2021. It requires two members from each congressional district and two members from the state at large, who are to be lay persons who do not hold teaching certificates and have at least one child in the public schools of the state. The FS adds the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, or a designee, as a voting member to serve as chair of the Committee and directs the State Department of Education to provide administrative services, including a secretary, to the Committee. The measure subjects the Committee to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act and the Oklahoma Open Records Act. The measure also requires rather than allows the Committee to meet at the call of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and removes a requirement to meet at the state Capitol. The bill defines “list of textbooks” to include textbooks and other instructional materials selected by the Committee.

SB1539 directs the State Department of Education, in coordination with the State Textbook Committee, to approve an application process to assemble review teams of no less than 12 subject matter experts to assist in reviewing textbooks and instructional materials and allows members of the review teams to receive travel expenses, subject to availability of funding. The measure directs the Committee to select textbooks that are aligned with the state’s subject matter standards. The Committee, in consultation with the State Department of Education, is to adopt a rubric to be used by the review teams with a three-tiered rating system of “exemplifies quality,” “approaching quality” and “not representing quality.” The measure allows additional criteria specific to a subject area to be included and allows the Committee to accept the recommended ratings from review teams, and it allows the Committee to request additional information from review teams. The measure directs the Committee to adopt the final rating for each textbook prior to including it on the list of textbooks. The measure allows a local textbook committee to adopt a textbook that was not reviewed by the State Textbook Committee if it conducts a review process in a manner prescribed by the State Board of Education. It also requires the local textbook committee to submit to the district board of education a statement justifying selection of textbooks not on the list of textbooks selected by the State Textbook Committee. It also repeals language regarding the term of the lay person on the Committee.

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