

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 57th Legislature (2019)

SENATE BILL 154

By: Simpson

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to education; creating the Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K) Task Force until certain date; providing purpose; providing for appointment of members; naming cochair of the task force; requiring appointments to be made by certain date; requiring an organizational meeting by certain date; requiring a quorum to approve certain actions; specifying quorum; prohibiting members from receiving compensation or travel reimbursement; subjecting the task force to certain act; providing for staff support; establishing duties of the task force; requiring submission of certain report by certain date; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 13-117 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created until December 31, 2020, the Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K) Task Force to develop a resource for parents to monitor and track deaf or hard of hearing children's expressive and receptive language acquisition

1 using American Sign Language, English or both, and developmental
2 stages toward English literacy and developing a framework for
3 assessing children who are deaf or hard of hearing to determine
4 their competencies in language and literacy skills for the purpose
5 of ensuring they have the opportunity to achieve kindergarten
6 readiness in an equitable manner.

7 B. The task force shall be comprised of seventeen (17) members
8 to be appointed as follows:

9 1. A parent or legal guardian of a child who is deaf or hard of
10 hearing and proficient in American Sign Language and English
11 appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

12 2. A parent or legal guardian of a child who is deaf or hard of
13 hearing and uses only spoken English appointed by the Speaker of the
14 House of Representatives;

15 3. A teacher of children who are deaf or hard of hearing whose
16 expertise is in curriculum and instruction in American Sign Language
17 and English appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

18 4. A teacher of children who are deaf or hard of hearing whose
19 expertise is in curriculum and instruction in English appointed by
20 the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

21 5. An early intervention specialist who works with infants and
22 toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing using American Sign
23 Language and spoken English appointed by the President Pro Tempore
24 of the Senate;

1 6. An administrator of an early intervention program for
2 children who are deaf or hard of hearing appointed by the Speaker of
3 the House of Representatives;

4 7. An administrator of a school-age program for children who
5 are deaf or hard of hearing appointed by the President Pro Tempore
6 of the Senate;

7 8. A speech-language pathologist with experience working with
8 children who are deaf or hard of hearing on the development of
9 spoken English, with or without the use of visual supplements
10 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

11 9. A school psychologist with experience working with students
12 who are deaf or hard of hearing and with knowledge in conducting and
13 interpreting cognitive assessments for such students appointed by
14 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

15 10. A licensed or certified mental health professional who
16 works with children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their
17 families appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

18 11. An adult who is deaf or hard of hearing and is proficient
19 in American Sign Language and English appointed by the President Pro
20 Tempore of the Senate;

21 12. An adult who is deaf or hard of hearing who uses spoken
22 English without visual supplements appointed by the Speaker of the
23 House of Representatives;

1 13. One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the
2 Speaker of the House of Representatives;

3 14. One member of the Senate appointed by the President Pro
4 Tempore of the Senate;

5 15. The director of the Department of Rehabilitation Services
6 or his or her designee;

7 16. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or
8 her designee;

9 17. The superintendent of the Oklahoma School for the Deaf or
10 his or her designee.

11 C. The cochairs of the task force shall be the State
12 Superintendent of Public Instruction or his or her designee and the
13 director of the Department of Rehabilitation Services or his or her
14 designee.

15 D. Appointments to the task force shall be made within thirty
16 (30) days after the effective date of this act. The task force
17 shall conduct an organizational meeting no later than August 31,
18 2019.

19 E. A quorum of the task force shall be required to approve any
20 final action of the task force. For purposes of this section, nine
21 members shall constitute a quorum.

22 F. Members of the task force shall receive no compensation or
23 travel reimbursement.
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1 G. The meetings of the task force shall be subject to the
2 Oklahoma Open Meeting Act.

3 H. The State Department of Education and the Department of
4 Rehabilitation Services shall provide staff support to the task
5 force.

6 I. The task force shall study and make recommendations
7 regarding the development of a framework for assessing children who
8 are deaf or hard of hearing and selecting language developmental
9 milestones from existing standardized norms. The framework shall
10 consider children with congenital or acquired hearing loss,
11 unilateral and bilateral hearing loss, all degrees of hearing loss
12 from minimal to profound and all types of hearing loss. When
13 conducting analysis and making recommendations, the task force shall
14 be impartial with regard to language and modalities to teach
15 children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The task force shall:

16 1. Review and make recommendations regarding existing tools or
17 assessments for educators to use to assess the language and literacy
18 development of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The tools
19 or assessments shall be:

- 20 a. standardized, norm-referenced and validated,
21 b. able to track such children's expressive and receptive
22 language and cognitive abilities compared to peers who
23 are not deaf or hard of hearing, and
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1 c. able to be used to establish or modify a child's
2 individualized education program (IEP) developed in
3 accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities
4 Education Act (IDEA) or an individual Family Service
5 Plan developed through the SoonerStart program;

6 2. Determine how often the tools or assessments reviewed
7 pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection should be used for
8 children from birth to age five (5);

9 3. Identify language development milestones for children who
10 are deaf or hard of hearing by consulting with professionals trained
11 in the language development and education of such children. The
12 milestones shall be all of the following:

- 13 a. a resource for use by parents and educators to monitor
14 and track such children's expressive and receptive
15 language acquisition,
- 16 b. able to be used to ensure that such children meet
17 developmental milestones toward English literacy, and
- 18 c. evaluated by the use of existing formalized, evidence-
19 based assessments;

20 4. Identify procedures and methods for reporting language
21 acquisition, assessment results, milestones, assessment tools used
22 and progress of such children to parents or legal guardians,
23 teachers and other professionals involved in their early
24 intervention and education; and

1 5. Make recommendations relative to ensuring that state law and
2 state and local policies are adequately addressing the language
3 developmental needs of such children.

4 J. The task force shall submit a report of its findings and
5 recommendations by December 31, 2020, to the Governor, the President
6 Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
7 Representatives, the chairs of the education committees of the
8 Senate and House of Representatives and the chairs of the health
9 committees of the Senate and House of Representatives.

10 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2019.

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

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