



ROSENSTEIN, FIST & RINGOLD

RED BANNER UPDATE

Date: May 12, 2021

Re: HB 1568

Signed: May 5, 2021

Effective: November 1, 2021

Topic: *Maria's Law* – Including Mental Health Instruction in Health Curricula

Summary: This Act creates *Maria's Law* and directs the Oklahoma State Board of Education (OSBE) to require school districts to include instruction in mental health, with an emphasis on the “interrelation of physical and mental well-being,” in any health education curriculum, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

The Act requires the OSBE to consult with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) to revise the Oklahoma Academic Standards for Health and Physical Education to include a focus on mental health and develop a list of age-appropriate resources for students in grades kindergarten through twelve (K–12). Both the standards and resources must be made available on the Oklahoma State Department of Education’s website (OSDE).

The Act permits school districts to enter into agreements with nonprofit entities and other community partners to assist with or provide mental health education to their students under the Act if those nonprofits and community partners are approved by both the OSDE and the ODMHSAS. The Act also obligates the OSBE to promulgate rules to implement its provisions, which school districts should follow once promulgated.

Please visit the firm’s website to view the signed Act.

RFR attorneys are reviewing this legislation and will be advising clients as to any recommended changes to existing district policies.