

An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 1569

By: Rosecrants, Blancett,
Phillips, Walke, Talley,
Davis, Munson, Ranson,
Conley, Dobrinski, Waldron,
Provenzano, Pae, Miller,
Hilbert, Boles and Cruz of
the House

and

Pugh and Stephens of the
Senate

An Act relating to schools; creating the Oklahoma Play to Learn Act; declaring legislative intent; defining terms; allowing instruction in early childhood education to foster certain development and learning; providing certain learning environment; authorizing educators to provide certain learning opportunities; authorizing certain professional development for teachers; disallowing school districts from prohibiting teacher use of play-based learning; requiring promulgation of rules; providing for codification; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Schools

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 11-103.2a of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Play to Learn Act".

B. It is the intention of the Oklahoma State Legislature through this act to focus on the importance of child-centered, play-based learning as the most rigorous and most developmentally appropriate way for children in the early childhood grade levels to learn literacy, science, technology, engineering, art and math academic concepts.

C. As used in this section:

1. "Child-directed" means interaction in which the child is helped to direct and lead the play in any way the child wishes, unless there is harmful or destructive activity;

2. "Domain" means a specified sphere of activity or knowledge;

3. "Early childhood education" means prekindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade and third grade;

4. "Play" means the spontaneous activity of children;

5. "Play-based learning" means any learning activities that are performed by a child for self-amusement that have behavioral, social and psychomotor rewards. Play-based learning shall also mean activities that are child-directed, joyful and spontaneous whereby the rewards come from within the individual child;

6. "Professional development" means any of a wide variety of specialized training, formal education or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators, teachers and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill and effectiveness;

7. "Reading for pleasure" means reading that is freely chosen or that readers freely and enthusiastically continue after it is assigned; and

8. "Socialization" means social interaction with others.

D. Instruction in support of early childhood education standards may be engaging and may foster children's development and learning in all domains, including physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language. To the best of their ability, educators may create a learning environment that facilitates child-directed experiences based upon developmentally appropriate early childhood practices and intentional, sustained, play-based learning

opportunities, including, but not limited to, movement, creative expression, exploration, socialization, reading for pleasure, art, music and dramatic play. The art instruction may adhere to prekindergarten standards for fine arts, which include dance, drama, music and visual arts, as approved by the State Department of Education. Educators may develop physical, social, emotional, cognitive and academic learning opportunities in all curricular domains, which may include unstructured time for the discovery of each child's individual needs, abilities and talents.

E. In support of play-based learning in Oklahoma public schools, school districts may provide ongoing early childhood professional development for early childhood educators and administrators, which may include existing early childhood professional development programs from the State Department of Education.

F. A school district shall not prohibit a teacher from utilizing play-based learning in early childhood education. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules, subject to approval by the Legislature, establishing guidelines for professional development programs for early childhood educators and administrators.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health or 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.

Passed the House of Representatives the 5th day of May, 2021.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 21st day of April, 2021.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this 6th

day of May, 20 21, at 11:58 o'clock a. M.

By: Sumel Curry

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this 11th

day of May, 20 21, at 2:50 o'clock p. M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this 11th

day of May, 20 21, at 3:23 o'clock p. M.

By: Robin Blum