

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 58th Legislature (2021)

3 SENATE BILL 662

By: Dahm

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6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to school curriculum; creating the
8 Oklahoma Science Education Act; providing short
9 title; providing for the creation of a school
10 environment that encourages the exploration of
11 scientific theories; allowing teachers to help
12 students analyze certain scientific strengths and
13 weaknesses; prohibiting the promotion of religious or
14 non-religious beliefs; providing for certain
15 notification; providing for certain immunity;
16 providing for codification; providing an effective
17 date; and declaring an emergency.

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

19 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
20 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.12 of Title 70, unless
21 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

22 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma
23 Science Education Act".

24 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.13 of Title 70, unless
there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1 A. The State Board of Education, school district boards of
2 education, school district superintendents and school principals
3 shall endeavor to create an environment within public school
4 districts that encourages students to explore scientific questions,
5 learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills
6 and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion
7 about controversial issues.

8 B. The State Board of Education, school district boards of
9 education, school district superintendents and school principals
10 shall endeavor to assist teachers to find effective ways to present
11 the science curriculum as it addresses scientific controversies.
12 Teachers shall be permitted to help students understand, analyze,
13 critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths
14 and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in
15 the course being taught using evidence-based, peer-reviewed
16 material.

17 C. Neither the State Board of Education, nor any school
18 district board of education, school district superintendent or
19 school principal shall prohibit any teacher in a public school
20 district in this state from helping students understand, analyze,
21 critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths
22 and weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in the course
23 being taught using evidence-based, peer-reviewed material.
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1 D. This section only protects the teaching of scientific
2 information and shall not be construed to promote any religious or
3 non-religious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a
4 particular set of religious beliefs or non-beliefs or promote
5 discrimination for or against religion or non-religion.

6 E. By no later than the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the
7 State Department of Education shall notify school district boards of
8 education and school district superintendents of public schools in
9 this state of the provisions of this act. Each school district
10 board of education and school district superintendent shall notify
11 all employees within the school district of the provisions of this
12 act.

13 F. A teacher as defined by Section 1-116 of Title 70 of the
14 Oklahoma Statutes who complies with the provisions of this act shall
15 be granted immunity from civil liability or termination of
16 employment for acts described in subsection B of this section.

17 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2021.

18 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
19 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
20 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
21 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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