

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

4 FOR

5 HOUSE BILL NO. 2513

6 By: Pittman

7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

8 An Act relating to schools; describing the problem of
9 unaddressed trauma in children; providing program
10 purpose; directing legislature to appropriate funds
11 to implement and operate a Handle With Care Oklahoma
12 program; providing for program coordination between
13 certain public agencies and community coalitions;
14 enabling law enforcement to notify program; listing
15 applicable traumatic events for notification;
16 requiring administration of a hotline, email, or
17 other method to provide notification; prescribing
18 information to be included in notification;
19 prohibiting inclusion of certain information;
20 directing notification to designated representatives;
21 including specified statement in notification;
22 directing Oklahoma School Security Institute to
23 provide model protocol and training for certain
24 agencies; requiring Department of Mental Health and
Substance Abuse Services to provide model protocol
and training; specifying information to be included
in training; authorizing rule promulgation; providing
exception for notification that could compromise an
ongoing investigation; requiring program to apply for
additional funding sources; directing program to
submit annual report to certain elected officials;
providing for noncodification; providing for
codification; and providing an effective date.

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

1 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be
2 codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

3 A. The Problem.

4 Research shows that unaddressed trauma can undermine children's
5 ability to learn, form relationships, and function appropriately in
6 the classroom. In the past, calling the Oklahoma Department of
7 Human Services statewide centralized hotline to make a mandated
8 child welfare report was one of the only tools in the first
9 responder's toolbox, but most children and teens do not meet the
10 criteria for a child welfare report. Consequently, the children and
11 teens are never identified, nor do they receive services, and they
12 linger in traumatic situations without adequate support. These
13 students have an increased risk for negative outcomes such as poor
14 academic performance, truancy, dropping out of school, and
15 delinquency.

16 B. The Handle With Care Oklahoma Program Purpose.

17 Handle With Care (HWC) Oklahoma is a program designed to enhance
18 existing cross-agency communication and partnership between local
19 law enforcement, community mental health services and supports, and
20 schools regarding children's exposure to traumatic events. The
21 "Handle With Care" approach enables first responders to start
22 building trust and positive connections with children and teens they
23 encounter at a traumatic scene and through a HWC notification, local
24 schools and mental health providers can provide trauma-sensitive

1 support immediately as needed. HWC is aimed at ensuring that
2 children who are exposed to crime, violence, and abuse receive
3 appropriate interventions so they can succeed in school to the best
4 of their ability. Children must feel safe in order to learn.

5 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
6 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.164 of Title 70, unless
7 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

8 A. The Legislature shall appropriate funds to support the
9 implementation and operation of the Handle With Care (HWC) Oklahoma
10 program, coordinated through the Oklahoma School Security Institute,
11 a division of the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security. HWC
12 Oklahoma efforts shall enhance existing partnerships and
13 collaborations with key partners such as, but not limited to, other
14 state and local first responder agencies, school districts,
15 community coalitions, the State Department of Education, the
16 Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the
17 Department of Human Services, and the State Department of Health.
18 The statewide HWC Oklahoma program shall enhance planning, training,
19 implementation, and sustainability in all counties in the state.
20 The program shall give opportunities for local HWC initiatives to
21 receive support from the state as needed.

22 B. The HWC program shall enable a law enforcement officer or
23 employee of a law enforcement agency to notify the program when a
24 child, who may attend a public school or childcare agency in the

1 state, is exposed to a traumatic event, is at the scene with a first
2 responder, or another event occurs that may affect his or her
3 ability to succeed at school including, but not limited to:

- 4 1. Domestic violence in the presence of the child;
- 5 2. Death of a member of the family or household of the child;
- 6 3. Arrest of a parent or guardian of the child affecting the
7 welfare of the child;
- 8 4. Search warrant is served in the residence of the child;
- 9 5. Drug or alcohol overdose of a child's family member;
- 10 6. Violence or mass shootings in the neighborhood where the
11 child resides;
- 12 7. Forced displacement from the residence;
- 13 8. House fire;
- 14 9. Child maltreatment; or
- 15 10. Child is present at a first responder encounter.

16 C. The HWC program shall work with local communities and key
17 partners to administer a telephone hotline, email, or other
18 appropriate method to allow a law enforcement officer or first
19 responder agency to provide the notification described in subsection
20 B of this section.

21 D. Information submitted to the HWC program in the notification
22 shall comply with the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation's
23 dissemination laws and Victim's Bill of Rights. It shall only
24 include, to the extent that it is available:

1 1. The first, middle, and last name of the child;

2 2. The grade and school or childcare agency where the child is
3 enrolled; and

4 3. The date of birth and age of the child.

5 The HWC notification shall not include any details about the
6 traumatic event unless there is an imminent threat to the safety of
7 the child or school safety.

8 E. Upon receiving notification as provided in subsection D of
9 this section, the local HWC multi-disciplinary team (MDT) shall
10 determine if the child attends a public school or childcare agency
11 in this state. If the child attends a public school or childcare
12 agency in the state, the local HWC MDT shall notify designated
13 representatives where the child attends. The notice shall include
14 that "the child referenced has been exposed to a traumatic event in
15 the last twenty-four (24) hours and could exhibit academic,
16 emotional, and behavioral problems because of exposure to a
17 traumatic event. Please handle the child with care."

18 F. 1. The Oklahoma School Security Institute, in coordination
19 with community coalitions and partner state and local first
20 responder agencies, shall provide model protocol and training for
21 the HWC Oklahoma program to first responder agencies and their
22 employees who may respond to a traumatic event involving a child.

23 2. The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse
24 Services, in coordination with the State Department of Education and

1 community coalitions, shall include model protocol and training for
2 the HWC Oklahoma program in existing efforts which promotes
3 universal trauma-informed practices in school settings.

4 G. The training required in subsection F of this section shall
5 include, at a minimum:

6 1. The criteria for sending a HWC notice;

7 2. The procedure for notifying the HWC program when a child who
8 may attend a public school or childcare agency is exposed to an
9 event listed in subsection B of this section that may affect his or
10 her ability to succeed at school and the information to include in
11 the notification;

12 3. Proper response to a notification received from the program,
13 including, without limitation, the manner in which to respond to
14 notification through early interventions; and

15 4. Collaboration with teachers and other members of the staff
16 of a school, students, family members of students, multi-
17 disciplinary teams, other persons, and behavioral, social, and
18 health providers, as appropriate, to reduce the negative impact of
19 the traumatic event on the affected student, appropriate
20 interventions that may be available to assist the student, and the
21 overall well-being of the student. Community coalitions shall be
22 engaged to increase coordination of community services.

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1 H. The Oklahoma School Security Institute may promulgate rules
2 to implement the provisions of this section with feedback from local
3 first responder agencies, schools, and community coalitions.

4 I. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a law
5 enforcement officer or employee of a law enforcement agency to
6 provide notification pursuant to this section if the disclosure of
7 information may compromise an ongoing investigation.

8 J. In addition to funds appropriated by the legislature
9 pursuant to subsection A of this section, the HWC Oklahoma program
10 shall apply for additional federal, state, local, and private funds
11 to support the HWC Oklahoma program.

12 K. The HWC Oklahoma program shall submit an annual report of
13 the program's progress, outcomes, and impact on students and
14 communities to the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives,
15 President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate, and the
16 Governor.

17 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

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