

TITLE 210. STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHAPTER 1. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

210:1-1-1. Purpose-Declaration of Foundational Values [AMENDED]

~~(a) This chapter outlines the context of the agency responsible for public education by describing the State Board of Education, their powers and duties, rules of practice, due process policies and procedures, the general principles by which the State Department of Education operates and the structural organization of the Department.~~

~~(b) The contents of this Chapter shall in no way be construed as the basis of, or as instituting any contractual rights between the State Board of Education and any person or employee. Of necessity, it cannot be complete in all detail and cannot, through error or omission, restrict the lawful powers of the State Board of Education. If it in any way conflicts with State Statutes, the law will take precedence and prevail. Any previous policies of the Board inconsistent with policies included here are hereby rescinded.~~

(a) This declaration of foundational values and principles of public education in this state should guide the interpretation of rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

(b) Education is the teaching and instruction of individuals by means of equipping them with the tools of learning that will best orient their whole lives toward the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty; the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and the competence, confidence, and courage to pursue virtue.

(c) Truth, goodness, and beauty are objective moral virtues that can be discovered, known, attained, and never exhausted in our limits as finite creatures. It is mankind's duty to pursue such virtues, and the goal of education is to train a student's desires toward an ever-growing love, appreciation, and capacity for these universal and self-evident truths, whose ultimate author is our Creator, having created all men equal, as echoed in our Declaration of Independence.

(d) Good and evil are real and universal rather than relativistic concepts, and it is incumbent upon every person to strive toward the former and to face the latter.

(e) Academics is the primary purpose of public schools, teachers, and public instruction. It cannot be said that a school is functioning as a school unless its students are made literate, meaning they are able to read; able to write; able to perform arithmetic and fundamental mathematics; able to comprehend literature; able to compose legible and coherent texts; able to politely and specifically discuss thoughts on complex ideas; able to seek out knowledge of a subject independently; able to think critically for themselves; and ultimately able to honestly navigate the world adeptly and independently as educated individuals.

(f) The ultimate responsibility of children's education rests firmly upon the shoulders of their parents, to whom their children were given by their Creator, or upon the shoulders of those guardians who, due to the unforeseen course of life, have taken upon themselves the solemn and

sacred task of providing for and protecting the wards in their care. All responsibilities of an educator and servant of public education are responsibilities delegated from these parents and guardians, and such responsibilities are to be taken with full sobriety and respect as is befitting the care and training of all children.

(g) The founding documents of our nation—the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights—and the founding document of our state—the Oklahoma Constitution—confirm these values. The preamble of the founding document of the State of Oklahoma reads: “Invoking the guidance of Almighty God, in order to secure and perpetuate the blessing of liberty; to secure just and rightful government; to promote our mutual welfare and happiness, we, the people of the State of Oklahoma, do ordain and establish this Constitution.”

(h) Instruction in the public schools must elevate, protect, and celebrate those values and ideals that are commonly expressed by the people of Oklahoma and bind us together so as to preserve and nurture a society of peace, prosperity, and shared community; founded upon our cultural principals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and the political conviction and knowledge that hard work conquers all, as enshrined in the Great Seal of the state of Oklahoma.

(i) The State Department of Education is hereby directed to use its full authority to propose rules, maintain standards, and ensure accountability and transparency in such a way that most fully upholds and protects the values of education as stated herein.

(j) All newly appointed members of the State Board of Education shall be required to read this rule and attest in writing to their having read and understood this rule on or before the day of their first Board meeting.

210:1-1-7. Purpose [NEW]

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