An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 2969

By: Nelson of the House

and

Griffin and Pittman of the Senate

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 3-104.4, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 311, O.S.L. 2014 (70 O.S. Supp. 2015, Section 3-104.4), which relates to accreditation standards; directing the State Board of Education to adopt accreditation standards for educational services provided in certain types of programs; making standards apply to certain sites and schools; requiring standards to provide for certain status upon failure to comply; requiring the State Department of Education to actively monitor for compliance; directing the Department to investigate complaints and report accreditation status to the State Board of Education within certain time period; and requiring the Board to withdraw accreditation if a school fails to take certain action.

SUBJECT: Accreditation standards

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 3-104.4, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 311, O.S.L. 2014 (70 O.S. Supp. 2015, Section 3-104.4), is amended to read as follows:

Section 3-104.4 A. On or before February 1, 1991, the State Board of Education shall adopt standards for the accreditation of the public schools in this state according to the requirements of this act, to be effective as set forth in this act. The

accreditation standards shall incorporate the curricular standards established pursuant to Section 11-103.6 of this title. The accreditation standards shall equal or exceed the accreditation standards for schools promulgated by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to the extent that the standards are consistent with an academic results-oriented approach to accreditation, excluding those standards which deal with affective behavior to the extent the adoption of the standards does not conflict with state statute. The accreditation adopted by the State Board shall encompass accreditation for elementary schools, middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools. The accreditation standards shall be made available for public inspection at the offices of the State Department of Education.

B. Standards for accreditation adopted by the State Board of Education shall include standards relating to the provision of school counselors to the public school children of this state. The State Board of Education shall require each local school district to provide information regarding the number of counselors serving each school site, the duties of all such counselors including all administrative duties, the number of students served by each counselor, and information regarding the number of counselors employed per elementary school, middle school, junior high school and high school.

C. Except as otherwise provided by subsection A of this section with regard to curricular standards, as a condition of receiving state accreditation pursuant to this act:

1. High schools shall meet the accreditation standards not later than June 30, 1995; and

2. Elementary, middle and junior high schools shall meet the accreditation standards not later than June 30, 1999.

Schools shall thereafter continue to meet the accreditation standards as a condition of continued accreditation. Nothing herein shall be construed as preventing changes to the adopted standards by the State Board of Education pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act.

D. If one or more school sites fails to receive accreditation as required pursuant to this section by the dates set forth in subsection C of this section or subsequently loses accreditation, the State Board of Education shall close the school and reassign the

students to accredited schools within the district or shall annex the district to one or more other districts in which the students can be educated in accredited schools.

E. Standards for accreditation adopted by the State Board of Education shall include standards relating to the provision of educational services provided in partial hospitalization programs, day treatment programs, day hospital programs, residential treatment programs and emergency shelter programs for persons between the ages of three (3) and twenty-one (21) years of age. The accreditation standards shall apply to onsite and offsite educational services provided by public school districts or state-accredited private schools. The accreditation standards shall provide for warnings, probation or nonaccredited status for schools that fail to meet the standards. Each school which is providing or is required to provide educational services for students placed in a program as described in this subsection shall be actively monitored by the State Department of Education. The Department shall determine on an ongoing basis if the educational program and services are in compliance with the accreditation standards. The Department shall investigate a complaint of failure to provide educational services within ten (10) days of receiving the complaint. If the Department determines that a school has failed to comply with the accreditation standards the Department shall report the recommended warning, probation or nonaccredited accreditation status to the State Board of Education within sixty (60) days. If a school does not take action to comply with the accreditation standards within ninety (90) days after a report is filed by the Department, the Board shall withdraw accreditation for the school.

F. State Board accreditation regulations shall provide for warnings and for assistance to schools and school districts whenever there is reason to believe a school is in danger of losing its state accreditation.

~~F.~~ G. The State Board shall provide assistance to districts in considering the possibility of meeting accreditation requirements through the use of nontraditional means of instruction. The State Board shall also assist districts in forming cooperatives and making arrangements for the use of satellite instruction or other instructional technologies to the extent that use of such instructional means meets accreditation standards.

~~G.~~ H. For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2015, and June 30, 2016, accreditation shall not be withdrawn from or denied nor shall

a penalty be assessed against a school or school district for failing to meet the media materials and equipment standards and media program expenditure standards as set forth in the accreditation standards adopted by the Board.

~~H.~~ I. The State Board shall not assess a financial penalty against any school district which is given a deficiency in accreditation status during the fiscal years ending June 30, 2015, and June 30, 2016. Accreditation shall not be withdrawn from or denied, nor shall a penalty be assessed against, a school district for complying with this section.

Passed the House of Representatives the 8th day of March, 2016.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 20th day of April, 2016.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this 29th
day of April, 2016, at 3:23 o'clock P M.
By: Audrey Rockwell

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this 26th
day of April, 2016, at 2:15 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 26th
day of April, 2016, at 3:24 o'clock P. M.
By: Chris Benge