



JOY HOFMEISTER

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Joy Hofmeister
DATE: May 28, 2015
SUBJECT: Statutory Waiver for Superintendent Certification Requirement

The following school district is requesting exemption from superintendent certification requirements pursuant to 70 O.S. § 3-126 for the 2015-2016 school year. An exemption from certification requirements may be granted to any district with an unweighted average daily membership over 25,000.

District	County	Waiver (Years)	Students Served
Tulsa	Tulsa*(1)	1	41,043

* The number in the County category represents the Congressional District.
See the attached map.

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Attachments

Section 42.8. Requirements for Exemption.

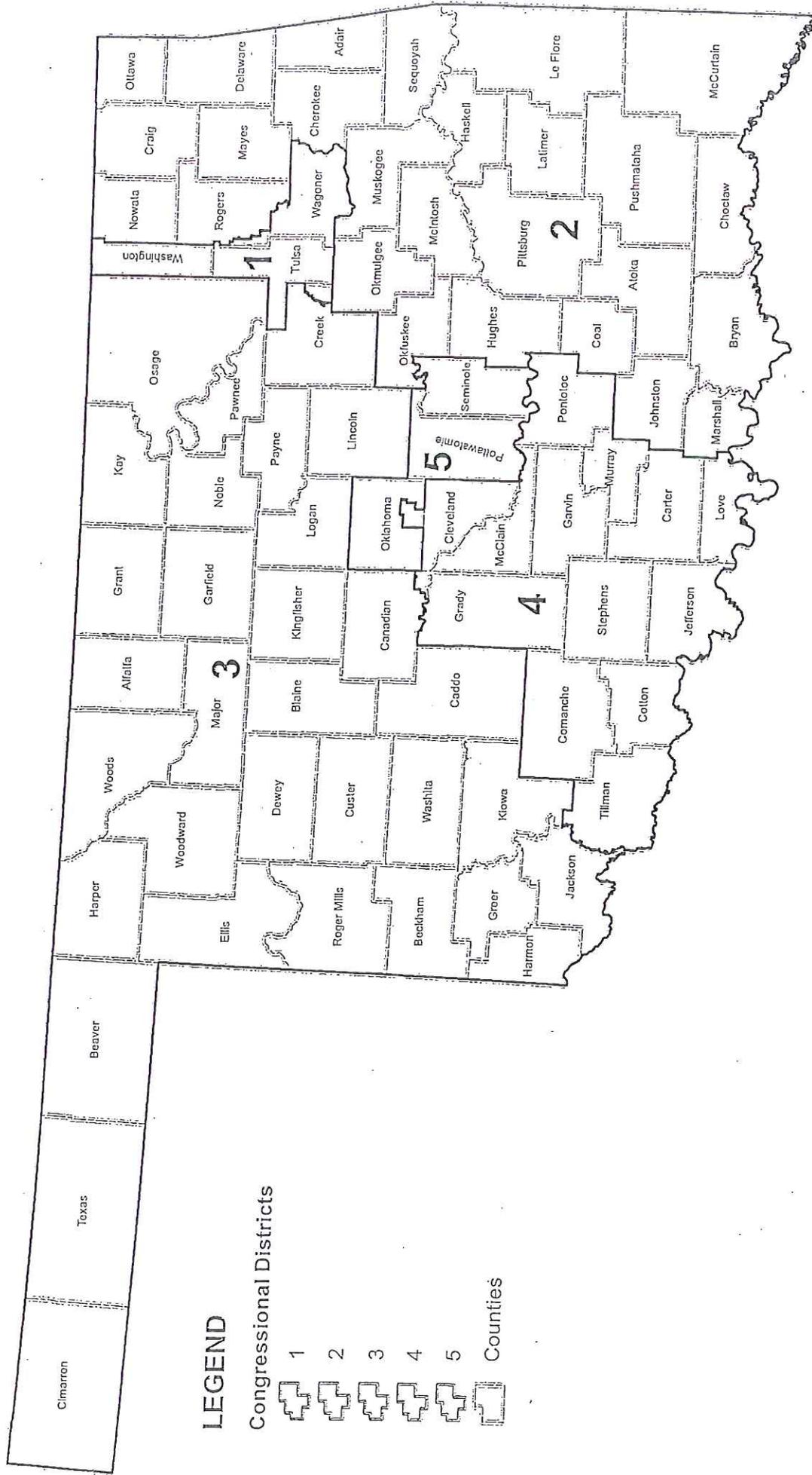
A. A school district may develop an educational improvement plan which includes exemption for the educational-related statutory requirements set forth in subsections C of this section and State Board of Education rules for the school district, a school site or any program, grade level, consortium of schools or school districts or other group within the school district. The board of education of the school district shall, through adoption of a resolution, approve the plan prior to application being made to the State board of Education.

B. Each educational improvement plan approved by the State Board of Education shall include the following components:

1. A description of the educational benefits to be derived;
2. A definition of the standards of the plan;
3. Development of definitive work products, such as site improvement plans and progress reports;
4. Demonstration of collaboration by teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, students, parents/families, and the community;
5. Development and the use of an assessment mechanism to determine progress in meeting the goals and objectives of the plan;
6. Development of an in-service training plan to be provided to personnel at the site who will participate in the project;
7. Report on the results of the plan to the State Board of Education and provision of appropriate technical assistance to other school districts and the State Department of Education as required; and
8. Explanation of how the plan will affect other schools, program or sites in the district.

C. Each educational improvement plan shall include a list of the specific educational-related statutory requirements and State Board of Education rules the school district is requesting an exemption from and why each exemption is necessary to success of the plan. The school district shall not be granted an exemption from federal educational-related requirements. A school district may request an exemption from any statutory requirement or State Board of Education rule not related to bilingual and special education programs, health and safety provisions, school finance, State Aid, pupil formula weights, teacher salary and teacher retirement, the Oklahoma School Testing Program, the Oklahoma Educational Indicators Program and the teacher preparation, examination, licensure, certification, residency and professional development system. The State Board of Education may grant district-wide exemptions from certification requirements for Library Media Specialist to districts experiencing a shortage in this area. The State Board of Education may grant an exemption from certification requirements for superintendents to any district with an unweighted average daily membership over twenty-five thousand (25,000). (70-3-126)

Oklahoma Congressional Districts 2012 - 2020 Elections



LEGEND

Congressional Districts

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Counties



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Deregulation/Statutory Waiver Application Worksheet

** SCHOOL YEAR 2015-2016**

Superintendent: Keith Ballard
District Name: Tulsa
School Name: Tulsa District
RAO: Mike Teel, Jeff Colclasure
O.A.C. Number:
Statute Number: 70 O.S. 3-126

County: Tulsa
Date Received: May 19, 2015
Date of Application:

	Yes	No	NA	Need
Correct Form:	x	_____	_____	_____
Correct Standard Stated:	x	_____	_____	_____
Principal's Signature:	x	_____	_____	_____
Superintendent's Signature:	x	_____	_____	_____
Board President's Signature:	x	_____	_____	_____
Notary with Seal:	x	_____	_____	_____
Equivalency/Letter of Explanation:	x	_____	_____	_____
Bell Schedule:	_____	_____	_____	_____
School Calendar:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Contract(Library/Counseling):	_____	_____	_____	_____

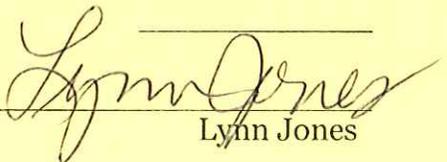
Focus, Priority, Targeted Intervention school- Various schools hold the designations

Enrollment

High School	8518
Middle/Junior High School	5986
Elementary School	25648
Total Enrollment	41,115

Description: Requesting waiver to allow superintendent to operate Tulsa Public Schools without a certificate

Board Month: May 2015

Approval: 
 Lynn Jones

Abbreviated Day/COOP
 Approved via e-mail(attached)

Project Year: 1 of 1
School Year: 2015-2016
Timeline: _____
CC: _____

Notification
 Superintendent _____ will attend
 Principal _____ will attend

OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ACCREDITATION DIVISION
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 210
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-4599
(405) 521-3333

SCHOOL SITE STATUTORY WAIVER/EXEMPTION APPLICATION
For 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR

Name of Site(s): Tulsa Public Schools -Education Service Center

Name of School District: Independent School District No. 1 of Tulsa
County, Oklahoma

Signature of Principal(s): * _____ Date _____
_____ Date _____
_____ Date _____

Signature of Superintendent: * [Signature] Date 5-18-2015

County Name: Tulsa County

I hereby certify that this deregulation application was approved by our local board of education at the meeting on May 18, 2015.

[Signature]
Signature of Board President*

Notary: Cynthia S. Hutchings

Date: May 18, 2015 My Commission Expires: 03/22/16



1. Statement of the Statute to be Waived (specify statutory citation)

Pursuant to 70 O.S. § 3-126(c), Tulsa Public Schools ("TPS" or "District") requests that the Oklahoma State Board of Education waive the superintendent certification requirements contained in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act (70 O.S. § 6-180 et. seq.), which are specifically listed in 70 O.S. § 6-189.

SDE USE ONLY

PROJECT YEARS
1 of 1

ENROLLMENT

High School 8518
Jr./Middle High 5986
Elementary 25648
District Total 41,115

Date Received 5/19/15

70 O.S. 3-126

*Original signatures are required.



T U L S A

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Keith E. Ballard, Ed.D.

May 19, 2015

Robyn R. Miller, Ed.D
Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness & Policy Research
Oklahoma State Department of Education
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Dr. Miller,

Please accept the attached application to exempt Dr. Deborah Gist from superintendent certification requirements for the 2015-16 school year. I have enclosed a copy of her resume, along with a completed waiver application, so that you can see what stellar credentials she brings to Tulsa Public Schools. Our request is to place this application before the State Board May 28, 2015 so that Dr. Gist is ready to start on July 1, 2015.

Dr. Gist is a fellow of the prestigious Broad Academy, a nationally renowned development program that identifies and prepares experienced leaders to successfully run urban public education systems. Dr. Gist's education includes a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Oklahoma; two master's degrees, one from Harvard University and one from the University of South Florida. Her doctorate is from the University of Pennsylvania. She has taught schools in Texas and Florida and served as the State Education Officer for the District of Columbia before being D.C.'s first State Superintendent. She has served for the last six years as Rhode Island's Education Commissioner.

It would be difficult to find anyone who can bring more leadership talent to Tulsa Public Schools in the area of learning and achievement. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Keith E. Ballard, Ed. D.

Attachments

"Excellence and High Expectations with a Commitment to All"

3027 S. New Haven Ave. • TULSA, OK 74114 • (918) 746-6800 • www.tulsaschools.org

- A. A description of the educational benefits to be derived (i.e., describe specific benefits to learning/achievement).

The Tulsa Public School (TPS) Board of Education conducted a nationwide search to find a superintendent with an extensive background in education and with stellar academic credentials. Dr. Deborah A. Gist was selected by the TPS Board to be its superintendent beginning July 1, 2015. On April 8, 2015, a 3-year contract of employment was entered into with Dr. Gist. Dr. Gist's education includes a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Oklahoma; two master's degrees- one from Harvard University and one from the University of South Florida. Her doctorate is from the University of Pennsylvania. She has taught schools in Texas and Florida for eight years, served as the state education officer for the District of Columbia before being D.C.'s first state superintendent. She has served for the last six years as Rhode Island's Education Commissioner. It would be difficult to find anyone who can bring more leadership talent to TPS in the area of learning and achievement.

- B. A definition of the standards of the plan (i.e., alternate strategies proposed).

The four finalists to be TPS's new superintendent were all from out of state. The TPS Board was aware that any candidate selected from out of state might need to engage in the superintendent credentialing process. The Board, however, was intent on finding the best person for the job. Accordingly, granting TPS an exemption from certification requirements for its superintendent for the 2015-16 fiscal year will fulfill the Board's goal of finding the best person, whether in-state or out-of-state, to lead the District and continue its efforts at academic and administrative improvement. It should be noted that while Dr. Gist's employment as superintendent will not begin until July 1, 2015, since her initial selection as superintendent-designee in February, 2015, she has been extensively involved in wrapping up her duties as Rhode Island's Education Commissioner. She also began to work with TPS' current superintendent in early April, 2015, to insure a smooth superintendent transition. An exemption from the superintendent certification requirements for the 2015-16 fiscal year will allow Dr. Gist sufficient time to pursue her certificate without adversely affecting her duties as superintendent.

- C. Development of definitive work products, such as site improvement plans and progress reports (i.e., describe the expected student performance levels to be demonstrated or results of the Statutory Waiver).

With a highly experienced and effective leader, TPS students, administrators, teachers and support staff will have the benefit of a strong leader who inspires maximum effort and ensures accountability. This maximum effort and sense of accountability will, in turn, create an environment for increased student achievement. One of the first major efforts of Dr. Gist will be to lead the district through a strategic planning process.

- D. Demonstration of collaboration of teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, students, parents/families, and the community.

The TPS Board believes that a leader with Dr. Gist's extensively demonstrated experience in several different areas of education will provide the best chance to bring together teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, students, parents/families, and the community in a collaborative effort to ensure that each student in TPS receives a top-quality education. Also, a leader with Dr. Gist's national connections will provide the District with the opportunity to draw on a variety of educational expertise around the nation which will help to increase the level of academic achievement in the District.

- E. Development and the use of an assessment mechanism to determine progress in meeting the goals and objectives of the plan (i.e., method of evaluation).

Dr. Gist, as superintendent of Tulsa Public Schools, will be evaluated based on a superintendent performance rubric developed by the Tulsa Public School Board (i.e., leadership; administration; instruction; relationship with the board, staff and community; personal qualities; financial).

- F. Development of in-service training plan to be provided to personnel at the site who will participate in the projects.

Dr. Gist will participate in in-service training recommended by the State Department of Education as well as any such training required by the Tulsa Public School Board. In addition, the TPS Board built professional development support into Dr. Deborah Gist's contract.

G. Report on the results of the plan to the State Board of Education and provision of appropriate technical assistance to other school districts and the State Department of Education as required (i.e., describe how you will report to the State Board of Education annually).

Upon request, the District will provide the results of this plan and any data needed.

H. Explanation of how the plan will affect other schools, programs or sites in the district.

The TPS Board believes that Dr. Gist's selection will continue and, in fact, accelerate the District's efforts to become a more efficient, cohesive, and thus effective, educational institution. Furthermore, the District has found in Dr. Gist a person with excellent communication skills and experience at working with different constituencies, which will result in increased community involvement and support of student needs. Dr. Gist's attributes in this regard will certainly have a positive effect on each site within the District.

I. Period of public review on the proposed plan.

A TPS Board meeting was held on Monday, May 18, 2015, at 6:30p.m. at the TPS Education Service Center. The agenda items, posted at least twenty-four (24) hours before the meeting, explained that the TPS Board would discuss and vote on whether to approve an application to the State Department to exempt Dr. Gist from the superintendent certification requirements for the 2015-16 fiscal year. Also, the meeting included a time for input from the community/ stakeholders. ✓

J. Notification and comments from the district bargaining agent, or if no bargaining agent exists, the teachers directly affected.

On May 14, 2015, TPS notified the District bargaining agents for teachers (the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association) and the District bargaining agent for support employees (The American Federation of Teachers, Local6049, Oklahoma). Each was informed of the Monday, May 18, 2015 Board meeting and their ability to make comments regarding this request for an exemption. Each was provided with a draft of the Plan/Application on May 14, 2015.

K. All comments, recommendations and objections made by the bargaining agent and others to the local board of education shall be forwarded to the State Board of Education for consideration prior to review of the plan.

A summary of any comments made during the May 18, 2015 TPS Board meeting will be presented to the State Board of Education prior to the Board's review of the plan.

L. Time line for implementing the Statutory Waiver, specifying the period requested.

The District requests that the exemption be effective July 1, 2015, and be granted for the entire 2015-2016 fiscal year.