

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OKLAHOMA EDUCATION POSITION RESTUDY: OKLAHOMA EDUCATION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

Despite (or maybe because of) the fact that education has always been considered important in the United States, it seems to be constantly changing. The world of education has definitely changed since the League of Women Voters of Oklahoma (LWVOK) last conducted a complete study of the issue in 1973. (Note: limited studies and positions were undertaken on textbook selection in 1986, corporal punishment in 1989, and education curriculum in 2005).

One of the biggest changes since the mid/late 1970s has been in the area of technology. The idea that students would have ready access to computers, smart phones and other electronic devices would never have occurred to a generation that had just gotten accustomed to color television. Another area of major concern has been with the privatization of education and with the lack of proper funding for education at all levels.

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The LWVOK Education Restudy Task Force has investigated public schools and the way they are funded. It has also researched higher education, vouchers, charter and virtual schools. In the interest of “readability,” some results of their research have been included in appendices. The materials also include a glossary of terms and a list of supplemental readings. Because the face of education changes daily, all League members are encouraged to contribute current information in addition to what is presented here.

These materials are divided into five parts

- I. Financing of common schools
- II. Vouchers
- III. Charter schools
- IV. Virtual classes and schools
- V. Post-secondary education

The sections need not be studied in the order given above. Each League can decide how to approach these materials. More than a single meeting will probably be necessary in order to cover all the information provided. Before considering the information on these five topics, it is important to outline what the LWVUS and the LWVOK have stated in their positions on education.

The LWVUS believes that

- the primary responsibility for education rests with the states,
- an equitable, quality public education is critical for students,
- the federal government should be primarily responsible for funding programs mandated by the federal government,
- a basic role of the federal government in funding education is to achieve equity among states and populations on the basis of identified needs.

The LWVUS believes that the federal government is responsible for

- providing a series of general standards which the states and local districts can adapt,
- creating national assessments that permit individuals and schools to evaluate their performance,
- giving money to states and local districts through both competitive and non-competitive grants to address inequities.

The LWVOK believes that quality education for all children in Oklahoma depends on adequate financing and supports

- the state assuming the major responsibility for financing common schools,
- the state assuming responsibility for equalizing financial resources among school districts,
- the major portion of financing common schools move away from a base of ad valorem taxes,
- continued improvement of assessment practices,
- the removal of constitutional limitation on millage,
- broad based sources such as income and sales tax used to provide funds,
- removal of loopholes in tax laws including the exemptions from property taxes,
- the requirement that each school district vote the maximum millage,
- consideration of formulas other than Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for state aid.

The LWVOK believes that all schools should deliver a basic curriculum that prepares all students for the future. This curriculum should include language arts, mathematics, social studies, history and world languages. The basic curriculum should be specific enough to ensure that all students have a grounding in the subject matter, but flexible enough to allow for individual students to choose additional courses that address their needs, interests and career goals.

The LWVOK supports mandatory kindergarten for all children by the state. It also supports special education including services for gifted children.

The LWVOK believes that improved financing, accountability of expenditures, and more efficient financial procedures are the keys to providing quality higher education in Oklahoma. It believes that the state government should assume the major responsibility for financing state institutions of higher learning.

The LWVOK believes that the boards of higher education should be restructured to provide better governance of the system. The coordinating board, the State Board of Regents for Higher Education, should remain a constitutional board.

The LWVOK believes that vocational-technical education should play a larger role in the story of total education. Counseling in career education needs emphasis, and greater opportunities for youth and adults in vocational-technical education need to be provided.

The writing team that prepared these study materials consisted of four LWVOK members: Sheila Swearingen (Tulsa), Judy Reynolds (Norman), Jan Largent (Stillwater), and Karen Cárdenas (Tulsa).

EDUCATION FINANCE

Current Common Education Funding in Oklahoma

The Oklahoma legislature appropriates more funds to common education than to any other state function: 35.8% of state appropriations in 2017 ([“8 key facts,” 2017](#)). Nevertheless, state public schools are underfunded. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), a nonpartisan American research institute, combined state and local school funding per pupil in Oklahoma declined 11.8% (adjusted for inflation) between 2008 and 2015. The CBPP lists several causes for this decline in financial support for Oklahoma students including weak revenues, rising costs of education, and state policy choices ([Leachman, 2017](#)). During this period, falling oil prices and slow sales tax growth contributed to the problem of weak revenues in Oklahoma. The increase in untaxed internet sales contributes to weak revenue collection as well. After the recession, because property values fell, property tax collections also declined. At the same time, statewide enrollment has increased by 30,000 pupils since 2009 ([Burkett, n.d.](#)). The increase in the number of students during this time and the decrease in federal aid to education also led to the rising costs of educating Oklahoma students.

State policy choices that significantly impacted education funding in these years included cutting budgets to close general budget shortfalls rather than finding more sources of revenue and cutting both personal and corporate income tax rates. Other policy changes are a 2012 ballot initiative, SQ 766 that exempted intangible property from tax liability. In that same year, SQ 758, another ballot initiative, capped the yearly property tax valuation increase at 3%. Before 2012, the cap was 5%. In 2014, SB 1469 extended the moratorium on accreditation standards for class size, textbook and library media spending. Also in 2014, HB 1378 required student CPR training without providing any additional funding. Finally, the Gross Production Tax (GPT) has been reduced from 7% to 2% for the first 3 years of a well’s production increasing to 7% for the remainder of the well’s years of production. Another policy shift by the legislature that has been noted is funding line items and specific reforms rather than general school operations, which usually make up the largest part of a district’s budget ([Burkett, n.d.](#)).

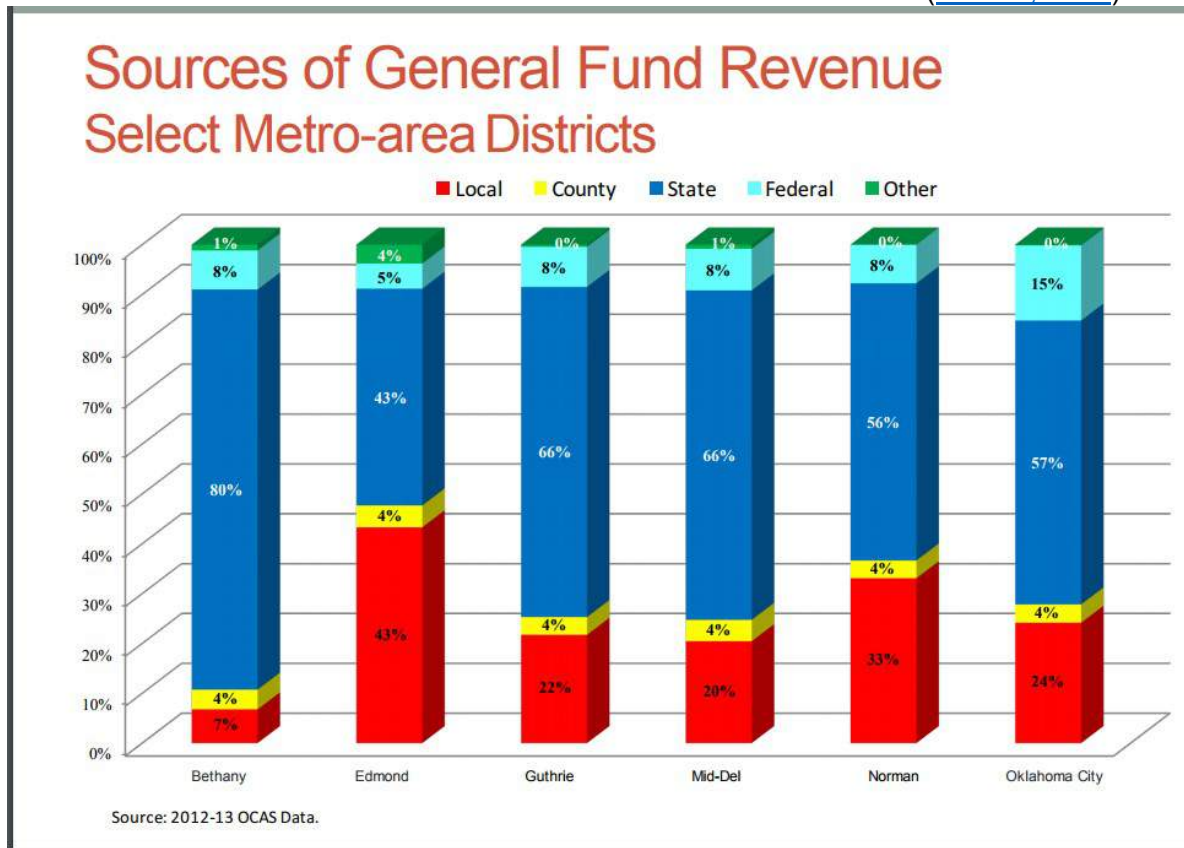
These policy choices are of great interest to the LWVOK in this study. Insufficient funds for our state public schools leads to inadequately preparing Oklahoma youth for productive and fulfilling employment, declining teacher quality, increased class sizes, less learning time in classrooms, and fewer options for high-quality early education. Some collateral effects of underfunding schools are diminished economic growth because of layoffs and reduced purchasing of textbooks, supplies, and contracts for school projects, the need for more university-level remedial classes, and the inability of the state to attract new business and industry requiring a well-educated workforce.

The LWVOK is engaging in a restudy of education finance in order to find positions to advocate for improved and adequate funding for common education in Oklahoma. To begin, it’s important to understand how the state currently funds common education.

Sources of Common Education Funding in Oklahoma

School districts in Oklahoma get revenue from state, local—including county, and federal sources ([Oklahoma State Department of Education \[OSDE\], Feb. 2017](#)). See Chart 1. School revenues, except for ad valorem, are controlled by Average Daily Attendance (ADA) or Average Daily Membership (ADM).

Chart 1 Sources of General Fund Revenue Select Metro-area Districts ([Burkett, 2015](#))



School districts get the majority of their funds from the state. (See Chart 2 Sources of Revenue General Fund). The state revenue comes from dedicated and line items funds and from appropriations by the Legislature. (See [Oklahoma School Finance Technical Assistance Document, p.11](#) for a complete listing of the Oklahoma State Department of Education Common Education FY 2018 Appropriations)

The state-dedicated revenue sources are:

- Gross Production Tax (GPT), (Calculated on ADA percentage within the county)
 - Motor Vehicle Collections, (Calculated on ADA across Oklahoma)
 - Rural Electrification Association Tax (REA) (based on miles of lines)
 - State School Land Earnings (Calculated on ADA percentage across Oklahoma)
 - Foundation and Salary Incentive Aid (Calculated on WADM)
- (Evans, Andy, personal communication, April 4, 2018)

The Foundation and Salary Incentive Aid revenue is the primary funding source for Oklahoma school districts. In 2016, 7.14% of revenue from the GPT was allocated for school districts. Any growth in revenues from these dedicated state sources are considered “chargeables” against the district budgets each year when calculating their share from the state funding formula.

State line items are funds for textbooks, employee health coverage, and other specific programs and reforms like those listed below:

- ACE Technology (Achieving Classroom Excellence Act of 2005)
- Alternative and High Challenge Education
- Driver Education
- Flexible Benefit Allowance—Certified/Support
- Reading Sufficiency Act (RSA)
- School Consolidation Assistance Fund
- School Lunch—State Matching
- National Board Certified Bonus.

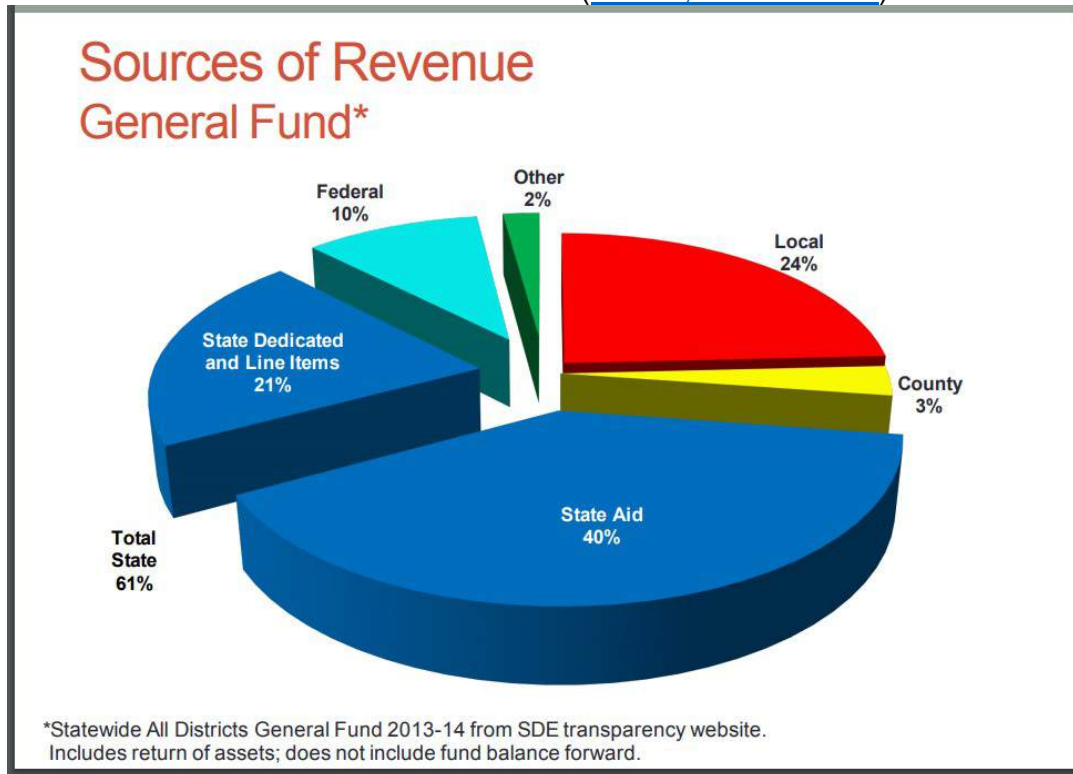
State Aid funds come from the State General Revenue fund, the Education Revolving Fund (1017 Fund), the Common Education Technology Fund, the Oklahoma Lottery Trust Fund, the Mineral Leasing Fund, the School Consolidation Assistance Fund, and from the Rainy Day fund. State Aid is dispersed to districts through the state aid formula ([OSDE, Oct. 2017, p.21-53](#)) that is administered by the Oklahoma State Board of Education (OSBE).

The state aid formula is a complicated formula that uses weighted average daily membership (WADM) to calculate a district's share of state funds. The object of the formula is to equalize funding across state school districts, although it doesn't fully accomplish that goal ([Burkett, October 2015](#)). It has been reported that ". . . many education experts consider Oklahoma's funding formula among the country's most equitable . . ." ([Wendler, 2017](#)). Emily Wendler reported for State Impact that "37 districts don't receive any funding from the state". This is because their counties bring in so much ad valorem money from a wind farm business, a gas plant, or the Google data center, for example. One proposal is to share the local wealth from districts like these with less fortunate districts through changes to the state aid formula ([2017](#)).

An OSBE Legislative Update from State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister reported that in July 2017, HB1578 established the Task Force on Improving the State Aid Formula. This 16-member group is authorized to make recommendations to the legislature through December 2018 when their report is due. The appointees on this task force will "study the State Aid funding formula, local ad valorem rates, formula structure, and efficiencies and cost-saving measures of school districts." HB1578 also created the School Finance Review Commission which ". . .will conduct a review of all matters related to school finance, including but not limited to teacher compensation, benefits and administration costs and submit a report by December 31, 2023 and every four years thereafter" ([Hofmeister, 2017](#)).

For a comprehensive look at the state aid formula definitions of terms and calculations see: [Oklahoma State Department of Education Technical Assistance Document \(OSDE 2017, October\)](#)

Chart 2. Sources of Revenue General Fund ([Burkett, October 2015](#))



The state lottery has contributed to school funding in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Education Lottery and Lottery Trust Fund were created in 2004. At least 35% of the net proceeds from the lottery are to be appropriated by

the legislature for several education agencies. These funds are usually used for general operating expenses rather than for any dedicated purpose. Lottery funds are to supplement not supplant other education funding.

The contribution of the lottery to the Oklahoma Education Lottery Trust Fund has been steady since 2006 at about \$70 million per year, though it has started to decline recently due to greater competition from tribal gaming. The contribution of the lottery and tribal gaming are barely half of what K-12 education has lost due to cuts to the state's top income tax rate, according to analysis by Oklahoma Policy Institute. (["8 key facts" 2017](#))

In addition to school districts across the state, charter schools also receive state education funds. An important impediment to the development of charter schools is the low level of state funding for all public schools. (See Charter Schools section of this document for details about funding charter schools.)

In 2016, State Question 779 was promoted by Oklahoma's Children, Our Future, a group spearheaded by David Boren--President of OU, to provide funds for education. The question, which was put on the ballot by petition, called for a 1% state sales tax to create more revenue for education in Oklahoma. Common schools were to receive 69.5% of the funds generated, institutions governed by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education 19.25%, the Department of Career and Technology Education 3.25%, and the State Department of Education 8%. The question was defeated by voters 59% to 41%.

In the spring of 2018 while this study was being prepared, Oklahoma teachers planned to walk out of their classrooms and go to the capitol to persuade the legislature to find recurring revenue sources for education. Just before the walkout was to begin, the legislature approved funding for the coming school year amounting to about half a billion dollars. The revenue came from increasing the gross production tax to 5%, increasing gasoline and diesel taxes, a sales tax on third-party internet sales, and increasing the tax on cigarettes. Ball and dice gambling was also approved and will generate tax revenue, but those proceeds will not be available until 2019. An increase in the Hotel/Motel tax was also approved but later eliminated from the revenue plan. These funds will provide average teacher salary increases of \$6,100, and increased pay for support staff and public employees.

Despite these measures, the historic teacher walkout began April 2 and lasted 9 days for many districts across the state. Teachers were supported by public employees, parents, students, and administrators as they pressed for a stronger commitment to providing recurring revenue for education. The teachers proposed repealing a capital gains tax exemption that would have yielded more funds, but the legislature refused to approve it. No further funding measures were passed during and after the walkout. As local LWV groups discuss this education study, these issues will still be in flux. As a result of the walkout, a group called Oklahoma Taxpayers Unite was organizing to circulate a petition calling for a statewide ballot initiative to repeal the revenue package supporting teachers' demands. These actions this year underscore the importance of being informed about how and if our state provides adequate funding for education at all levels.

Local Sources of Oklahoma School District Funds

Local sources of revenue are seven different ad valorem tax levies that are defined and limited by the state constitution. Ad valorem tax is the local property tax that is levied in mills (1 mill = 1/1000 of a dollar). Ad valorem revenue is generally used as a local source of school funding in the U.S. This tax is limited by the Oklahoma Constitution to 35% of the fair cash value of real, personal, and public service property. Ad valorem revenue is determined by the adjusted valuation in the district (Evans, Andy, personal communication, April 3, 2018)

Ad Valorem Tax Levies for School Purposes

General Fund:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Certification of Need | 15 mills |
| County 4-mill levy | 4 mills (calculated on WADA in the county) |
| County 15-mill levy | 5 mills |
| Emergency levy | 5 mills |
| Local Support levy | 10 mills |

Building Fund: 5 mills

Sinking Fund: depends on bond issue election

The definitions of these levies can be found in this state department of education document ([OSDE, 2017, October, pp. 1-6](#)).

The General Fund levies are “not really optional” and “in effect, there is no constitutionally permissible way for districts, even by approval of voters, to raise additional ad valorem levies to support the general operation of the schools” ([OSDE, 2017, October p.2](#)). For a complete list of the constitutional ad valorem levies for schools, county government, municipal government, and special districts, see Oklahoma School Finance Technical Assistance Document ([OSDE, 2017, October p. 6](#)).

School districts can secure funds from bonds, but this funding can only be used for “improving or acquiring school sites, constructing, repairing, remodeling and equipping school buildings, and acquiring school furniture, fixtures, equipment, uniforms, technology, and transportation equipment.” ([Smith](#)). Therefore, bond money cannot be used for salaries or benefits. Bond issues must be approved by 60% of the voters in a district bond election. These bonds are repaid from the district Sinking Fund which accumulates revenue from ad valorem taxes.

School districts develop their budgets without knowing exactly what their resources will be each year. Their budgets are based on revenue collections in prior years and adjustments are made mid-year for changes in collections, ADA, and ADM. Districts maintain fund balances, or carryover funds, to help compensate for these unknown factors.

Several common arguments about Oklahoma school funding have been addressed by David Blatt of the Oklahoma Policy Institute:

The first myth is that education revenue is at an all-time high. PolitiFact analyzed this claim and found it to be “mostly false,” concluding that when “population and economic growth are added in, spending has been higher over most of the past decade.” OK Policy finds that, adjusted for inflation, per-pupil revenue from all local, state, and federal sources combined is down 12 percent compared with the pre-recession peak in 2009.

The second, more long-standing myth is that if Oklahoma could only reduce the amount it spends supporting so many school districts, we’d have more than enough to pay our teachers properly. The numbers prove otherwise.

School district administration accounted for \$237 per student in 2015, about 3 percent of total school spending. This ranks us right in the middle of the U.S. Meanwhile, our rank for per pupil spending on instruction is near the lowest – 47th. If the state somehow moved every dollar that we spend on district administration into instruction, our ranking would... still be 47th. We wouldn’t move the needle a single spot. ([2018](#))

Federal Sources of Oklahoma School District Funds

The federal government funds several programs, the largest of which are from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I for disadvantaged students, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These funds have been subject to sequestration, a federal budget mechanism by which federal programs are cut 5% each year for 10 years.

Something to note is that the 5% federal level cut is allocated through a formula to the 50 states which in turn is allocated in Oklahoma through another formula to the approximately 540 school districts. The complex allocation formulas produce a different rate of budget cuts in each district ([Burkett, n.d.](#)). Funding cuts of varying percentages due to federal sequestration measures are likely to continue through 2023.

Because of the recession in 2008-9, the federal government provided some stimulus money to Oklahoma. The state received the last of those funds in 2011-12.

A great deal of interest in school finance and school privatization has been generated recently. A related trend is providing new schooling options for families. Some families receive vouchers from their school districts to be used in private schools. Some children attend public charter schools that are designed to encourage innovation and competition. Virtual schools that use technology rather than brick and mortar classrooms to deliver content are also proliferating in our state and country. These developments and trends are not without controversy. Studies are being done to measure the effectiveness of these options, but so far, the results indicate that more study is necessary. Citizens need to consider the changing roles of parents, educators, government, private enterprise, and students in determining, improving, and delivering curriculum as well as in funding and governing schools.

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Additional Reading

Not Going to be Enough for our Circumstances: School Finances have Changed Little Despite Walk-Out http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/education/not-going-to-be-enough-for-our-circumstances-school-finances/article_6acf92df-4102-5bfa-ac82-50aee7152dcf.html

Education Laws & Regulations First Regular Session of the 56th Oklahoma Legislature 2017. (2017, June 6). Retrieved from https://www.ccosa.org/index.php?resources&a=&a=view&resource_id=89

Oklahoma School Finance Technical Assistance Document-- this document contains the State Aid Formula and many definitions of terms including ad valorem tax levies
http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/documents/files/FY%202018%20TAD%20toc%20updated%20mp_r_m_1.pdf

School Finance 101—a powerpoint presentation by Brenda Burkett, CFO of Norman Public Schools. (2015, October) This is a good overview of common school funding.
<https://www.normanpublicschools.org/cms/lib/OK02210265/Centricity/Domain/48/School%20Finance%20101.pdf>

School Revenue—The Simplified Version. [A powerpoint presentation from OPSRC](#). (Available on the LWVOK website: lvvok.org)

Twenty Questions (and Answers) about School Finance. Edmond Public Schools.
https://okpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/20QUEST_schoolFinance_EPS.pdf?x43134

VOUCHERS

The LWVUS is a member of the [National Coalition for Public Education](#), which opposes vouchers.

According to the organization GreatSchools, a source of information and advocacy for parents who want to improve educational experiences for their children, a voucher “allows parents to use public funds to pay for some or all of their child’s private school tuition. Vouchers are created and distributed by state governments, in most cases” ([GreatSchools](#)). Voucher programs have existed since 1991. Originally, vouchers were developed to give children in low-income families options for better school experiences. The idea has spread to 12 states and Washington D.C. Voucher programs have met with resistance for a variety of reasons.

GreatSchools reports that:

Voucher programs are politically contentious. They often face harsh scrutiny from critics who say they blur the lines between church and state or destroy public education because they drain much-needed resources from public schools and lack the oversight that exists in public institutions. Advocates contend that these programs provide families, especially those who cannot afford private school tuition, with alternatives when a school or school system fails. They also argue that parents should not have to pay for schooling twice (in both taxes and tuition). As well, vouchers are promoted as a way to improve public education by introducing competition.

Vouchers have not necessarily led to improved school performance for students who use them. Cory Turner reported in an NPR interview on *All Things Considered*:

The research on vouchers is really hotly debated. There's one 2007 overview of voucher research that found some positive results for African-American students. But there are also a lot of important caveats in that research. A more recent review from 2011 found voucher students doing roughly the same as public school kids, really no better. And some of the newest research frankly - we heard a little bit of it in Eric's piece there - out of Louisiana and Ohio both found some negative academic effects for voucher students. ([School Vouchers 101](#))

A recent report, sponsored by the Center for American Progress, on the effectiveness of vouchers, stated:

While choice in the education sector can spur innovation and offer parents and children options to best meet individualized needs, evidence indicates that voucher programs do not improve results for students and will not achieve that aim. Indeed, vouchers will likely hurt student growth and lower overall outcomes. ([Boser, Benner, & Roth, March 2018, para. 46](#))

Oklahoma has had a voucher program called the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship for Students with Disabilities Program (LNH) since 2010. This program was challenged in the courts, but it was upheld in 2016 by the State Supreme Court ([Palmer](#)). In 2017, the program was extended to include children in foster homes. Other states, notably Arizona, have gradually expanded the groups of children eligible for vouchers. To be eligible for the voucher in Oklahoma, students must have an individual education plan (IEP) and have attended an Oklahoma public school one year before receiving the voucher. Exceptions are made for children in active military families and for children who were in the program for infants and children with developmental delays. There are no enrollment limits for Oklahoma vouchers. According to the Education Commission of the States, a nonpartisan interstate compact on education, the value of the voucher is either “the state's per-pupil amount, including grade and disability weights for the applicable school year, or the amount of the private school's tuition and fees, whichever is less. The state may retain 2.5 percent of the voucher amount for administrative services.” There are no testing requirements for participants. “Schools that receive vouchers must:

- Meet state's accreditation standards.
- Demonstrate fiscal soundness and in operation for at least one year.
- Be accountable to parents for meeting students' academic and emotional needs.
- Teachers must have baccalaureate degrees or higher or meet certain requirements.
- Adhere to the school's published disciplinary procedures before expelling a participating student.
- Comply with all state laws applicable to private schools.”

([Education Commission of the States](#))

Parents who accept the LNH scholarship for their children must agree that (1) the student is no longer entitled to receive special education and related services from any Oklahoma public school district and (2) each Oklahoma public school district must treat the student as a nondisabled student for all purposes, including discipline. ([Notification, n.d.](#))

Sixty schools are approved by the Oklahoma State Department of Education to accept voucher students. ([Lindsey Nicole Henry Approved Private Schools](#)). Palmer reported that “about 60 percent of the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarships provided, or just under \$1.5 million, was spent at religious schools” (2017). One objection to voucher programs is that they funnel public school funds to private and religious schools.

Other types of funding innovations like vouchers are education savings accounts, tuition tax credits, and Title I portability ([Types of Vouchers](#)). Oklahoma does have a tax credit program, The Oklahoma Equal Opportunity Education Scholarships, as well as vouchers. The [National Coalition for Public Education](#) has compiled resources supporting its opposition to vouchers. The group [EdChoice](#) has compiled resources supporting its advocacy for more school choice.

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association has made this statement about vouchers:

Vouchers, also known as education savings or scholarship accounts, aren't a solution for helping build a solid education foundation for Oklahoma's children. We urge legislators to work with parents and education leaders at all levels for real solutions to support the 693,000 students in their public schools. ([Vouchers/ESAS](#))

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Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/lindsey-nicole-henry-lnh-scholarship-program-children-disabilities>

National Coalition for Public Education <https://www.ncpecoalition.org/>

[School Choice and Charters](http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/school-choice-and-charters.aspx) [Http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/school-choice-and-charters.aspx](http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/school-choice-and-charters.aspx)

School Choice Glossary:
https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/School_Choice_Glossary-3.pdf

CHARTER SCHOOLS

What is a Charter School?

Charter schools are public, tuition-free schools that are open to all students. They are often operated independently from the traditional school district. They are allowed greater flexibility and don't have to adhere to the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness standards set by the state of Oklahoma, but charters that do not meet performance standards may be closed by their sponsors (authorizers). A charter school maintains its own board of governance in addition to being accountable to their sponsor (authorizer). The sponsor is responsible for advising and closely monitoring charter school leadership ([Oklahoma State Department of Education \[OSDE, 2017, Dec.\]](#)).

Oklahoma Law

The Oklahoma Charter Schools Act was passed in 1999.

The Act listed the following purposes:

- Improve student learning
- Increase learning opportunities
- Provide additional academic choices for parents and students
- Require the measurement of student learning and create different and innovative forms of measuring student learning
- Establish new forms of accountability for schools
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers and administrators including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site

There are no for-profit charter school organizations in Oklahoma. The 1999 law specifies that charter school organizations must be nonprofit and provides the following list of possible sponsors or authorizers:

- A school district or a technology center with average daily membership (ADM) of 5,000 in counties with more than 500,000 residents
- A school district or technology center with a school site in school improvement
- A member of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education that has a teacher education program within districts with ADM of 5,000 in counties with more than 500,000 residents.
- A member of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education with a teacher education program may sponsor a charter within a school district with a school site in school improvement.
- A federally recognized Indian Tribe, if the charter is for the purpose of native language immersion.
- The State Board of Education only when the applicant is the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) or when the charter has a contract with the OJA. ([OSDE, 2017, Dec.](#))

The 1999 law was amended in 2015 allowing charter schools in rural areas.

All or part of a traditional public school may be converted into a charter school. However, state law does prohibit an entire district from become a charter school site.

Authorizers or Sponsors of Charter Schools (2017)

| AUTHORIZERS | NUMBER OF SCHOOLS |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Cherokee Nation | 1 |
| • Langston University | 4 |
| • Oklahoma State University | 1 |
| • Tulsa Public Schools | 6 |
| • University of Oklahoma | 1 |
| • Oklahoma City Public Schools | 10 |
| • State Board of Education | 1 |
| • Canadian Public Schools | 1 |

According to Eric Doss from OPSRC, another authorizer is Rose State College (personal communication, February, 2018). It is the authorizer for a blended virtual and brick and mortar charter with campuses in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. One of the goals of this particular concept is to give parents more choices especially for those who work outside of the home and want their child to attend a virtual school. Students have the option of attending daily or part-time. Subject standards are worked on as opposed to taking particular classes ([Eger](#)).

Entities

In addition to an authorizer or sponsor for the charter school is the entity that actually runs the schools. Some of those entities are: KIPP Reach Academy Charter School, Inc., Lighthouse Academy Inc., Insight School of Oklahoma LLC, ASTEC, Families for Excellence, Inc., Harper Academy, Inc., Collegiate Hall, Inc., etc. Some entities are national organizations and others are local. The entities by law are nonprofit.

Some of the responsibilities of the entities are:

- Create a board—a majority of board members are required to complete State Department of Education Charter Training. Almost all need to reside with the district where the charter is located. Resumes need to be provided. Dates of board meetings are to be listed and at least four meetings are required per year.
- Provide a mission statement
- Appoint a treasurer to account for revenues and costs of programs of the school (transportation, child nutrition, special education, counseling, gifted and talented, etc.)
- Provide a plan for insurance
- Provide a plan for student recruitment
- Provide an academic plan. The charter may offer a curriculum that emphasizes a specific learning philosophy or style in the subject areas. Charters for school grades 9-12 have to show that they comply with graduation requirements.
- Provide survey results, petitions and crowd source funding that demonstrates community support of application
- Hire teachers and other staff with provided job descriptions that are in compliance with employment law.
- File annual report about enrollment, testing curriculum, finances and employees
- Secure and possibly recreate a site building. Maintain that building. ([OSDE, 2017, Dec.](#))

Rural Charter Schools

In 2015 the Charter School Law was amended allowing charters statewide. In the original law, charter schools were only allowed in urban areas. The amendment opened the way for charters to be established in rural areas.

In January 2017 The State Board of Education ruled unanimously that if a local school board won't sponsor a valid charter school application, the State Board of Education may instead. The law allows the State Board of Education to sponsor up to five charter schools per year if the applicant had been twice denied by the local school district ([Palmer, 2017](#)).

Oklahoma's first rural charter school is Carlton Landing Academy, which is located in a small community on Lake Eufaula. It was formerly a private school and is now a public charter school sponsored by the Canadian Public Schools. The Seminole Public Schools had twice rejected the application for the Academy of Seminole. The State Board instead will be sponsoring the school. The Academy of Seminole will be the second rural charter school to open in 2018 ([Palmer, 2016](#)). The idea of a charter school in Seminole was started by businessman, Paul Campbell who was concerned about the ACT scores in Seminole county. The Academy of Seminole will open on the Seminole State College campus. The Pre-K through 8th grade school will be based on classical curriculum, with a focus on reading and the 9th through 12th grades will focus on STEM ([Saegert](#)).

Another charter school that will open soon as a result of the change in the charter school law in 2015 is the Le Monde School in Norman. It is set to open in the fall of 2018 and will be a French and Spanish immersion school for grades Pre-kindergarten through 4th grade. The idea of an immersion school grew out of parent frustration with Oklahoma budget cuts that resulted in large cuts to the Norman Public School leading to the discontinuation of Reagan Elementary's Partial French Immersion Program. The authorizer for the Le Monde School is the Oklahoma State Board of Education. The entity that will be running the school is Le Monde International School ([Lee](#)).

The fear among rural areas is that charters will take funds away from districts that are already strapped for needed operating and instructional costs.

Charter Schools for Juvenile Offenders in Detention Centers

The Oklahoma Board of Education is the authorizer for the Oklahoma Youth Academy that has campuses in Tecumseh and Manitou. The traditional schools inside the detention centers were converted to a charter school system to offer greater flexibility to a population of students who have special needs and large gaps in their education. Their mission is to provide an individual education, which encompasses academic, social, emotional and employment skills for highly challenged youth in a non-traditional setting with encouragement of self-worth and determination. One of the main goals is to help youth toward realizing their true potential ([Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs](#)).

Who Can Attend Charter Schools?

Oklahoma Charter schools cannot limit admission based on ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling conditions, English proficiency, achievement levels, aptitude, or athletic ability. They may enroll students whose legal residence is within the boundaries of the school district in which the school is located or who have transferred into the school district. Preferences are given to resident students, siblings of students who are already attending, and those who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. (E. Doss, personal communication, February 2018). If capacity is insufficient to enroll all interested eligible students, the charter school must select students through a lottery. Lotteries have to be random and in an academic enterprise zone in which 60% or more of the children who reside in the area qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches ([OSDE, 2017, Dec.](#)). Students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are served in the charter school according to their needs and the IEP that is developed by a team. The process is the same as in a traditional school.

A student who is outside of a district can apply to a charter if the contract with the sponsor or authorizer allows it. Tulsa does not allow charters to take students from outside of its district. Otherwise, students have to go

through the transfer process just as if they are transferring from one school district to another. According to the Charter School law of 1999, charters are to give enrollment preference to students within their districts. (E. Doss, personal communication, April 2018)

Recruitment

Charter schools recruit students by advertising in the local papers and on radio spots, by knocking on doors, and yard signs. Recruitment is usually started in February for the coming school year (E. Doss, personal communication, February 2018). *The Oklahoman* did an analysis of applications for the state’s charter schools applications and found that the application process can be a barrier ([Felder, 2017, July](#)). Several charter schools in the state require parents to explain their child’s academic abilities in detail, pledge a commitment to volunteer at the school or have the student submit as essay. Some applications require a recommendation from a teacher, ask for details on a student’s discipline history or if they have received special education services. However, some charter schools ask for nothing more than a student’s name and contact information.

Brad Clark, general counsel to the State Board of Education, has said that because student demographics and abilities are not to be considered in enrollment decisions, asking for those details on an application could violate Oklahoma law.

Oklahoma Charter School Demographics Compared to Oklahoma Demographic Averages ([OSDE, 2017, January](#))

| | Brick and Mortar Charter | Traditional Public School |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Population: | | |
| Black | 25.86% | 8.77 % |
| Asian/Pacific Islanders | 15.08% | 2.39% |
| Hispanic | 40.52% | 17.23% |
| Native American | 2.76% | 13.59% |
| White | 12.93% | 49.36% |
| Two or more races | 2.84% | 8.78% |

Charter School enrollment is 2.92% of the total Oklahoma school enrollment ([OSDE, 2015](#)).

Ben Felder reported that: While Oklahoma’s charter school enrollment has exploded over the past several years—nearly 20,000 between virtual and traditional—it still accounts for a small portion of the state’s total public school enrollment of 693,710, based on last year’s count. He added that the growth in enrollment in charter schools fell from 17.4% in 2015 to 3.8% in 2016 ([2017, August](#)).

Teachers

Teachers at charter schools are not required to be certified. However, the charter contract must include provisions about teacher and personnel certification and qualifications. Teacher certification may not necessarily be in the area in which the teacher is teaching. The law has been interpreted to mean that charter schools are not required to hire certified staff, as certified staff is not specifically mentioned in the Oklahoma Charter School Act ([OSDE, 2017, December](#)). Daniel Craig Ed. D., the executive director of the Oklahoma Office of Educational Quality and Accountability stated that with his experiences most charter school teachers are or were certified and needed to be to meet No Child Left Behind requirements (personal communication, January 1, 2018). With No Child Left Behind (NCLB) being replaced by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) not all teachers are required to be highly qualified, so the numbers may be changing. Charter schools are not required to follow the state’s minimum teaching salary requirements. Charter school teachers can be paid below or above state minimums. However, most charter schools seek to be competitive in regard to teacher salaries with the traditional public schools. Charters must have a contract with sponsoring school districts before entering into employment contracts with teachers and support staff. The contract with the school districts must establish salaries. Charter schools are exempt from teacher due process and collective

bargaining. Charter school teachers have access to the state's teacher retirement system ([Education Commission of the States](#) [ECS]).

Transportation

The charter school is responsible for transportation, but only within the boundaries of the school district where it is located.

Financial

Charter schools that are under a public school system umbrella are financed through that public school. All others are financed through the state. Charter schools receive the state aid allocation and other state-appropriated revenue generated for their students according to the same state aid funding formula as traditional public schools. Up to 5% of a school's allocation (Average Daily Membership) may be retained by its sponsor for administrative fees. Charter schools are eligible to receive other forms of aid and grants as are to traditional schools. The governing body (entity) of a charter school cannot levy taxes or issue bonds. The Charter Schools Incentive Fund provides start-up and planning grants for charter schools. The state department of education allocates per-pupil funds to match funds allocated through the federal State Charter Schools Facilities Incentive Grant Programs. The Charter School Incentive Fund provides support for costs associated with renovating or remodeling existing buildings for use by a charter school. The department of education allocates per-pupil funds to match funds allocated through the federal State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Programs. Also, the Common School Building Equalization Fund provides aid for acquiring buildings. To qualify, charter schools have to provide matching funds of not less than 10% of the total grant. The maximum grant award is \$4 million. Charter Schools are eligible for tax-exempt financing through the Oklahoma Development Finance Authority ([OSDE, 2017, Dec.](#)). Charters can receive federal title funds and IDEA funds. Charter schools do not receive local funds such as ad valorem taxes and aren't always included in local bond issues.

The Oklahoma Public Charter School Association is suing the state Board of Education over the funding allocated to charter schools, arguing that it is inequitable. OK charter schools are eligible for state and federal funding but not local tax revenue. The Oklahoma City and Tulsa Schools have filed motions to intervene in the lawsuit, in opposition stating that they could lose an estimated \$1.5 million each with monies being diverted to brick and mortar charters located within their districts ([Palmer, 2017, November](#)).

Oklahoma will receive \$16.5 million in federal funds to open and expand charter schools across the state. This funding boost will significantly increase the number of new charter schools opening in the coming years ([Oklahoma receives](#)).

Private Funds

Charter schools are allowed to solicit and accept private funds as are public traditional schools. A \$1 million grant from Inasmuch Foundation will help fund the addition of the middle school grades to the John Rex Charter School in Oklahoma City, which will begin in the fall of 2018 at Myriad Botanical Gardens. Inasmuch Foundation is also committing capital improvement grant up to \$700,000 for enhancements to the garden's educational spaces ([Scrivens](#)).

Accountability

Charter school contracts can be approved for no longer than five years at a time and most include criteria by which effectiveness of the school will be measured. Sponsors must give written notice and explanation of their intent to deny requests for renewal at least 8 months prior to expiration of contract, its sponsor may give only 90 days written notice of intent to terminate ([OSDE, 2017, Dec.](#)). Charter schools are required to annually file a report to the office of accountability including, but not limited to, information on enrollment, testing,

curriculum, finances and employees. Charter schools are also subject to annual report card requirements ([ECS](#)).

Charters are graded on the A-F grade card like traditional schools. Charter schools can be put on probation due to academic or money issues. Plans of improvement can be given or contracts can be withdrawn. Authorizers don't have to wait until the end of the charter school contract to issue a plan of improvement or withdraw a contract. (E. Doss, personal communication, February 2018).

Comparisons

Many factors go into overall student and school success. Because comparative data is not readily available, these charts were developed for this study. Chart 1 compares Tulsa's Collegiate Hall to the schools that feed into it. Chart 5 compares two Oklahoma City high schools that were cited in a national publication for their excellence, one charter, the other traditional. Charts 2, 3, & 4 comparisons were made using similar percentages of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. All comparisons include percentages of the total Oklahoma student population. Also, all of the charts include percentages of students who are English Language Learners (ELL) and students who are on Individualized Education Plans (IEP's). Absentee averages per student were also included.

CHART 1--Comparisons between Tulsa's charter school Collegiate Hall, schools whose former students attend that school and Oklahoma percentages ([Education Profiles, Tulsa](#))

| | SCHOOLS | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------|---------|-------|----------|---------|-------|----------------------|
| | Collegiate Hall | Grimes | Grissom | Key | Marshall | McClure | Salk | OKLA. Schools Totals |
| Math & Reading Percentages: | | | | | | | | |
| 4th Gr. Math | 58% | 54% | 84% | 56% | 22% | no data | 51% | 70% |
| 4th Gr. Reading | 25% | 61% | 80% | 62% | 22% | 4% | 62% | 68% |
| 5th Gr. Math | 73% | 30% | 69% | 52% | 7% | 17% | 76% | 71% |
| 5th Gr. Reading | 60% | 61% | 83% | 59% | 22% | 31% | 85% | 73% |
| Demographic % | | | | | | | | |
| Eligibility for free & reduced lunches | 81% | 83% | 55% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 62% |
| Students on IEP's | 11.5% | 16.7% | 11.6% | 16.7% | 16.8% | 14.3% | 14.3% | 15.5% |
| English language learners | 9% | 7.3% | 8.8% | 27.4% | 26.6% | 13.5% | 29.4% | 8.7% |
| Absentee averages per student | 7 | 11.1 | 8.1 | 12.9 | 13.9 | 14.6 | 9.4 | 9.4 |

CHART 2---Comparisons are shown for Tulsa high schools - charter school Tulsa School of the Arts & Sciences vs. the traditional schools Thomas Edison Preparatory, Booker T. Washington and OK school percentages 2016. ([Education Profiles Tulsa](#))

| | Tulsa School of the Arts & Sciences | Thomas Edison Preparatory | Booker T. Washington | OK Schools |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| End of Instruction Testing passes: | | | | |
| Algebra I | 68% | 73% | 89% | 75% |
| English II | 86% | 89% | 95% | 77% |
| US History | 70% | 75% | 78% | 63% |
| Biology I | 50% | 57% | 69% | 48% |
| Algebra II | 56% | 88% | 85% | 72% |
| Geometry | 72% | 81% | 87% | 79% |
| English III | 80% | 79% | 97% | 82% |
| | | | | |
| Demographic Percentages: | | | | |
| Eligibility for free and reduced lunches | 41% | 53% | 50% | 62% |
| English Language Learners | 3.3% | 2.1% | 2% | 3.5% |
| Students on IEP's | 12.7% | 15.3% | 2.7% | 16% |
| Absentee averages per student | 12.2 | 14.3 | 9 | 9.4 |

Chart 3: Oklahoma City Schools--Comparisons of charter elementary schools vs traditional elementary schools with similar rates of eligibility for free and reduced lunches. (2016 data) ([Education Profiles Oklahoma](#))

| | Charter Schools | | Traditional Schools | | OK Averages |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------|-------------|
| | Lighthouse Academies | Hupfeld Academy | Arthur | Buchanan | |
| Math & Reading Pass %'s: | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 3rd Grade Math | 47% | 67% | 48% | 56% | 67% |
| 3rd Grade Reading | 47% | 75% | 62% | 53% | 72% |
| 4th Grade Math | 48% | 86% | 36% | 59% | 70% |
| 4th Grade Reading | 50% | 69% | 30% | 57% | 68% |
| | | | | | |
| Demographic Percentages: | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Eligibility for free & reduced lunches | 87% | 88% | 89% | 89% | 62% |
| Students on IEP's | 5.3% | 12.1% | 11.6% | 11.9% | 15.5% |
| English Language Learners | 3.0% | 5.1% | 48.6% | 62.1% | 8.7% |
| Absentee Averages per Student | 10.2 | 5.4 | 11 | 7.4 | 9.4 |

CHART 4--Comparisons between high schools Santa Fe Charter School and traditional U.S. Grant were made due to their similar percentages of eligibility for free and reduced lunches 2016 data. ([Education Profiles Oklahoma](#))

| | Santa Fe Charter | U.S. Grant | OK Schools |
|---|------------------|------------|------------|
| End of Instruction Testing Passes: | | | |
| Algebra I | 47% | 73% | 75% |
| English II | 70% | 65% | 77% |
| US History | 59% | 49% | 63% |
| Biology I | 25% | 27% | 48% |
| Algebra II | 53% | 71% | 72% |
| Geometry | 65% | 62% | 79% |
| English III | 81% | 62% | 82% |
| | | | |
| Demographic Percentages: | | | |
| Eligibility for free and reduced lunches | 90% | 90% | 62% |
| English Language Learners | 21.7% | 30.8% | 3.5% |
| Students on IEP's | 6.8% | 16.1% | 16% |
| Absentee averages per student | 2.9 | 17.5 | 9.4 |

CHART 5--Comparisons between the charter high school Harding Charter Prep, the traditional high school Classen and OK school averages. Both Classen and Harding made a top 50 list for best high schools in the US 2016 data. ([Education Profiles Oklahoma](#)) ([Pemberton, 2013](#))

| | Harding Charter Prep | Classen | OK High School |
|--|----------------------|---------|----------------|
| End of Instruction Testing Passes | | | |
| Algebra I | 91% | 82% | 75% |
| English I | 97% | 95% | 77% |
| US History | 87% | 89% | 63% |
| Biology | 78% | 81% | 48% |
| Algebra II | 91% | 93% | 72% |
| Geometry | 97% | 89% | 79% |
| English III | 100% | 63% | 82% |

| | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|
| Demographic Percentages: | | | |
| Eligibility for free and reduced lunches | 51% | 28% | 62% |
| English Language Learners | 3.3% | 0.6% | 3.5% |
| IEP Students | 3.3% | 8.8% | 16.0% |
| | 4.1 | 12 | 9.4 |

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VIRTUAL SCHOOLS AND COURSES

Virtual charter schools are covered under title 70, chapter 1, article 3 of the Oklahoma Statutes. This article addresses charter schools in general. Specific sections of this article that apply to virtual charter schools are included in Appendix II, Section A)

Virtual Schools: News and Background

On January 3, 2018, the Tulsa World published information showing that Oklahoma virtual schools were due to receive significant increases of funding from the annual midyear adjustments made by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. The article implied that an increase in enrollment was the driver behind the virtual schools funding increase. However, according to Dr. Rebecca Wilkinson, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Statewide Virtual Charter School Board, the increase in funding was largely due to the way that weighted funding is distributed. While brick and mortar schools receive their weighted funding (additional monies provided to districts if their students are low-income, have special needs or meet other criteria), virtual schools only receive their weighted funding at mid-year. Regardless of this fact, the article's basic premise, that "all four of the state's virtual school choices were among the top 20 in gaining state aid" ([Eger](#)) reflects the perceived popularity of virtual schools.

To put that statement into perspective, of the Oklahoma cities with local Leagues, only one received an increase in funds when midyear adjustments were made. Norman received slightly over a million dollars in funds. The rest lost funds.

Bartlesville lost \$299,514

Lawton lost \$98,891

Oklahoma City lost \$2,060,765

Stillwater lost \$212,792

Tulsa lost \$2,694,412

The virtual charter schools all gained funding.

EPIC gained \$13,459,297 (55.41% increase)

Insight gained \$504,245 (37.45% increase)

Oklahoma Connections gained \$2,326,023 (61.67% increase)

Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy \$1,880,420 (21.78% increase)

Why are virtual schools (all of them charter schools) gaining in popularity? How well do they educate the children they serve? What has been their impact on traditional schools?

Virtual schools are the latest iteration of a phenomenon that began at least as far back as the 18th Century. This phenomenon was known as distance education.

In the early days of distance education, letter writing was the most widely accessible technology. In 1728, the first well-documented example of a correspondence course ran as an ad in the *Boston Gazette*, where a man named Caleb Phillips offered to teach shorthand to students anywhere in the country by exchanging letters. Almost 150 years later, in 1873, the first correspondence schools in the United States were founded, called The Society to Encourage Studies at Home. Shortly thereafter, in 1892, the University of Chicago began offering correspondence courses, becoming the first traditional educational institution in the U.S. to do so. By 1906, primary schools such as The Calvert School in Baltimore began following suit. ([Miller](#))

As technology progressed, correspondence courses became more sophisticated. When appropriate, audio tapes could supplement written materials. In the 1920s both Pennsylvania State College and Iowa State University offered courses by radio ([Miller](#)). With the advent of television, distance learning progressed even further. In early days, the "educational" channels contained little besides more than classes that students could take either for their own edification or for credit.

However, it was only in the 1980s that the real revolution in distance education took place. “In 1981 the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute's School of Management and Strategic Studies started an online program” (Miller). As one reads Miller’s concise history of distance learning, one is reminded of the constantly evolving technologies and the learning systems they supported. There was a vigorous debate over the value of both synchronous and asynchronous learning. And, ironically, there seemed to be a constant emphasis on replicating, as closely as possible, the classroom experience.

It is important to note that, until very recently, distance learning was considered inferior to the education that one could receive in an actual classroom. Those who enrolled in distance learning courses did so, for the most part, because they had no access to a traditional school. In a 1996 article, L. Sherry cites some common characteristics of distance learners: “Adult learners have a wide variety of reasons for pursuing learning at a distance: constraints of time, distance, and finances, the opportunity to take courses or hear outside speakers who would otherwise be unavailable, and the ability to come in contact with other students from different social, cultural, economic and experiential backgrounds” (Sherry).

Several groups of people have traditionally been considered as the most common enrollees in distance learning programs: (1) adults from developing countries who have no access to a university in their own country, (2) military personnel whose travel makes it almost impossible to pursue a traditional education, and (3) adults who are employed full-time and who want to complete a degree program or take courses that would enhance their employability. It must be noted that, until very recently, distance learning has focused on adults with college courses being the largest segment of all offerings. Until fifteen years ago, the only place where distance learning was widespread for elementary and secondary students was Alaska where students were so isolated that there were few schools. Today, that situation has changed radically.

As noted at the beginning of this section, there are four virtual charter schools in Oklahoma. From the largest to the smallest, according to a 2016 report from the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, they are EPIC One-on-One Charter School, Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy, Oklahoma Connections Academy, and Insight School of Oklahoma (Office of Educational Quality and Accountability OEQA). This four-page report provides a good overview of who attends virtual charter schools and how well they do on state examinations. Chart 1 shows the racial composition of the study body of each of the virtual charter schools as it compares to all students in the state. Chart 2 shows the percentage of students whose test scores showed that they were proficient in math and reading in 2016.

Chart 1: Who attends virtual charter schools?

2016 Fall Enrollment by Race

| | Total | White | Black | American Indian | Asian | Two or More Races | Hispanic |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--------|-----------------|--------|-------------------|----------|
| STATE TOTAL | 693,710 | 342,418 | 60,843 | 96,703 | 16,245 | 60,893 | 116,608 |
| | | 49.4% | 8.8% | 13.9% | 2.3% | 8.8% | 16.8% |
| VIRTUAL CHARTERS (4) | 13,166 | 8,508 | 1,048 | 1,741 | 147 | 504 | 1,218 |
| | | 64.6% | 8.0% | 13.2% | 1.1% | 3.8% | 9.3% |
| EPIC | 9,077 | 5,932 | 784 | 1,351 | 102 | 28 | 880 |
| | | 65.4% | 8.6% | 14.9% | 1.1% | 0.3% | 9.7% |
| OVCA | 2,429 | 1,514 | 180 | 251 | 31 | 274 | 179 |
| | | 62.3% | 7.4% | 10.3% | 1.3% | 11.3% | 7.4% |
| OKCA | 1,246 | 802 | 68 | 108 | 11 | 141 | 116 |
| | | 64.4% | 5.5% | 8.7% | 0.9% | 11.3% | 9.3% |
| ISOK | 414 | 260 | 16 | 31 | 3 | 61 | 43 |
| | | 62.8% | 3.9% | 7.5% | 0.7% | 14.7% | 10.4% |

(OEQA)

First, it should be noted that fewer than 2% of all Oklahoma students were enrolled in a virtual charter school in 2016. Although enrollment has increased since that time, virtual charter schools do not yet come close to enrolling even 10% of Oklahoma students. It should also be noted that virtual charter schools do not mirror all state schools in terms of their ethnic composition. While slightly less than half of all Oklahoma students are white, almost two-third of virtual charter schools are white. Students who are of two or more races and Hispanic students are underrepresented at virtual charter schools.

An article published in January of 2018 also sheds some light on why students choose to study at a virtual school rather than at a traditional school. According to this article, 41% of all students who attend a virtual school cite bullying as the reason they left a traditional school. 34% cite problems with school administration or staff ([Felder](#)).

However, recent research into course offerings in Oklahoma’s traditional schools suggests that virtual schools may be attractive because they offer courses that traditional schools, particularly smaller ones, do not. The list of courses offered at the Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy includes six different languages (with four years of French, German and Spanish) offered. Science classes include earth science, biology, chemistry and physics (with regular and honors tracks for each).

Compare these offerings to the fact that, according to an article in Education Week, 68.6% of all Oklahoma high schools do not offer physics ([Heitin](#)). And, a recent Oklahoma Watch study found that the number of Oklahoma high schools that didn’t offer a single world language class almost quadrupled from 39 in 2006 to 149 in 2016 ([Palmer, 2017](#)).

The situation is similarly bleak in Oklahoma schools offering calculus. A 2016 Oklahoma Watch study showed that Oklahoma ranks near the bottom of states in the percentage of schools offering calculus. “The latest state rankings available from the U.S. Education Department – from the 2011-2012 school year – show that Oklahoma had the third lowest percentage of schools reporting they offered calculus, with 34 percent, just above Alaska and North Dakota” ([Palmer, 2016](#)). From these studies, it is not difficult to understand why a student or a parent would like to find a better education than that afforded by most public schools. However, despite the richness of their offerings, do virtual charter schools actually deliver a better education?

Chart 2

**Percent Students Scoring Proficient and Above: 2016
Reading and Math
All Students (FAY and NFAY)**

| Reading | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| STATE TOTAL | 71.6% | 67.8% | 72.2% | 63.1% | 70.7% | 74.6% |
| EPIC | 44.9% | 51.6% | 53.4% | 56.5% | 59.7% | 61.7% |
| OVCA | 43.0% | 50.9% | 60.4% | 51.3% | 63.0% | 66.9% |
| OKCA | 31.8% | 55.8% | 66.0% | 63.5% | 75.3% | 85.3% |
| ISOK | | | | | 37.5% | 44.4% |
| Math | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| STATE TOTAL | 66.1% | 69.2% | 70.5% | 66.4% | 65.7% | 53.0% |
| EPIC | 34.2% | 36.2% | 43.2% | 43.5% | 43.7% | 24.8% |
| OVCA | 24.7% | 43.0% | 47.9% | 47.4% | 50.3% | 46.5% |
| OKCA | 30.2% | 48.1% | 38.0% | 46.2% | 61.6% | 39.4% |
| ISOK | | | | | 6.3% | 3.7% |

The graph above shows how students at the four charter schools perform in reading and math. It should be noted that the scores provided are for all students. This includes low income and special needs students. It also includes those who attended virtual charter schools for less than a full academic year. Only one of the virtual schools surpassed the state performance average in reading. Oklahoma Charter Academy 6th, 7th, and

8th grade students did so. However, the percentage of students who scored proficient and above in the lower grades at all schools are quite low. And, none of the schools managed to match or exceed the state average percentage in math.

Further evidence of the issues surrounding virtual charter schools can be found in the extensive reports that have been done by the Oklahoma School Performance Review. Three of the four virtual charter schools (EPIC, Insight and the Oklahoma Virtual Charter Academy) have had these reviews conducted at the request of the Oklahoma Statewide Virtual Charter School Board. It is to the Board's credit that they have sought to compare these schools to traditional brick and mortar schools. Each review is approximately 250 pages long and includes comments on the school's physical plant as well as numerous surveys of parents, students and teachers. The reviews can be downloaded from the Oklahoma School Performance Review website: ([OEQA, 2017](#)).

It is worth scanning at least one of these reviews to gauge the variety of reactions to the virtual charter school experience. They run the gamut from a student who resents having to "show up" for group activities to the parent who is elated that her child was able to complete second grade in a matter of months ... something that her local school would not allow. It is also important to note that each of the virtual charter schools is compared to three traditional schools with similar characteristics.

Supplemental Course Offerings

You don't have to be enrolled in one of Oklahoma's four virtual charter schools to take an online course. There is an extensive program of supplemental course offerings ([Oklahoma Supplemental](#)). The course catalog is 156 pages long and supplies information such as the title of the course, the name of the course provider, the cost of the course (with or without instructor) and the grades for which the course is appropriate.

You can search for a course by grade (pre-K through 12th grade), subject (there are 20 different categories), and provider (all the courses are offered by one of three providers: Fuel Education, Connections Education or Edgenuity Inc). The website also provides a designation for each course. The four designations provided are: College Board Approved, NCAA Eligible, Accredited by AdvancED, and State Certified.

The rules for supplemental online courses are outlined in Title 210 Oklahoma State Department of Education, Chapter 15 Curriculum and Instruction and Subchapter 34 Supplemental Online Course Procedures and Title 777 Statewide Virtual Charter School Board, Chapter 15 Oklahoma Supplemental Online Course Certification of the Oklahoma Administrative Code ([Office of Administrative Rules](#)). Title 210 focuses on the rights and responsibilities of the student and the local schools and districts. All students have the right to take supplemental online courses provided they do not duplicate courses already taken. A district cannot prevent a student from taking a supplemental online course, but it is the student's responsibility to provide their own equipment and internet access.

There are strict attendance requirements for students taking online courses. However, these requirements tend to be couched in terms of progress rather than answering to some kind of electronic roll call. Students who take online courses are eligible to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities. This contrasts with students who are enrolled in one of the virtual charter schools. They are also required to take the same state-level academic assessments as other students.

The Title 777 guidelines focus more on the criteria that a virtual course must meet to be included in the list of courses approved by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board. They must be approved as vendors by the Oklahoma Management and Enterprise System (OMES). They must also adhere to certain pricing guidelines. There are a total of nine pieces of information that must be provided for a course to be considered including a highly detailed syllabus. There are also criteria for a course to remain in good standing.

Local Virtual Academies

A discussion of virtual schools would not be complete without an analysis of those schools that offer supplemental coursework online. These schools do not, in contrast to virtual charter schools, offer any programs leading to a degree. However, they make certain courses available to students who need them. An example of one such school is the Union Virtual Learning Academy ([Union](#)). The Union Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) requires that its students be incoming high school freshmen, at least, and have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5. Their courses are taught by Union High School faculty. Jenks is another school system that has its own virtual academy.

In a lengthy conversation with Gart Morris, Executive Director of Instructional Technology at Union High School, it became clear that there are successful virtual academies at local Oklahoma schools. The VLA at Union began in 2009 with their summer program beginning in 2014. There is no charge to Union students for the school-year classes. Summer classes cost \$250 each because there is no state aid for summer courses. Currently, 1400 Union students take a virtual class each year.

Students have a wide range of courses to choose from. When asked what kinds of students chose to take one of more virtual courses, Mr. Morris indicated that virtual courses attracted the better students. Virtual courses are not used for credit recovery. Instead, they are taken by students who cannot fit a traditional class into their schedule. This may occur because the student is already taking a number of advanced classes or it may occur because of conflicts with extracurricular activities.

In limiting online courses to students taking the course for the first time, Union's policy is consistent the research discussed in a January article in The New York Times ([Dynarski](#)). This article cites several studies that suggest that using online classes for credit recovery does a disservice to the students who take these classes. The students might pass the classes, but research has shown that they do not learn as much as in a traditional classroom and, therefore, have difficulty with subsequent courses in the same area.

When asked about the quality of the online classes in contrast to traditional classes, Mr. Morris noted that all of their virtual courses had to be NCAA approved. However, they do not follow the same curriculum as traditional classes. All the virtual courses offered are purchased from the Florida Virtual School ([Florida Virtual School](#)).

Blended courses and flipped learning

Some schools have discovered that neither traditional nor virtual schools are the answer in all circumstances. Two ways in which schools are using technology and face-to-face learning are blended courses and what is known as flipped learning. An article about the use of blended learning at Union High School ([Hardiman](#)) illustrates how a typical blended course works.

The students do most of their work online following a competency-based model that allows students to move from one concept to the next as soon as they have demonstrated mastery; however, they are able to get help from a flesh-and-blood instructor if they need it. The instructor is also involved in making sure that the students keep up with their work. In the case of Union High School, students are able to take advanced math classes such as pre-calculus for college credit as a blended course.

Instructors of such courses report that the ability to work one-on-one with students is one of the greatest advantages of the blended approach. Students who don't need help may not need to call on the instructor and may even work ahead. But, when students need help, they are encouraged to identify exactly where they are having a problem. Instructors say that this helps build rapport between student and teacher.

Flipped learning is a slightly different kind of blended learning. It contains a technological component and a face-to-face component. It is called "flipped learning" because in a traditional classroom, the instructor gave a lecture and then gave the students an assignment in which they were to apply what they had learned. In a

flipped classroom, the students listen to the lecture before coming to class. In class they engage in hands-on projects that help them apply what they have learned.

The face of education is constantly changing. One of the more recent experiments to be tried in Oklahoma is the Momentum School model proposed by the Oklahoma Public School Resource Center. The Center introduced this model after visiting the Innovations Early College High School, a public school that is part of the Salt Lake City system.

The goals of this approach are to:

- provide students with access to blended learning regardless of time;
- provide high-quality courses for all students through blended learning;
- use the power and scalability of technology to customize education so that students may learn in their own style preference and at their own pace;
- use technology to remove the constraints of a traditional classroom. This allows students to access learning at any time and in any place, facilitating flexibility to take advantage of their peak learning time;
- provide personalized learning where students can spend as much time as needed to master the material;
- provide greater access to self-paced programs, enabling high-achieving students to accelerate academically, while struggling students have additional time and help to gain competency;
- allow students to customize their schedule to better meet their academic goals; and
- provide quality-learning options to better prepare students for post-secondary education and career opportunities. ([Momentum Schools](#))

This approach is unique in that it puts students in charge of their own education. Teachers no longer direct the student; the students set goals and can progress as rapidly as they wish. This is a performance-based approach and is not simply for the most capable or the least capable students.

Homeschooling

Homeschooling does not necessarily entail the use of virtual courses. However, many parents who choose to home school their children use online programs. Although this restudy of the LWVOK position on education did not investigate homeschooling in depth, it is important to note that “Oklahoma is the only state that guarantees the right to home school as part of its constitution. Article XIII, Section 4 states that ‘The Legislature shall provide for the compulsory attendance at some public or other school, unless other means of education are provided, of all the children in the State who are sound in mind and body, between the ages of eight and sixteen years, for at least three months in each year.’ It is generally agreed in Oklahoma legal circles that ‘or other school’ includes home schools” ([Homeschool](#)).

Information on homeschooling to be found on the State Department of Education website is included in Appendix II, Section B.

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POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

History of Higher Education in Oklahoma

Shortly after the land run of 1889, Oklahoma Territory was established by the Organic Act passed by Congress on May 2, 1890. In December 1890 the First Oklahoma Territorial Legislature created three colleges, demonstrating an early commitment to higher education in the new territory. Statehood in 1907 brought a proliferation of colleges and universities to Oklahoma. A combination of a high number of institutions of higher education and a low tax-base has continued to make problems for Oklahoma to the present time.

The Oklahoma Historical Society's [*Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*](#) traces the history of public higher education in Oklahoma. "Public higher education in Oklahoma began shortly after the Land Run of 1889. Oklahoma Territory was established by the Organic Act passed by Congress on May 2, 1890. In December 1890 the First Oklahoma Territorial Legislature created three colleges: the University of Oklahoma (OU) at Norman, the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (Oklahoma A&M, now Oklahoma State University) at Stillwater, and Central State Normal School (now University of Central Oklahoma) at Edmond."

The U.S. Congress had promoted agricultural colleges in the states by passing the Morrill Act, establishing what were known as Land Grant Colleges. The Morrill Act ". . . gave states public lands provided the lands be sold or used for profit and the proceeds used to establish at least one college—hence, land grant colleges—that would teach agriculture and the mechanical arts." (<https://www.nap.edu/read/4980/chapter/2>) Oklahoma was the recipient of Land Grant funding, which established Oklahoma A&M (now Oklahoma State University) in 1890 and the Colored Agricultural and Normal University (now Langston University) at Langston that was established in 1897.

The *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* says that statehood brought a proliferation of public higher education institutions. "With the politics of statehood, the western imbalance in the location of colleges and universities affecting the Twin Territories called for a compromise. To satisfy the leadership of Indian Territory, Oklahoma Territory offered to duplicate in the eastern part of the new state the number and types of institutions that existed in the west side.

Accordingly, after statehood the First Oklahoma Legislature in 1908 initially established the Oklahoma Industrial Institute and College for Girls (now University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma) in Chickasha and the Oklahoma School for Mines and Metallurgy (now Eastern Oklahoma State College) at Wilburton. In 1909 three normal institutions opened, East Central State Normal (now East Central University) at Ada, Northeastern State Normal (now Northeastern State University) at Tahlequah, and Southeastern State Normal (now Southeastern Oklahoma State University) at Durant. In that same year a secondary Eastern University Preparatory School was located at Claremore.

Six district agricultural schools of secondary grade were also created in 1909. Their purpose was to prepare students for entrance to Oklahoma A&M or the normal colleges. In the eastern part of the state schools were established at Broken Arrow, Tishomingo, and Warner and in the western part of the state at Helena, Lawton, and Goodwell.

Thus, by 1910 the First Oklahoma Legislature had created twelve new institutions, six of collegiate grade and six of secondary grade. These twelve added to the seven established before statehood made a total of nineteen public schools and colleges in the young state. Six of the eight secondary schools evolved into colleges and universities (Murray State College, Connors State College, Northern Oklahoma College, Cameron University, Rogers State University, and Oklahoma Panhandle State University). The other two secondary-grade institutes, at Broken Arrow and Helena, closed in 1919. Also in 1919 a two-year college was added, Miami School of Mines (now Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College).

Although the total number of colleges and universities in 1920 was not excessive for a state of Oklahoma's size, the number in the public sector was greater because of the immediate need to establish an adequate statewide system. A combination of an above-average number of public institutions and a limited tax base has thus plagued Oklahoma almost since 1907 statehood.

In 1941, Oklahoma voters amended the state Constitution to establish a system of higher education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education describes this amendment. “The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education was established on March 11, 1941, when the people of the state adopted an amendment to the constitution, Article XIII-A, creating the State System. The amendment provides, “All institutions of higher education supported wholly or in part by direct legislative appropriations shall be integral parts of a unified system to be known as The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.”

Public Higher Education

At present, the State System comprises 25 colleges and universities – including two research universities, 10 regional universities, one public liberal arts university and 12 community colleges – and 11 constituent agencies and two university centers. The State System is coordinated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and each institution is governed by a board of regents. ([Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education \[OSRHE\]](#) 2014) (See complete list in Appendix III, Section A)

Higher Education Defined

Higher education, as the term is used in Section I of Article XIII-A, Constitution of Oklahoma, and House Bill No. 810, Chapter 396, Section 102, Session Laws 1965, is defined “...to include all education of any kind beyond or in addition to the twelfth grade or its equivalent as that grade is now generally understood and accepted in the public schools of the State of Oklahoma; provided, however, that this shall not exclude as a constituent institution any institution of higher learning which now offers as a part of its curriculum courses of high school study.” (See Appendix III, Section B, for more about the governance of state institutions of higher education.)

History of Funding

The Oklahoma Legislature sets lump sum appropriations for public higher education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher education allocate funding to institutions from the lump-sum legislative appropriation.

The constitutional amendment approved in 1941 improved the quality of higher education and stabilized funding. The Oklahoma Historical Society’s Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History notes that “Constitutional creation of the state regents and the unified state system has resulted in stability and improved quality of Oklahoma higher education. Before 1941 only three state institutions were accredited. There was little coordination among entities and no uniformity in accounting and financial practices. While a good share of higher education funding comes from the legislature and governor, as a result of their constitutional status, the state regents and the state system enjoy some insulation from fierce Oklahoma politics. At the turn of the twenty-first century Oklahoma’s twenty-five colleges and universities and ten constituent agencies as well as independent institutions have regional accreditation.”([Dreyer](#))

Recent Funding Cuts to Higher Education

The recent history of funding for higher education has seen Oklahoma’s 2017 appropriations drop by 34% when compared to funding in 2008. Dr. Glen Johnson, Chancellor of the Board of Regents, reported in 2017 that appropriations had fallen to below 2001 levels. ([Johnson, 2017](#)) Chart 1 in Appendix III, Section C from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, shows Oklahoma decreasing funding for higher education by 34 percent from 2008 to 2017.

While funding for higher education has decreased over the last decade, tuition has increased. Oklahoma’s increase in tuition at public colleges and universities has been 38.9%. (See Chart 2 in Appendix III, Section C.) In addition to increased tuition, the overall effect on state institutions of higher education includes a loss of programs, fewer full-time professors, and a dampening effect on enrollment. The Tulsa World reported in a July

13, 2017 article that two-year colleges, state colleges and state universities were cutting faculty, staff and benefits as well as cutting course offerings to make ends meet.

“In higher education, you have kind of all the colleges lumped in together, and cuts hurt every single one of us, but when you get down to the community college level, the two-year college level, the rural college level, those cuts can be much more severe,” said Jordan Adams, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College’s public information and marketing coordinator.

In Miami, appropriations at NEO have diminished by about \$3 million in the last decade, with about \$2 million of those cuts coming in the last three years, Adams said.

To make ends meet after last year’s cuts, the college eliminated 27 faculty and staff positions and stopped offering dental, vision and long-term disability coverage in their employee benefit plans, Adams said.

In addition to that, there have been some scholarship reductions, and the school has shuttered one academic program and two certificate programs.

“We’re going to continue to do our best with what we have to educate as many students as possible and put them into the workforce, but each cut makes that more difficult,” Adams said.

Tulsa Community College saw a nearly \$9.1 million cut in state funding over the past three fiscal years, including a nearly \$2 million decrease from fiscal year 2017 to fiscal year 2018, said Nicole Burgin, media relations specialist at TCC.

To offset the reductions in state funding, TCC has eliminated 200 full-time positions — about 20 percent of the college’s workforce — through attrition and layoffs over the past three years, said TCC President Leigh Goodson.

“Everybody is doing so much more work because we have (fewer) people,” Goodson said.
“Everybody’s stretched thin.”

In addition, those cuts have resulted in the college not having any on-site nurses or print shops for faculty, Goodson said.

There are also fewer course sections, since the college has not filled all vacant faculty positions, meaning it’s more difficult for students to build convenient class schedules, Goodson said.

“Our state has a tremendous need for a workforce that has the skills to support our economy,” Goodson said. “As we continue to cut higher education, we get further and further from meeting that need.”
([Harkins](#))

In its 2018 Legislative Agenda ([OSRHE, 2018](#)), the office of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education reports the following impacts of successive years of budget cuts to higher education:

- Faculty and staff positions eliminated, unfilled and furloughed.
- Reduced academic course offerings, including STEM fields.
- Reduced degree completion initiatives and community support programs.
- Match funding for research and grants reduced or eliminated.
- Reduced funding for scholarships and tuition waivers, including Academic Scholars, the National Guard waiver, and the Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship.
- Threatened college and university accreditation.

In April 2017, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education established a task force to “. . .consider ways to improve degree completion and increase productivity by focusing on modernization, efficiencies and innovation.” ([OSRHE, Task](#)) The task force examined every aspect of higher education operations, including “academic models, such as program and faculty sharing and targeted degree completion initiatives; online education models; structure; fiscal services and operational efficiencies; workforce development; and information technology to ensure they are properly aligned and defined to best serve the students and state.” (op. cit.)

Four subcommittees were established to examine

1. College Degree Completion and Workforce Development Initiatives
2. Academic Program Innovations and Online Education
3. System Structure
4. Fiscal Solutions, Efficiencies, Affordability and Technology

The mission of the task force was to “. . .conduct a systematic and thorough review of the current status of higher education in Oklahoma; examine existing initiatives and best practices; and report to the State Regents findings and recommendations on strategies that best support improving quality, access, affordability and efficiency in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.”

A detailed report on task force recommendations was presented to the task force at the January 31, 2018 meeting, and to the State Regents for acceptance at their Feb. 1, 2018 meeting. The full report may be accessed online. ([OSRHE ,2018, February 1](#))

A December, 2017 press release ([OSRHE, December](#)), outlined initial recommendations made by the subcommittees, and included the following statement:

“Maintaining accessibility and affordability remains the State Regents’ highest priority,” said State Regents Chair Ronald White, M.D. “We are mindful that Oklahoma’s economic prospects depend on our state colleges and universities producing more college-degreed and trained employees. Given the harsh economic realities of the precipitous decline in state support for state system institutions over the past three years, we must consider ideas to optimize performance and boost productivity. Our 68 member task force tackled the charge head-on, reviewing our governance and operational structure, administrative practices, and productivity relative to new academic innovations and emerging technologies.”

According to recent reports, the cost of higher education in Oklahoma ranks as among the most affordable in the United States. The report of the 2017 Task Force on the Future of Higher Education, an initiative of the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education, reports, “Oklahoma is . . . very affordable, only increasing tuition and mandatory fees an average of 4.9 percent in eight years and ranking fifth in the nation for college affordability by the 2015 Enterprising States Report. Oklahoma also has low student debt, with 52 percent of students graduating without any debt.” ([OSRHE ,2018, February 1](#))

Another report, issued by LendEdu , a private firm that describes itself as a marketplace for private student loans, student loan refinancing & consolidation, offering state by state comparisons of student debt, ranks Oklahoma 39th out of 50 states for students graduating with student loan debt ([LendEdu](#)).

Oklahoma has established programs to help families afford college. Two of these programs include the Oklahoma 529 Savings Plan ([Oklahoma 529](#)), which allows parents and grandparents to set up tax-free college investment accounts; and the Oklahoma’s Promise program, which provides scholarships to qualified students from low- to middle income families ([OSRHE Oklahoma’s Promise](#)).

In 2011, Oklahoma joined the Complete College America Initiative, with a goal of increasing “. . . the number of degrees and certificates earned in Oklahoma by 67 percent by 2023 to meet our state’s workforce needs and keep Oklahoma competitive in a global economy.” ([OSRHE Complete](#)). When the program was launched, Gov. Mary Fallin stated, “We can and must do better in producing a highly skilled and educated workforce in our state.” By 2015, the number of degrees and certificates earned in Oklahoma increased by 8,462, surpassing the state benchmark of 6,800, despite funding cutbacks during this same period.

As more students are encouraged to enroll in higher education, a lack of college readiness is of concern. Thirty-nine percent of all first-year college students in Oklahoma end up enrolling in remedial (or catch-up) courses, and pay tuition but receive no college credit for these courses. This costs Oklahoma families \$22.2 million in annual out-of-pocket costs for remediation each year. Data is collected by the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education on the percentage of students requiring remediation in English, Math, Science and Reading. ([OSRHE 2017, April](#)). Math remediation is needed by a significantly higher percentage of students than in other subjects. For example, in 2017, 32% of students required math remediation, 15% took remedial English courses, 8% took a remedial reading course, and .9% required remedial science. To address the need for college-preparedness in math, the Oklahoma State Department of Education has designed the College Career

Math Ready program. The program, College Career Math Ready, is “. . .largely composed of competencies from Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2, will help students solidify foundational mathematics skills before entering college. It will not count as a math credit toward high school graduation, but students who achieve an A or B in each unit will receive a recommendation to immediately begin taking entry-level, credit-bearing classes in their first year of college.” ([Bartlow](#))

In 2016, University of Oklahoma President David Boren, led a campaign to pass State Question 779, which proposed funding public education (K - 12 and higher education) through a constitutional amendment that would create a dedicated 1% statewide sales tax for education, with the first available funding giving public school teachers a \$5,000 raise, and subsequent funding going to state colleges and universities, Career Tech and specific school improvement efforts. Voters rejected the measure, 59% voting no and 41% voting yes.

Career Tech Education

The institutions that are now known collectively as Career Tech Education have a long history in Oklahoma. In 1862, the U.S. Congress had promoted agricultural colleges in the states by passing the Morrill Act, establishing what were known as Land Grant Colleges. The Morrill Act “. . .gave states public lands provided the lands be sold or used for profit and the proceeds used to establish at least one college—hence, land grant colleges—that would teach agriculture and the mechanical arts.” ([National](#))

In 1905, the first manual training programs were instituted in Oklahoma City. When Oklahoma's Constitution was approved in 1907, it was the first in the nation to mandate agricultural and domestic education. Oklahoma's Constitution Section 7 of Article 13, Education, reads:

Instruction in Agriculture, Horticulture, Stock Feeding and Domestic Science
The Legislature shall provide for the teaching of the elements of agriculture, horticulture, stock feeding, and domestic science in the common schools of the State.

Over the decades, the emphasis in career tech education has changed to meet needs and requirements of current industry, technology, manufacturing and the needs of a changing workforce. Career Tech serves junior high school students, high school students, dropouts, unemployed adults, employed adults, senior citizens, prison inmates, as well as Oklahoma's businesses and industries.

The Oklahoma Career Tech website states,

Oklahoma's system is often used as a model for programs across the United States and around the world. The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education provides leadership and resources and assures standards of excellence for a comprehensive statewide system of career and technology education. The system offers programs and services in 29 technology center districts operating on 58 campuses, 395 comprehensive school districts, 16 Skills Centers campuses that include three juvenile facilities and 31 Adult Basic Education service providers ([CareerTech About](#)).

The State Career Tech Agency, located in Stillwater, is governed by the State Board of Career and Technology Education. The nine-member board is led by the state superintendent of public instruction, who serves as the chairman. Two members of the State Board of Education are appointed to the board along with a representative of each congressional district and one member at large. Members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by State Senate. ([CareerTech State](#))

Career Tech schools are primarily funded through local property taxes. The Career Tech website states, “On a statewide average, technology centers receive about two-thirds of their funding at the local level. The remaining is a mixture of state and federal funds.” ([CareerTech Technology](#))

Regulation of for-profit institutions

For-profit degree-granting institutions are approved, licensed and regulated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (See [OSRHE SHEEO](#)). Institutions that offer college level courses and/or confer college level credentials in Oklahoma must be authorized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Additionally, out-of-state institutions with a physical presence in Oklahoma must also be authorized

by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. As of this writing, there are no degree-granting for-profit universities, colleges or schools with campuses in Oklahoma. Phoenix University offers online courses only.

Established by the Oklahoma Legislature in 1970, the Oklahoma Board of Private Vocational Schools was authorized to set minimum standards for private vocational schools which include standards for courses of instruction, and the qualifications of instructors, financial stability, advertising practices, and reasonable rules and regulations for the operation of private vocational schools. Private vocational schools may offer certificates, but do not offer degree programs.

Post-Secondary Online or Distance Learning

Currently, there are 26 Oklahoma colleges and universities offering online or distance learning classes. Oversight of these programs is the responsibility of the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education. ([OSRHE](#)).

The following are links to five of the Oklahoma colleges and universities that offer online classes:

[Cameron University](#)

[Carl Albert State College](#)

[East Central University](#)

[Eastern Oklahoma State College](#)

[Murray State College](#)

U.S. News and World Report has ranked the University of Oklahoma Bachelor's Degree program in its top ten online degree programs ([McNutt](#)).

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APPENDICES

Appendix I.

Oklahoma School Finance and the Constitution

State Constitution:

Section X-6Av2: Intangible personal property exempt from ad valorem or other tax.

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-6Av2.html>

Section X-8: Valuation of property for taxation - Limit on percentage of fair cash value - Approval by voters

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-8.html>

Section X-8A: Approval of exemption of household goods of heads of families and livestock employed in support of family - Adjusted millage rate - Computation procedure - Maximum rate.

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-8A.html>

Section X-8B: Limit on percentage of fair cash value of real property. <http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-8B.html>

Section X-9 Amount of Ad Valorem tax <http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-9.html>

Section X-10: Increased rate for public buildings or for building fund for school districts.

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-10.html>

Section X-12a: Common school taxes on property of public service corporations.

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-12a.html>

Section X-26: Indebtedness of political subdivisions - Assent of voters - Limitation of amount - Annual tax

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-26.html>

Section X-28: Revenue for sinking fund - Uses to which applied. <http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-28.html>

Section X-32: State public common school building equalization fund. <http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/X-32.html>

Section XI-2: Permanent school fund - How constituted - Use - Reimbursement for losses

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/XI-2.html>

Section XI-6: Investment of permanent common school and other educational funds.

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/XI-6.html>

Section XIII-1a: Appropriation and allocation of funds for support of common schools.

<http://www.oklegal.onenet.net/okcon/XIII-1a.html>

Appendix II

Section A. Laws Governing Virtual Schools

Section 3-145.1 – Statewide Virtual Charter School Board

Section 3-145.2 – Meetings – Quorum – Reimbursement

Section 3-145.3 – Powers and Duties

D. As calculated as provided for in Section 3-142 of this title, a statewide virtual charter school shall receive the State Aid allocation and any other state-appropriated revenue generated by students enrolled in the virtual charter school for the applicable year, less up to five percent (5%) of the State Aid allocation, which may be retained by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board for administrative expenses and to support the mission of the Board. A statewide virtual charter school shall be eligible for any other funding any other charter school is eligible for as provided for in Section 3-142 of this title. Each statewide virtual charter school shall be considered a separate local education agency for purposes of reporting and accountability.

E. Students enrolled full-time in a statewide virtual charter school sponsored by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall not be authorized to participate in any activities administered by the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association. However, the students may participate in intramural activities

sponsored by a statewide virtual charter school, an online provider for the charter school or any other outside organization.

Section 3-145.4 – Authority to Promulgate Rules

Section 3-145.5 – School Districts – Virtual Education – Residency Requirement

Section 3-145.6 – Virtual Education Providers – Non-Resident Students

Section 3-145.7 – Statewide Virtual Charter School Board Revolving Fund

Section 3-145.8 – Virtual Charter School Attendance Policy

B. By July 1, 2018, the governing body of each virtual charter school shall adopt an attendance policy. The policy may allow attendance to be a proportional amount of the required attendance policy provisions based upon the date of enrollment of the student. The attendance policy shall include the following provisions:

1. A student who attends a virtual charter school shall be considered in attendance for a quarter if the student:
 - a. completes instructional activities on no less than ninety percent (90%) of the days within the quarter,
 - b. is on pace for on-time completion of the course as defined by the governing board of the virtual charter school, or
 - c. completes no less than forty instructional activities within the quarter of the academic year.
2. For a student who does not meet any of the criteria set forth in paragraph 1 of this subsection, the amount of attendance recorded shall be the greater of:
 - a. the number of school days during which the student completed the instructional activities during the quarter,
 - b. the number of school days proportional to the percentage of the course that has been completed, or
 - c. the number of school days proportional to the percentage of the required minimum number of completed instructional activities during the quarter.

[Oklahoma Statutes](#)

Section B: Information on Homeschooling on the Department of Education website

Oklahoma law provides for the compulsory attendance of all school children ages 5 through 18. This law has been interpreted by the Attorney General to allow for the education of a child in the home by a parent/guardian with the following guidelines for home instruction. These recommendations are not required by law; however, following these suggestions would allow a parent to prove they are providing a quality education.

1. Notify the principal of the school district the child resides in and inform them that you plan to home school your child. Some schools may have you sign a form that releases them from the responsibility of educating the student also stating that you are assuming full responsibility for the education of your child.
2. It is important to know the Attorney General has ruled that while home instruction does not require a certified teacher, the instruction provided must be supplied in good faith and must be equivalent to the education provided by the state.
3. Home instruction should follow compulsory school age laws requiring children, ages 5 - 18, to be enrolled in school.
4. Home school setting should maintain compulsory school attendance as well. This would be the equivalent of 180 days per each calendar year and six clock hours or 360 minutes per day, as appropriate for child's age. It does seem clear that a point of the Attorney General's opinion is that homeschooling must not be used as a maneuver to bypass truancy.
5. There is no required state approved curriculum, but a well-defined curriculum or design for learning should be implemented. Required school subjects under Oklahoma law include: reading, writing, math, science, citizenship, US constitution, health, safety, physical education, and conservation.
6. Academic progress must be established and maintained for the child.
7. For college-bound students, refer to the Oklahoma State Board of Education Regulations for Graduation listed on our website or required courses at the college of your choice.
8. The Attorney General has further ruled that a board of education is not required to furnish textbooks, resources, or other materials to home schooled students.
9. Because home schools are not accredited by the State Board of Education, a student will be required to take a standardized achievement test if he/she re-enters the public school system. Results of tests may

be used to determine grade placement and/or credit for the student. All examinations will be administered by the receiving school and results, as well as copies of the exam given, will be kept on file for one year. Upon re-entry into a public school, the parent/guardian must provide documentation of compliance with the above requirements. This documentation will determine if the equivalent instruction was provided during home schooling.

10. Homeschools are not regulated and Oklahoma law does not require parents to register with or seek approval from state or local officials, conduct state testing with their students, or permit public school officials to visit or inspect homes. ([Oklahoma State Department of Education](#))

Appendix III

Section A. Information on the governance and structure of Oklahoma Institutions of Higher Education

University and College Lands – Control of Institutions – Diversion of Funds

"Section thirteen in every portion of the state, which has been granted to the State, shall be preserved for the use and benefit of the University of Oklahoma and the University Preparatory School, one third; of the normal schools now established, or hereafter to be established, one third; and of the Agricultural and Mechanical College and Colored Agricultural and Normal University, one third. The said lands or the proceeds thereof as above apportioned to be divided between the institutions as the Legislature may prescribe: Provided, that the said lands so reserved, or the proceeds of the sale thereof, or of any indemnity lands granted in lieu of section thirteen shall be safely kept or invested and preserved by the State as a trust, which shall never be diminished, but may be added to, and the income thereof, interest, rentals, or otherwise, only shall be used exclusively for the benefit of said educational institutions. Such educational institutions shall remain under the exclusive control of the State and no part of the proceeds arising from the sale and disposal of any lands granted for educational purposes, or the income or rentals thereof, shall be used for the support of any religious or sectarian school, college, or university, and no portion of the funds arising from the sale of sections thirteen or any indemnity lands selected in lieu thereof, either principal or interest, shall ever be diverted, either temporarily or permanently, from the purpose for which said lands were granted to the State." (Oklahoma Constitution, Article XI, Section 5)

State Regents – Internal Organization – Staff

The state Legislature in 1941 vitalized Article XIII-A of the Constitution, providing for the internal organization of the agency. There is a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and assistant secretary, all of whom are elected annually by the membership of the State Regents. The law also provides for office staff and for the furnishing of suitable permanent quarters for the State Regents.

State Regents' Office

The work of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education is defined by constitutional provision, state statute or State Regents' policy delineating coordinating responsibility for the State System of Higher Education, including the areas of institutional functions, programs of study, standards of education and finances.

The Chancellor

The Chancellor is the chief executive officer for the State Regents and provides leadership for the State System. The work of the office serves the following functions: academic affairs; administration; board relations; budget and finance; legislative; economic development; student affairs; grants and scholarships; and the Oklahoma College Assistance Program.

Governing Boards of Regents

While the State Regents have responsibility for determining the functions and courses of study of each institution, setting standards of education and allocating funds to carry out institutional functions, the governing boards assume responsibility for the operation of the institutions, including:

- Determining management policy.
- Employing personnel, fixing their salaries and assigning their duties.
- Contracting for other services needed.
- Having custody of records.
- Acquiring and holding title to property.

Among specific areas of administration control for which the governing board assumes responsibility in operating an institution are:

- General academic policy and administration.
- Student life.
- Budget administration.
- Planning and construction of buildings.
- Purchasing.
- Auxiliary activities budgeting and administration, including the issuance of revenue bonds and administration of self-liquidating properties.

The governing board, through its chief executive officer, the president of the institution, makes recommendations to the coordinating board, the State Regents, regarding the institutions' functions and programs of study, standards of education, and the budgetary needs of the institution for both general operations and for capital improvements.

Institutional Governing Boards

There are currently three constitutional governing boards and 12 statutory boards. The constitutional boards are the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges, the Regional University System of Oklahoma and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma.

Institutions of Higher Education

Research Universities

Oklahoma State University
University of Oklahoma

Regional Universities

Cameron University
East Central University
Langston University
Northeastern State University
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Oklahoma Panhandle State University
Rogers State University
Southeastern Oklahoma State University
Southwestern Oklahoma State University
University of Central Oklahoma

Public Liberal Arts University

University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma

Higher Education Programs/Sites

Langston University, Oklahoma City
Northern Oklahoma College, Stillwater
OKC Downtown College
University Center at Ponca City
University Center of Southern Oklahoma

Community Colleges

Carl Albert State College
Connors State College
Eastern Oklahoma State College
Murray State College
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College
Northern Oklahoma College
Oklahoma City Community College
Redlands Community College
Rose State College
Seminole State College
Tulsa Community College
Western Oklahoma State College

Constituent Agencies

OSU Agricultural Experiment Station
OSU Center for Health Sciences
OSU College of Veterinary Medicine
OSU Cooperative Extension Service
OSU Institute of Technology, Okmulgee
OSU-Oklahoma City
OSU-Tulsa
OU Geological Survey
OU Health Sciences Center
OU Law Center
OU-Tulsa

Section B. Constitutional Governing Boards and Statutory Boards Oklahoma Higher Education

Entities Governed by the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges

- Oklahoma State University, Stillwater
- OSU Agricultural Experiment Station
- OSU Center for Health Sciences
- OSU College of Veterinary Medicine
- OSU Cooperative Extension Service
- OSU Institute of Technology, Okmulgee
- OSU-Oklahoma City
- OSU-Tulsa
- Connors State College, Warner and Muskogee
- Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma City and Tulsa
- Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College, Miami
- Oklahoma Panhandle State University, Goodwell

Entities Governed by the Regional University System of Oklahoma

- East Central University, Ada
- Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Broken Arrow and Muskogee
- Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Alva, Enid and Woodward
- Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant and Idabel
- Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford and Sayre
- University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond

Entities Governed by the Regents of the University of Oklahoma

- University of Oklahoma, Norman
- OU Geological Survey, Norman
- OU Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City
- OU Law Center, Norman
- OU-Tulsa
- Cameron University, Lawton and Duncan
- Rogers State University, Claremore, Bartlesville and Pryor

Statutory Governing Boards

- Board of Regents of Carl Albert State College
- Board of Regents of Eastern Oklahoma State College
- Board of Regents of Murray State College
- Board of Regents of Northern Oklahoma College
- Board of Regents of Oklahoma City Community College
- Board of Regents of Redlands Community College
- Board of Regents of Rose State College
- Board of Regents of Seminole State College
- Board of Regents of Tulsa Community College
- Board of Regents of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma
- Board of Regents of Western Oklahoma State College
- Board of Trustees for the Quartz Mountain Arts and Conference Center and Nature Park

University Center Boards of Trustees

The boards of trustees for the University Center at Ponca City and the University Center of Southern Oklahoma act as the administrative agencies for the centers. Their powers include negotiating agreements with institutions for courses and programs, selecting a chief executive officer, budgeting and expending funds allocated to the center, acquiring and taking title to property and entering contracts.

- Board of Trustees of the University Center at Ponca City
- Board of Trustees of the University Center of Southern Oklahoma

Advisory Councils and Boards

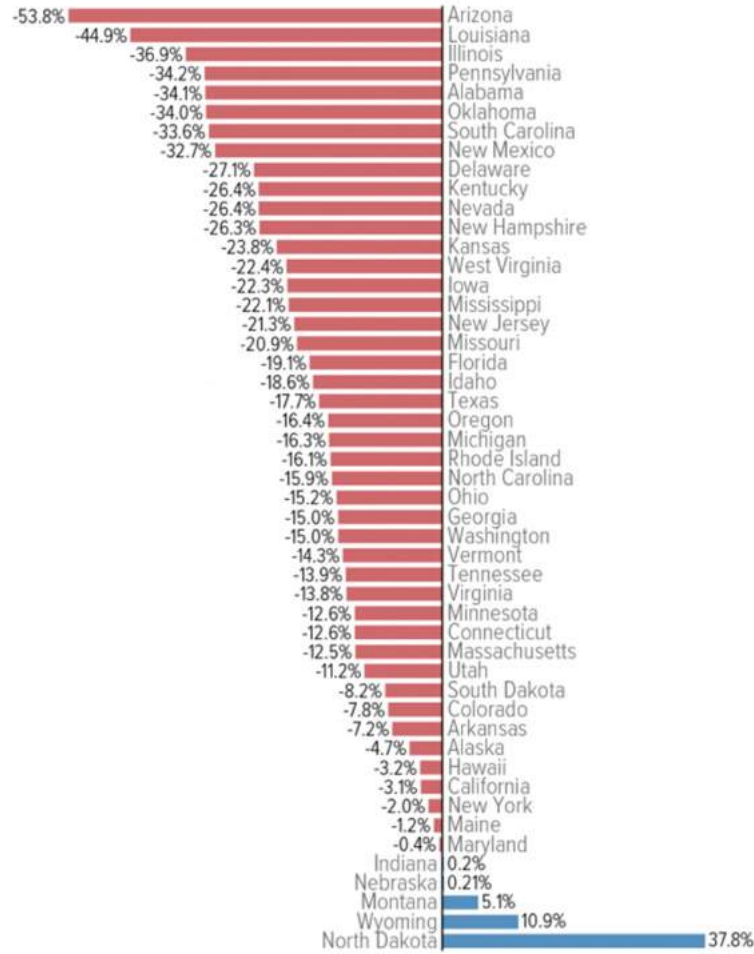
The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education recognize the value of a formal structure for input from a wide variety of campus personnel. These key advisors represent each institution and assist the Regents, chancellor, Regents' staff and others regarding issues and policies. There are nine advisory councils and boards.

- Communicators Council
- Council of Business Officers
- Council on Information Technology
- Council on Instruction
- Council of Presidents
- Council on Student Affairs
- Economic Development Council
- Faculty Advisory Council
- Student Advisory Board

Section C

State Funding for Higher Education Remains Far Below Pre-Recession Levels in Most States

Percent change in state spending per student, inflation adjusted, 2008-2017

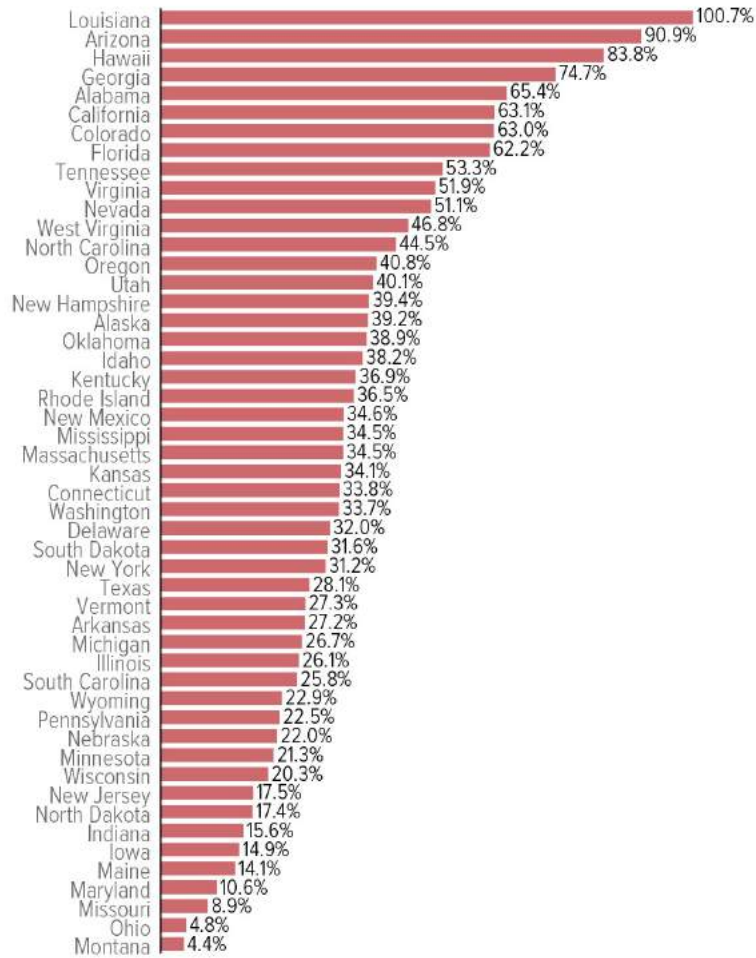


Note: Wisconsin was excluded because the data necessary to make a valid comparison are not available. Since enrollment data is only available through the 2015-16 school year, we have estimated enrollment for the 2016-17 school year using data from past years.

Source: CBPP calculations using the "Grapevine" higher education appropriations data from Illinois State University, enrollment and combined state and local funding data from the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, and the Consumer Price Index, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Illinois funding data is provided by Voices for Illinois Children.

Tuition Has Increased Sharply at Public Colleges and Universities

Percent change in average tuition at public, four-year colleges, inflation adjusted, 2008-2017



Source: College Board, "Trends in College Pricing," 2016. Years are fiscal years.

Glossary

Academic Enterprise Zone The geographic area in which 60% or more of the children who reside in the area qualify for the free or reduced school lunch program is an academic enterprise zone.

<http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/mbstprofexcl?Rep=CSP15&st=Oklahoma>)

ADA The average daily attendance for each school district is calculated by dividing the total days students are present while enrolled in each school district by the number of days taught in each school district. It is always a smaller figure than ADM. <https://okstatestat.ok.gov/content/average-daily-attendance-rate>

ADM Average Daily Membership is a figure that reflects enrollment rather than attendance. ADM is used to determine funding from the state. The ADM used in the initial July State Aid formula allocation is the higher of the two preceding school years. If a district is growing, an adjustment based on the higher current year WADM will be paid to the district in December. ADM is weighted in specific situations such as special education and economically disadvantaged.

Ad valorem “Property tax, also known as ad valorem tax, is an annual tax paid by property owners to local government. Property tax collections in Oklahoma totaled \$2.2 billion in 2011 and are the single largest source of local government revenue. Oklahoma’s per person property taxes are among the lowest in the nation and less than half the national average.” Source <http://okpolicy.org/ad-valorem-tax-property-tax>

Authorizer An authorizer is a charter school sponsor. Under the Oklahoma charter School Act, sponsors should be a school district, technology center, a comprehensive or regional institution that is a member of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, a federally recognized Indian Tribe, and the State Department of Education. The State Board of Education can be a sponsor when the applicant is the Office of Juvenile Affairs. As a result of the 1999 charter school law amendment that allows charters in rural areas, the State Board of Education can be a sponsor when a rural district refuses to sponsor. [\(OSDE, 2017, Dec\)](#)

Blended Learning Generally used to refer to a course or class that has both a face-to-face and an electronic component. Students work on their own but have access to an instructor to help them as needed. The instructor may also monitor the student’s progress and make sure they are not falling behind. <https://blended.online.ucf.edu/about/what-is-blended-learning/>)

Board of Regents This board prescribes academic standards of higher education, determines functions and courses of study at state colleges and universities, grants degrees, and approves each public college’s and university’s allocation as well as tuition and fees within the limits set by the Oklahoma Legislature. <http://www.okhighered.org/state-system/>

Chancellor The chancellor is the chief executive officer for the Oklahoma State system of Higher Education who provides leadership on matters relating to standards for higher education, courses and programs of study, budget allocations for higher education institutions, fees and tuition, and strategic planning. <https://www.okhighered.org/state-system/chancellor-johnson.shtml>

Chargeables Chargeables are a district’s local revenue sources that are included in its annual State Aid calculation. The revenue sources are: ad valorem property taxes, motor vehicle collections, gross production taxes, school land earnings, county 4-mill taxes and rural electric association taxes. The amount of these funds collected by a district (current year for ad valorem & previous year for others) are “charged” or subtracted from the district’s State Aid since these funds are collected locally. As these

revenue sources, such as ad valorem taxes, rise, the district's chargeables also increase, meaning less State Aid for the district. <https://okpolicy.org/abcs-school-finance-quest-post-lori-smith/>

Charter Schools Public schools that operate with more freedom from some of the regulations that are imposed upon district traditional schools are called charter schools. They are accountable to their sponsors, or authorizers, for academic results. <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/faqs/oklahoma-charter-schools-program>

Collective Bargaining Employee and administration relations through establishment of an orderly process of communications between school employees and the school district to discuss wages, hours, fringe benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. <https://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/99/78/9978.pdf>

Credit Recovery When a student has failed a required course (sometimes more than once), he/she may take the course online in order to recover the credit. <https://www.edglossary.org/credit-recovery/>

Distance Learning This is a method of studying in which lectures are broadcast or classes are over the Internet without the student's needing to attend a school or college. In this method of study, teachers and students do not meet in a classroom, but use the Internet, e-mail, mail, etc. to have classes. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/distance-learning>

Due Process This is a legal guarantee that entitles school personnel to a hearing prior to dismissal or non-reemployment from a local school district. <http://okea.org/assets/docs/legal-and-advocacy/from-your-counsel/due-process-education-employees.pdf>

English Language Learners (ELL or ELLs) Students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses are considered ELLs. <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Bilingual-DefLEP.pdf>

Entities These are the organizations that actually run the charter schools. Entities are required to be nonprofit. Some entities are national organizations and others are local.

FAY/NFAY These are terms used to indicate whether a student in a virtual school has attended all year or not. They are acronyms for Full annual year/Not full annual year.

Flipped Learning A teaching approach that introduces students to concepts (often through the use of technology) at home and allows them to put concepts into practice in the classroom. (<https://teachthought.com/learning/the-definition-of-the-flipped-classroom/>)

Free and Reduced Lunch Program This program is designed to help parents with the expense of meals (lunch & breakfast) during the school year. Its aim is to provide assistance for qualifying lower-income families. <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/child-nutrition-programs>

Gross Production Tax—"Oklahoma assesses a gross production tax, or severance tax, on the extraction of oil, natural gas and other minerals. The tax is assessed as a percentage of gross market value based on the average monthly price for each product as determined by the Oklahoma Tax Commission". <https://okpolicy.org/files/GPTfactsheet.pdf> "The gross production tax, or severance tax, is a value-based tax levied at a basic rate of 7 percent upon the production of oil and gas in Oklahoma.

Under legislation approved in 2014 (**HB 2562**), effective July 1, 2015, oil and gas from newly-spudded wells will be taxed at 2 percent for the first 36 months of production. One percent of gross production tax revenues is divided between counties and school districts, with the remainder going to the state”.
<http://okpolicy.org/gross-production-tax>

Highly Qualified Teacher Under No Child Left Behind, teachers teaching core subjects in prekindergarten through 12th grade were required to hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree, have full Oklahoma certification and demonstrate subject matter competency in each of the academic subjects in the teacher’s area of instruction. Teachers were required to be “Highly Qualified” by June 30, 2006.
<http://sde.ok.gov/sde/faqs/highly-qualified-hq-teachers>

House Bill 1017, 1017 Fund—“The Education Reform Act of 1990, was landmark legislation that funded a broad range of education initiatives through increased taxes. The Legislature appropriated more than \$560 million over five years to implement a wide range of reform policies, including reduced class sizes, minimum teacher salaries, alternative teacher certification, funding equity, early childhood programs, school consolidation, new statewide curriculum standards, and statewide testing. HB 1017 was passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Henry Bellmon in 1990. State Question 639, a referendum petition aimed at repealing HB 1017, was defeated in 1991 by a 46-54 percent vote. The new taxes raised by HB 1017 are allocated directly to the 1017 Fund and can be appropriated only to the Department of Education”. <http://okpolicy.org/house-bill-1017>

Individual Education Plan (IEP) An IEP is a written document that is developed for each public school child who is eligible for special education. The IEP is created through a team effort and reviewed at least once a year. Children who receive special education services must have an IEP that spells out a child’s learning needs, the services the school will provide and how the progress will be measured.
<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/what-is-an-iep/>

Intangible Property Intangible personal property includes items such as patents, inventions, formulas, designs, and trade secrets; licenses, franchise, and contracts; custom computer software; and trademarks, trade names, and brand names. Source <https://stateimpact.npr.org/oklahoma/tag/sq-766/>

Mill—One mill is 1/1000 of \$1. One mill generates \$1 for every \$1000 of assessed taxable valuation.
<https://www.thefreedictionary.com/mill>

Normal Schools Normal schools, sometimes called teacher colleges, were created to train high school graduates to be teachers by educating them in the norms of pedagogy and curriculum.
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Normal_school

Oklahoma Career Tech This system provides technology education through a network of 29 technology centers on 58 campuses serving high school and adult learners with specialized career training in more than 90 instructional areas. High school students living in a technology center district attend tuition free. Adults are charged a nominal fee. Students can also earn transferable college credit. <https://www.okcareertech.org/technology-centers>

Oklahoma Organic Act This was an 1890 statute used by the U.S. Congress to describe a territory in anticipation of being admitted to the Unions as a state. <https://www.manataka.org/page2368.html>

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) STEM is an interdisciplinary and applied approach to providing curriculum choices in schools to improve competitiveness in science and

technology, and educate students in these four specific disciplines. <https://www.livescience.com/43296-what-is-stem-education.html>

Synchronous/Asynchronous In distance learning, a course is synchronous when the teacher and the students are connected in real time. A course is asynchronous when they are not.

<https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/asynchronous>

Virtual When applied to coursework, a class or a school is virtual when interaction between teacher and students takes place on the internet.

WADM (Weighted Average Daily Membership) This is a student count which is weighted based on student characteristics such as grade level and category (e.g. special education, economically disadvantaged, bilingual, gifted/talented). There are also weights awarded based on district characteristics (e.g. small or isolated) and teacher education and experience.

<https://www.normanpublicschools.org/Page/2877>