



TO: LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES
FROM: OKLAHOMA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL'S SCHOOL NUTRITION SERVICES
SUBJECT: SB1357
DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2016

As the Director of the Oklahoma City School Nutrition Program I ask for you to support the SB 1357. SB 1357 will allow Food Safety in Schools to be an approved program for School Food Authorities (SFA). It will gain schools a seat on the Food Service Advisory Council.

Food Safety in Schools

Currently, there are only a limited number of approved courses by Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH, Chapter 257 Food Service Rules and Regulations). All of the approved courses require a fee. This can prove costly for school districts. Food Safety in Schools is a no cost curriculum available to School Nutrition Professionals. *Food Safety in Schools* was created by the University of Mississippi. It is recognized by the USDA. *Food Safety in Schools* adheres to a specific audience, educating School Nutrition Professionals on evidence based food safety practices for schools. Your support of SB 1357 will allow this to be used as an approved course with the same recognition as those listed in OSDH Chapter 257 Food Service Rules and Regulations but at NO COST to our district or any other district in Oklahoma. Oklahoma City Public Schools currently spends over \$12,000 every 5 years on curriculum material alone to meet OSDH requirements. *Food Safety in Schools* is a financially reasonable plan for schools. SB 1357 would free up additional funds to be used directly for the children of the school districts, in lieu of spending it on costly, unnecessary curriculum. Please support SB 1357 to eliminate unnecessary and wasteful spending.

SNA should have an appointment on the Food Service Advisory Council

The Food Service Advisory Council's purpose is to advise the State Board of Health regarding food service establishments and recommend actions to improve sanitation and consumer protection. There are 13 appointments including various members including but not limited to the health department, hotels, grocery stores and restaurants. None of the members represent school food service institutions. SFA's are required to adhere to strict rules and regulations set forth by this board, yet we have no voice in those rules and regulations. Members of the board include hotel & motel's, holding less licenses than SFA's yet they have a voice in food service establishments. SFA's can serve up to 688,000 meals daily, but under current statute are not members of the food service advisory council. Schools are required by law to have 2 health inspections a year, while restaurants are only required to have 1. SFA's pay fees, receive more inspections, have high food safety requirements (HACCP), and prepare thousands of meals daily. SFA's should be represented on the council; your support will enable this opportunity.

I kindly ask you to support SB 1357; its passing will have a huge financial and positive effect on SFA's across Oklahoma.

Thank you,

Kevin Ponce, SNS School Nutrition Services Director

Oklahoma City Public Schools