



RYAN WALTERS

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

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Contact: Dan Isett
405-570-9203

Walters Releases Guidelines on Patriotic Displays
No Student Should Ever Be Targeted for their Patriotism

Oklahoma City, Okla – After Edmond Public Schools disallowed students from displaying the American flag, State Superintendent Ryan Walters has issued new guidance to Oklahoma school districts today.

“No school in Oklahoma should tell students they can’t wave an American flag,” said Walters. “Americans have fought and died for the right to carry our flag, and no student should ever be targeted for exercising that right. Our young people should never have to fear displaying their patriotism and I will fight every day so that when our students want to express their love for America, they can do so boldly and proudly.”

The American flag represents the enduring values this nation was built upon, and the Pledge of Allegiance serves as a reminder of our shared commitment to those principles. Incorporating these symbols into our schools not only respects our heritage but also instills a sense of patriotism and civic duty in students. To uphold these values and comply with state laws, Oklahoma school districts are required to follow these guidelines:

- **Develop a District Policy:** Each school district must establish a clear policy that ensures the U.S. flag, as defined in 4 U.S.C. §§ 1 and 2, can be flown and displayed on all school campuses without infringement. This policy should promote the respectful presentation of the flag, ensuring it is treated with the honor it deserves.

2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-4599
PHONE: (405) 521-4885 • SDE.OK.GOV • RYAN.WALTERS@SDE.OK.GOV



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- **Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance:** In accordance with state law, every school must lead its students in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance at least once a week. This practice is crucial in fostering a sense of national pride and respect for the country's ideals among students.
- **Reporting to the Oklahoma Department of Education:** All districts are required to submit a report detailing their policies regarding the display of the U.S. flag and the weekly recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. This report should include specific measures the district has implemented to ensure compliance and how these practices are being integrated into the school culture.

By adhering to these guidelines, schools will contribute to a unified and respectful educational environment that honors the foundational principles of our nation.

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