

School District Legal Status

Unlike most countries where education is centralized in the federal government, public education in the United States is a function of the individual states. Although no specific reference appears in the U. S. Constitution, the basis for the power of the states is implied in the 10th Amendment. There are, therefore, 50 individual state systems of education with considerable authority delegated by each state to their local school districts.

A singular feature of education in this country is that lay citizens who elect state legislators are primarily responsible for educational policies rather than professional educators or government officials. State legislators enact school laws and local boards of education formulate policies for the operation of their schools within the framework of these laws. Provisions are made for the education of all citizens regardless of race, religion or wealth of the parents. Public schools are nonsectarian and coexist with private and church supported schools.

Like other states, the Legislature of Oklahoma has established a State Department of Education and charged it with the "responsibility of determining the policies and directing the administration and supervision of the public school system of the state." A State Board of Education governs the State Department, and the public school system of the state and an elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction serves as the executive officer of the State Board of Education.

While the state has overall responsibility for education, it grants considerable power and control to the local school districts. Local school boards have only those powers and responsibilities which are granted them by the state through the School Laws of Oklahoma. Local policies are established by each school board and must be consistent and in harmony with state laws.

Alva's School Board formulates its policies and procedures within the framework and constraints of the Oklahoma school laws.

Adopted: December 02, 1991

Revised:

Legal Reference:

Cross Reference:

District #001, Woods County, Oklahoma