

VOTE “YES” ON HB 1028!

END CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

OKLAHOMA SHOULD END CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FOR DISABLED STUDENTS BECAUSE IT IS:

EXCESSIVE

“Children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to corporal punishment. When students with disabilities are subjected to corporal punishment for behaviors associated with their disabilities, they **are unjustly and excessively punished and deprived of access to quality education and a safe learning environment.**” (Allison et al., 2023)

UNFAIR

“**Children with disabilities are more than 50 percent more likely to be corporally punished** than their nondisabled peers in many southeastern states. Disability status is defined as students who qualified as having a disability (physical, cognitive, or emotional) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.” (Gershoff & Font, 2016)

RISKY

The risk of a person who is not a parent administering corporal punishment to a child with disabilities opens a school district up for a lawsuit. There are **no written guidelines for the proper application of corporal punishment**, defined as “hitting, slapping, paddling, or any other means of inflicting physical pain.”

PARENTS’ RIGHTS PROTECTED

HB 1028 does not prevent a parent from administering corporal punishment to their own child. This simply takes away the ability of a government employee to administer the corporal punishment on behalf of the parent.

HB 1028 NARROWED

HB 1028 has been amended to address House concerns regarding the broad nature of the disabilities. The language has been tightened to include specific parameters under an Individualized Education Program (IEP) provided for by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). 504 plans are not part of special education, so they are different from IEPs. 504 plans and IEPs are covered by different laws and work in different ways. **Many broader Section 504 Plan disabilities are therefore not included in the bill.**

FINALLY, CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IS **NOT** BIBLICAL

Those who oppose the bill will no doubt quote the following Scripture: Prov 13:24: “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes (diligently)’ ... and Prov 22:15: ‘Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.’

“Those who rely on ancient texts to justify corporal punishment should remember that, **in the Hebrew, there are three different words that are translated into English as ‘rod’** and the one used in the often quoted Proverbs text is **‘Shebet’. The Shebet was the large walking staff held by the head of a family, the king’s sceptre, or the shepherd’s crook which was used to rescue and guide sheep.** Guidance was given by the kind and responsible shepherd whose rod was used to **guide and protect his sheep, not to beat them.** A version of the Shebet is carried by bishops to this day – as a symbol of guiding, not beating their people. It should be remembered that **the ‘rod’ referred to in Psalm 23 comforts people.**

“The term ‘physical correction’ is a term often used by parents and others who believe it to be their Biblical duty to punish their children by using corporal punishment. **‘Correction’ is from the Hebrew word ‘muwcar’ and means ‘chastening’ or ‘come let us reason together’. Reasoning together has nothing to do with physically striking a child.**

“There is no mandate from God to beat children.” (2008) Discipline does not mean striking the child, it means guidance—which OICA fully supports.

References

Allison, M. A., Beers, N., Peterson, J. W., O’Leary, S. C., Bode, S., Baum, M., Connor, K. A., Frank, E., Gibson, E., Larkin, M., Newman, T., Okuizumi-Wu, Y., Padrez, R., Schumacher, H., Goddard, A., King, K., Ryst, E., & McCarty, C. (2023). Corporal punishment in schools. *Pediatrics*, 152(3). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2023-063284>

Child Rights International Network. (2008, November 2). *Corporal punishment: The arguments*. CRIN. <https://archive.crin.org/en/library/publications/corporal-punishment-arguments.html#:~:text=What%20does%20appear%2C%20among%20others,drive%20it%20far%20from%20him.%22>

Gershoff, E., & Font, S. (2016, October 5). *Corporal punishment in schools is used disproportionately on African-American children and children with disabilities*. UT News. <https://news.utexas.edu/2016/10/05/disproportionate-use-of-corporal-punishment-in-schools/>

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