

GOALS 2000, "NO STRINGS ATTACHED"

By Marta McCloskey
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Since October 20, 1995, local education agencies in states not participating in Goals 2000 could apply directly to the U.S. Department of Education for a portion of the state's allotment of the program's funds, subject to approval of the state education agency. After much confusion over Oklahoma's participation in the federal program, local school districts may now apply directly to the federal government for those grants. Gerald N. Tirozzi with the U.S. Department of Education said earlier this week that "local school districts receiving the funds would be required to use them for the development and implementation of a comprehensive education improvement plan, focused on preparing students to meet state or local academic standards for a program consistent with the state's overall plan for education improvement."

In April, the Goals 2000 program was briefly discussed by members of the state joint education committee. At that time, Wayne Rowley with the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce told members that appointees of the Executive Council on School-To-Work feared that the federal government would start putting their own "morality spin" on programs such as Goals 2000. He urged members that time was running out for participation and that the state could oppose

program provisions they did not agree with. "The feds may demand their money back, if we are not careful," he warned. "If you oppose school-to-work, just stand up and say I do not want that federal money."

In response to a letter from Tirozzi on May 7, 1996, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sandy Garrett said that Oklahoma had no plans to develop a state plan. In fact, Garrett said she supported local school districts' participation in Goals 2000.

As a result of Garrett's approval, local school districts will now be able to apply for grants totaling \$4,396,613 for fiscal year 1995. In addition, program funds appropriated to Oklahoma for fiscal year 1996, bring the total to \$9,731,068.

Governor Frank Keating had originally opposed the program until he learned that funds available to Oklahoma from Goals 2000 could be used to improve the teaching of mathematics, science, reading and writing.

Keating especially endorsed the program after he learned that recent changes in federal law would allow local school districts to apply directly to the federal government for Goals 2000 funds. "This is purely and simply an issue of local control." He continued, "It is the best answer for Oklahoma's schools, which can, if they choose, apply directly to Washington for funds that come with no strings attached."

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policies and procedures.

"It's a big impact in terms of keeping our staff trained."

Norman criminal defense attorney Robert Jackson said he anticipates the system will reduce the amount of plea bargaining in court cases.

"That will gum-up the system," he said. "When you start making people serve specific amounts of time without some type of release valve, you are going to have to start stacking prisoners on top of one another."

Jackson also said he was concerned about placing sentencing power in the hands of a judge. A strong advocate of jury sentencing, he said the provision could make a "political creature" out of issuing punishment.

"I believe that there is a possibility for individual judges that have sat on the bench for years and years to become jaded," he said. "Jury sentencing is the only way to keep the setting of punishments free from political consideration."

A spokesman for Governor Frank Keating said, while the governor has not seen a final version of the bill, he supports the Truth in Sentencing concept, calling it a step toward restoring public confidence in the justice system.

"The governor is supportive of making people serve the sentences they are given."

Currently, the bill containing the act (HB1138) is being addressed by its conference committee. The bill's author, Rep. Dwayne Steidley, D-Claremore, said he expects conference committee members to make a decision on the matter later next week.

TWO NEW OKLAHOMA ROUTE 66 MUSEUM SATELLITE EXHIBITS ESTABLISHED

From Okla. Historical Society

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) Two new satellite exhibits of the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum have been completed in Miami and Yukon with the cooperation of local organization, it was announced by the Oklahoma Historical Society.

The new exhibits have been opened in the Coleman Theater of Miami and the Yukon's Best Railroad Museum of Yukon, said Project Director Sandy Stratton of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

"With Miami and Yukon, we now have six satellite exhibits open and three more planned in Claremore, El Reno and Elk City," Stratton said. The exhibits are designed as part of a coordinated plan for museums and historic sites along Historic Route 66 in Oklahoma.

"Each one features local scenes, artifacts and memories from the seven decades when Route 66 was the Main Street of America."

Satellite exhibits previously were opened in Arcadia, Chandler, Edmond and Sapulpa. The satellite exhibits are part of an overall project that included the establishment of the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton last September with funds through the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

"We are developing more than a new museum with the satellite exhibits," said Dr. Bob Blackburn, deputy executive director of the Oklahoma Historical Society. "It's a concept of tying historical places and events together across Oklahoma."

"This project reflects the effect of Route 66 on people and places along that 397-mile

route from the Kansas border to the Texas panhandle."

The Miami exhibit includes photos of the lead and zinc mine operations located in the Tri-State Mining District along Route 66; road maps of the 1930s and 1940s, photos of early drive-in theaters and promotional materials for the Meramec Caverns, Grand Lake and the National Route 66 Association.

The Yukon exhibit contains photos of early road-building near Yukon and El Reno, a window tray for curb service at the Model Drug Store, a metal finger bowl from Beverly's Restaurant, menus from Route 66 restaurants and a popular steering knob of the 1940s.