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STATE OF OKLAHOMA**

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**State Superintendent Convenes First-Ever State Student Advisory Council;
Students Tackle Subject of Dropouts**

OKLAHOMA CITY - Fifty outstanding high school students from across the state have been selected as inaugural members of the State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (*see attached list of Council members*).

The students competed with hundreds of high school applicants who applied for the Council. Those chosen distinguished themselves in their applications and represent geographic diversity, school size and range from freshmen to seniors.

The Council's first meeting is today in Oklahoma City, where members are discussing with Garrett and facilitators the school dropout problem and possible solutions. Later in the day, they will be introduced to lawmakers in both the state House and Senate.

"Some of the most insightful and innovative ideas for school improvement come from students themselves, and it's important we take the time to listen, and learn from what they have to share," Garrett said, indicating she was deeply impressed with the intellect and maturity of her Council.

"There have been a lot of changes in schools in recent years and the global economy demands there be much more in the years to come. I want to know what our student leaders think we could be doing better or differently in Oklahoma to ensure their peers have every opportunity to succeed. It's never been more important for instruction to be relevant and to think outside the box where it's warranted."

Garrett said she will be incorporating many of the ideas generated by today's meeting as part of the planning for the Oklahoma Dropout Summit being convened by the State Department of Education in partnership with America's Promise Alliance on March 25.

The State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council will meet again March 25 in conjunction with the summit and on other dates TBA.

A group photo of the Student Advisory Council will be available this afternoon.

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