



OKLAHOMA STATE  
**SENATE**  
COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION • STATE CAPITOL  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

**Immediate Release: December 18, 2015**

***State Senator Anastasia A. Pittman backs local author in effort to educate kids about medicine; support legislative study on kindergarten preparedness***

State Senator Anastasia Pittman is praising the efforts of an Oklahoma-born author to educate children on the importance of medicine through his fun and easy to read book. Alonzo Cannon, who is originally from Tecumseh and now lives in Los-Angeles, recently visited his home state and met with several state agencies and hospitals about the possibility of partnering to share his new book, “That Medicine I Will Not Take!” Pittman, who has hosted several educational community think tanks and authored legislation aimed at kindergarten preparedness and literacy curriculum, served as one of Cannon’s hosts during his time in Oklahoma.

According to the Oklahoma City legislator, the teamwork of Cannon and illustrator, Missi Jay, both graduates from the University of Oklahoma, is a creative effort to reach children through the Caped KIDSaders Children’s Hospital Foundation. The organization donates books and superhero capes to hospitals for young patients admitted for care. Pittman is now hoping to help Cannon take those efforts a step further in Oklahoma by appealing to state organizations involved in early childhood intervention and education programs like Smart Start and encouraging their partnership in the push to distribute the books to children in hospitals across the state.

“Oklahoma was recently ranked in the top 5 nationally for early childhood literacy, so our efforts to develop strong reading skills and maintain those high standards are producing results,” said Pittman. “Books like Alonzo Cannon’s go a long way in supporting the goal to reach young children wherever they are – which in this case, is in our Oklahoma hospitals.”

Cannon said his inspiration to write the book came from a friend whose sick child refused to take her medicine.

“I’m excited about this book because it has a literacy element to it, as well as a strong health component, said Cannon. “The Caped KIDSaders Children’s Hospital Foundation would like to reach as many pediatric clinics and pharmaceutical companies as we possibly can. We feel it would be a great tool to encourage kids to take their medicine, whether it’s cough syrup or chemo. We’re so proud that this book will serve in the education, health, and entertainment of kids.”

Pittman has been a longtime advocate of kindergarten preparedness in Oklahoma, with an ongoing commitment to literacy through a series of think tank forums, which have met five times since June, with an upcoming sixth meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 3pm in room 419-C at the State Capitol. Pittman encourages community leaders, parents, administrators, pastors, teachers, homeschool educators, and other interested groups to attend the meeting to discuss and define the vision of the curriculum in Oklahoma schools. The meetings have been facilitated by Dr. Belinda Biscoe, Associate Vice President of University Outreach at the University of Oklahoma, where discussions build and create a “roadmap” for the future of education in the state and to create a curriculum that embraces diversity and differences in programming.

“I want to promote literacy in every aspect of the lives of children, including in their schools, their churches, and even in the medical arena,” said Pittman. “Even if children are sick, they can still have resources to keep them connected to learning, and that’s why projects like Alonzo Cannon’s book are vital to this endeavor.”

*For more information, please contact Sen. Anastasia A. Pittman’s office at (405) 521-5531 or by email at [pittman@oksenate.gov](mailto:pittman@oksenate.gov).*

**CUTLINE: Senator Anastasia Pittman welcomes author Alonzo Cannon to the State Capitol.**

**-END-**