

# TULSA WORLD

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Brent Venables promises every team will take notice when Sooners are scheduled **SPORTS, PAGE B1**



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Saturday, May 9, 2026

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## Early release scrutinized

Grand jury report says Stitt made calls to DOC on inmate's behalf

**STEVE METZER**  
Tulsa World

OKLAHOMA CITY — A multicounty grand jury report raises serious questions about Gov. Kevin Stitt's role in the early release from prison of a politically connected Norman woman whose drunken driving accident caused life-altering injuries to a 20-year-old woman.

The 14-page report, produced after the



**Polston**

grand jury reviewed nearly two months of evidence, also casts a harsh light on the Department of Corrections, where officials seemingly fast-tracked Sara Polston's return home with a GPS-monitoring bracelet after she served only 73 days of a 15-year sentence that was supposed to have included eight years behind bars.

The grand jury was advised by assistants of Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond. On Friday, the day after the report was released, Drummond issued a

statement that noted findings that Stitt made multiple calls to the Department of Corrections on Polston's behalf.

According to records of campaign contributions kept by the Oklahoma Ethics Commission, Sara Polston, 43, donated \$13,900 to Stitt's campaigns as he was running for governor in 2018 and 2022. Her husband, attorney Rod Polston, also made contributions totaling that amount.

According to the grand jury report, Rod Polston and Stitt went to the same high school and were in the same college fraternity.

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## Cellphone ban made permanent in schools

Governor also signed legislation this week on variety of issues

**STEVE METZER**  
Tulsa World

OKLAHOMA CITY — A "bell-to-bell" ban on students having cellphones in schools was made permanent under legislation signed Tuesday by Gov. Kevin Stitt.

House Bill 1276, authored by Claremore Republican Sen. Ally Seifried and Rep. Chad Caldwell, R-Enid, proposed to extend indefinitely a one-year ban on cellphones in schools adopted last year. It passed with strong support in both the House and Senate.

Prior to the final vote in the upper chamber, Seifried said she had heard many positive comments about the temporary ban from teachers, administrators and parents.

The senator, who had earlier hosted an interim study on cellphones in schools, reported that more than 90% of teens had admitted to being distracted by cellphones in school. She cited a study by the Pew Research Center that showed 72% of high school teachers described phone distraction as a major problem.

At least 11 other states have adopted similar bans.

The law, which will officially take effect July 1, will also prohibit public school students in Oklahoma from using other personal electronics, such as smartwatches, during the school day. However, they will still be allowed to have school-issued tablets. Additionally, exceptions will be allowed for

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The **BrightSide**  
**HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

## STUDENT COUNCIL WINS THIRD NATIONAL AWARD



**STEPHEN PINGRY PHOTOS, TULSA WORLD**

Above: Hamilton Elementary's Student Council sponsor Tucker Hopper gets a hug from fourth grader Xiomar Cortez after the group's lunch meeting Thursday. "I know how being in Student Council made me feel when I was your age," Hopper told the students. "Just being given the opportunity to do something was a pretty cool feeling." Below: Isabella Gordineer and Maymarli Kolman laugh during their Student Council meeting Thursday at Hamilton Elementary.

## Students have been hard at work on various community projects

**LENZY KREHBIEL-BURTON**  
Tulsa World

A fourth grader at Hamilton Elementary School, Maymarli Kolman has something she wants Tulsans to know.

"We are a hard-working school," she said quietly, with a grin.

That hard work is drawing notice from beyond the school's northeast Tulsa neighborhood. Kolman is one of 12 students on Hamilton's Student Council, one of three Oklahoma recipients of the National Association of Elementary School Principals' Student Council School of Excellence award this year.

NAESP is a professional organization for elementary and middle school principals. It has state-level affiliates in all 50 states, plus a group for principals at private American-style schools in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

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## Oklahoma man's UFO claims part of files release

**CURTIS KILLMAN**  
Tulsa World

The Pentagon's release Friday of thousands of records related to UFO sightings included an Oklahoma resident's widely reported 1947 claim that may have been one of the first of its kind.

Byron Savage's claim to Army officials — that he saw a "radically built," "probably atomic" powered object in the sky in mid-May 1947 from his residence in northwest Oklahoma City — was published in newspapers across the nation that summer.

Savage's claim was among thousands of documents released Friday by the Pentagon after President Donald Trump signed an executive order in February calling for the public release of government files related to extraterrestrial life and UFOs, also called unidentified aerial phenomena.

Savage went public with his claim two days after another widely reported UFO sighting in Washington by an Idaho pilot.

Both Savage's and the Idaho man's claim that year were part of a wave of purported UFO sightings that has since earned its own Wikipedia entry titled "1947 flying disc craze."

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