

Amend CSHB 1287 by striking all below the enacting clause and substituting the following:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 28.011 to read as follows:

Sec. 28.011. ELECTIVE COURSES ON THE BIBLE'S HEBREW SCRIPTURES (OLD TESTAMENT) AND NEW TESTAMENT AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE HISTORY AND LITERATURE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION. (a) A school district shall offer to students in grade nine or above:

(1) an elective course on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and its impact and an elective course on the New Testament and its impact; or

(2) an elective course that combines the courses described by Subdivision (1).

(b) The purpose of a course under this section is to:

(1) teach students knowledge of biblical content, characters, poetry, and narratives that are prerequisites to understanding contemporary society and culture, including literature, art, music, mores, oratory, and public policy; and

(2) familiarize students with, as applicable:

(A) the contents of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament;

(B) the history of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament;

(C) the literary style and structure of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament; and

(D) the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament on law, history, government, literature, art, music, customs, morals, values, and culture.

(c) Notwithstanding Sections 28.002(c) and 31.022, respectively, for a course under this section, the State Board of Education or the agency may not:

(1) identify the essential knowledge and skills; or

(2) adopt textbooks under Chapter 31.

(d) The book or collection of books commonly known as the Hebrew Scriptures shall be used as the primary source textbook for a course on the Hebrew Scriptures. The book or collection of books commonly known as the New Testament shall be used as the primary

source textbook for a course on the New Testament. A school district may select a supporting textbook or curriculum materials to accompany the primary source textbooks, and students may be assigned a range of reading materials for the courses, including selections from secular historical and cultural works and selections from religious and cultural traditions other than the Jewish and Christian traditions.

(e) A student may not be required to use a specific translation as the sole text of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament and may use as the basic textbook a different translation of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament from that chosen by the board of trustees of the student's school district or the student's teacher.

(f) A course offered under this section must be taught in an objective and nondevotional manner that does not attempt to indoctrinate students in any religion or nonreligious system of belief. Nothing in a course offered under this section is intended to violate any provision of the United States Constitution, federal law, or the Texas Constitution.

(g) A teacher of a course offered under this section is entitled to training in connection with the chosen curriculum at a level equal to that provided to teachers of other elective courses.

(h) For the purpose of a student earning credit for high school graduation, a school district shall grant one-half academic elective credit for satisfactory completion of a course on the Hebrew Scriptures, one-half academic elective credit for satisfactory completion of a course on the New Testament, and one-half academic elective credit for satisfactory completion of a combined course on both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. This subsection applies only to a course that is taught in strict compliance with this section.

(i) If, for a particular semester, fewer than 15 students at a school district campus register to enroll in a course required by this section, the district is not required to offer the course at that campus for that semester.

(j) This section does not prohibit the board of trustees of a school district from offering an elective course based on the

books of a religion or society other than one with Jewish or Christian traditions. In determining whether to offer such a course, the board may consider various factors, including student and parent demand for such a course and the impact such books have had on history and culture.

SECTION 2. Section 28.002(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) Each school district that offers kindergarten through grade 12 shall offer, as a required curriculum:

(1) a foundation curriculum that includes:

(A) English language arts;

(B) mathematics;

(C) science; and

(D) social studies, consisting of Texas, United States, and world history, government, and geography; and

(2) an enrichment curriculum that includes:

(A) to the extent possible, languages other than English;

(B) health, with emphasis on the importance of proper nutrition and exercise;

(C) physical education;

(D) fine arts;

(E) economics, with emphasis on the free enterprise system and its benefits;

(F) career and technology education; ~~and~~

(G) technology applications; and

(H) the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and New Testament and their impact on the history and literature of western civilization as provided by Section 28.011.

SECTION 3. A school district shall offer a course on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and its impact and a course on the New Testament and its impact, or a combined course in those subjects, as required by Section 28.011, Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this

Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
Act takes effect September 1, 2007.