

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R8586 ANG-D

H.B. 2681
By: Wilson et al. (Buckingham)
Education
5/20/2021
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

H.B. 2681 changes the grade level at which a public school district may begin to offer an elective course on the Hebrew Scriptures and its impact, an elective course on the New Testament and its impact, or an elective course that combines those courses from grade nine to grade six.

H.B. 2681 changes a requirement that a teacher of such a course must hold a minimum of a High School Composite Certification in language arts, social studies, or history with, where practical, a minor in religion or biblical studies. The bill requires the teacher instead to hold a certificate in those subjects that qualifies the teacher to teach at the grade level at which the course is offered with, where practical, a minor in religion or biblical studies. The bill authorizes a course offered under the bill's provisions to students in grade six, seven, or eight to be considered as a social studies course for purposes of complying with the foundation school curriculum.

H.B. 2681 amends current law relating to public school elective courses providing academic study of the Bible offered to certain students.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 28.011, Education Code, by amending Subsections (a) and (f) and adding Subsection (g-1), as follows:

(a) Authorizes a school district to offer to students in grade six, rather than 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).

(f) Requires a teacher of a course offered under this section to hold a certificate, rather than a minimum of a High School Composite Certification, in language arts, social studies, or history that qualifies the teacher to teach at the grade level at which the course is offered with, where practical, a minor in religion or biblical studies. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

(g-1) Authorizes a course offered under this section to students in grade six, seven, or eight to be considered as a social studies course for purposes of complying with the required curriculum under Section 28.002 (Required Curriculum).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.