

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2681  
By: Wilson  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

It has been noted that courses that provide academic study of the Bible are currently offered to public school students in grades nine and above. Some have pointed to the potential benefits in expanding such course offerings to students in grades six through eight. H.B. 2681 would make this change.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2681 amends the Education Code to change from grade nine to grade six 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.

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 applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.