

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 2681
By: Wilson et al. (Buckingham)
Education
5/24/2021
Committee Report (Substituted)

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.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.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(a) and (f), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Authorizes a school district to offer to students in grade six or above, 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 Section 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) 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.

SECTION 2. Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to implement Sections 28.011(a) and (f), Education Code, as amended by this Act, only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. Provides that, if the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, SBOE is authorized, but not required, to implement Sections

28.0119(a) and (f) , Education code, as amended by this Act, using other appropriations available for the purpose.

SECTION 3. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.