

Grand Prairie ISD Board of Trustees

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Topic: Resolution Regarding Period of Prayer and Reading of Religious Texas During the School Day

Submitted by: Dr. Melissa Kates, General Counsel

Approved for Transmittal: 

Board Meeting Date: 2/17/2026

Recommendation:

The Administration does not recommend adoption of a resolution under Senate Bill 11. SB 11 was enacted by the 89th Texas Legislature and requires each Texas school board to take a record vote on or before March 1, 2026, on whether to adopt a resolution authorizing a period of prayer and reading of religious text during the school day pursuant to Texas Education Code § 25.0823.

Students' rights to religious expression before, during, and after school are well established, and the District has policies and practices in place to protect those rights. Existing state and federal law, along with Grand Prairie ISD Board Policy FNA (Legal) and (Local), already permit students to engage in prayer, read religious texts, and express religious beliefs on school property and during the school day in compliance with constitutional requirements. Therefore, the period of prayer is not needed since students already have this right to pray during the school day.

Adoption of a resolution under Texas Education Code § 25.0823 would not expand these existing rights and is not necessary for their continued exercise. Accordingly, the Administration recommends that the Board decline to adopt the proposed resolution.

Rationale:

The Texas Education Code § 25.0823 does not mandate adoption of such a resolution but requires the board to formally consider and vote on the matter. If the board elects to adopt a resolution, any period of prayer and religious reading must strictly comply with Texas Education Code § 25.083. If adopted, the period of prayer must comply with Texas Education Code § 25.083, including the following requirements: (1) parental submission of written consent waiving Establishment Clause claims; (2) prayer and religious reading may not occur in the presence or hearing of any non-consenting individual; and (3) participation must be limited to segregated settings, before the school day, or through methods recommended by the Texas Attorney General or district legal counsel.

Budget Information:

No budgetary impact.

Board Policy Reference and Compliance:

FNA (LEGAL)
FNA (LOCAL)