



AGENDA SECTION: Action Item

SUBJECT: Daily Period of Prayer and Reading of Bible or Other Religious Text

BOARD POLICY: Senate Bill 11

STRATEGIC GOAL(S): 1,2,3 and 4

FISCAL NOTE: None

PREPARED/PRESENTED BY: Tellauance L. Graham, Chief of Staff

## **Background Information**

Over the past several legislative sessions, states and school districts across the country have revisited policies related to religious expression in public schools. Federal law and longstanding U.S. Supreme Court precedent clearly protect individual, voluntary, student-initiated prayer while simultaneously prohibiting school-sponsored or school-directed religious activities.

Key guiding principles include:

- Students may pray individually or in voluntary groups, provided it is not disruptive and not school-directed.
- Staff may not lead, endorse, organize, or require participation in prayer.
- Districts must remain neutral regarding religion to ensure compliance with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

Duncanville ISD already operates within this legal framework. Students are permitted to pray voluntarily, engage in silent reflection, and express religious beliefs in a manner consistent with district policy and state and federal law—without a formal, scheduled prayer period.

## **Recommendation**

Administration recommends that the Board NOT approve the adoption of a daily period of prayer.

This recommendation is based on:

- Maintaining constitutional neutrality and minimizing legal risk.
- Preserving instructional time.
- Ensuring an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students.
- Continuing to support voluntary student prayer as currently allowed under law and district practice.

Duncanville ISD can continue honoring religious freedom without formalizing a district-scheduled prayer period.



# DUNCANVILLE ISD

*Writing success stories, one student at a time.*

## **Communication Deployment**

- Issue a districtwide communication to all staff summarizing the approved changes.
- Update affected administrative regulations and procedures.
- Post updated policies to the district policy webpage.

## **Suggested Motion**

I move that the Duncanville Independent School District Board of Trustees decline to adopt a formal daily period of prayer and direct administration to continue operating under existing policies that allow voluntary, student-initiated prayer in accordance with state and federal law.

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Respectfully submitted,

Dr. T. Lamar Goree  
Superintendent