



*Building Champions.  
Every one. Every day.*

# HISD BOARD MEETING

**SENATE BILL 11 - Daily Period of Prayer &  
Religious Text Reading in Texas Public Schools**

**January 22nd, 2026**

***Marcus D. Forney***

***Deputy Superintendent***

# Purpose of the Presentation

To provide trustees with a clear, neutral overview of Texas Senate Bill 11 and key considerations for Huntsville ISD as the Board fulfills its requirement to vote on whether to adopt a policy.

# Current Practice in Huntsville ISD

- Daily Moment of Silence observed districtwide
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and Bible Buddies participation
- The Good News Club-After school bible study for students
- Students pray before various events



**Note: These practices already align with constitutional protections for voluntary, student-led religious expression.**

# What SB 11 Does (and Does Not Do)

## DOES

- Permit but does not require the adoption of a district policy
- Allows a daily period for voluntary prayer and/or scripture reading
- Requires formal Board action to adopt or decline

## DOES NOT

- SB 11 does NOT create new rights. Students already have constitutional protections for voluntary, non-disruptive religious expression.

## Important

Students already have the constitutional right to:

- Pray individually or in groups
- Read religious texts
- Express religious beliefs

As long as activities are non-disruptive and non-coercive.

# Potential Benefits & Challenges

## **Potential Benefits**

- Affirms local board control
- Responds to community members seeking structured option
- Provides explicit statutory guardrails
- Offers state legal support if challenged

## **Potential Challenges**

- Scheduling and supervision logistics
- Risk of social pressure or exclusion
- No added instructional benefit
- May divert from district priorities
- Potential for community division



# Key Considerations



- Voluntary participation only

- Written parent/guardian consent

- No instructional time replaced

- No PA/Intercom use

- Protection of non-participating students

## Additional Considerations

- Scheduling and supervision logistics

- Risk of unintentional social pressure

- No added instructional benefit



# Common Board Approach

Many Boards have formally stated:

“The district already protects students’ rights to voluntary prayer and religious expression and does not find it necessary to adopt a separate SB 11 prayer period policy at this time.”



# Board Decision Point

## *Key Questions for Trustees*

- Does this policy add value beyond current practices?
- Does this policy divert attention from district priorities: academics, attendance, student support?
- How would implementation work across PreK-12 campuses?
- What staffing, space, and training would be required?

## ***Board Action Required:***

☐ Adopt SB 11 Policy

☐ Decline SB 11 Policy



# Questions?

