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HISD BOARD MEETING

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

January 22nd, 2026

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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?

