

(A) a secondary education student who has entered the first course in a sequence of two or more technical courses for three or more credits in a career and technical education program; or

(B) a student who:

(i) is enrolled in an academic or workforce course that is part of a sequence of courses leading to an industry-recognized credential, certificate, or degree; and

(ii) has declared that sequence of courses as the student's major course of study.

(2) "Sequence of courses" means career and technical education courses approved by the State Board of Education, innovative courses approved by the State Board of Education that are provided for local credit, or a tech-prep program of study under Section 61.852.

Added by Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., ch. 5, § 5.01, eff. May 26, 2006. Amended by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., ch. 763, § 2, eff. June 15, 2007.

§ 28.010. Notification Regarding College Credit Programs

(a) Each school year, a school district shall notify the parent of each district student enrolled in grade nine or above of the availability of programs in the district under which a student may earn college credit, including advanced placement programs, dual credit programs, joint high school and college credit programs, and international baccalaureate programs.

(b) A school district may provide the notification required by this section on the district's Internet website. The notification must include the name and contact information of any public or private entity offering a program described by this section in the district.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., ch. 973, § 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

§ 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

(a) A school district may offer to students in 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).

(b) The purpose of a course under this section is

(1) teach students knowledge of biblical characters, poetry, and narratives that are prerequisites to understanding contemporary society; culture, including literature, art, music, mores, history, and public policy; and

(2) familiarize students with, as applicable:

(A) the contents of the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament;

(B) the history of the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament;

(C) the literary style and structure of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament; and

(D) the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament on law, history, government, literature, art, music, customs, morals, values, and culture.

(c) A student may not be required to use a specific translation as the sole text of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament and may use as the basic text a different translation of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament from that chosen by the board of trustees of the student's school district or the student's teacher.

(d) A course offered under this section shall follow applicable law and all federal and state guidelines maintaining religious neutrality and accommodate the diverse religious views, traditions, and perspectives of students in their school district. A course under this section shall not endorse, favor, promote, or disfavor or show hostility toward, any particular religion or nonreligious faith or religious perspective. Nothing in this statute is intended to violate the provision of the United States Constitution or federal law, the Texas Constitution or any state law, or rules or guidelines provided by the United States Department of Education or the Texas Education Agency.

(e) Before adopting rules identifying the essential knowledge and skills of a course offered under this section, the State Board of Education shall submit proposed essential knowledge and skills to the attorney general. The attorney general shall review proposed essential knowledge and skills to ensure that the course complies with the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and the board may adopt rules identifying the essential knowledge

skills of a course offered under this section without the attorney general's approval under this subsection.

(f) A teacher of a course offered under this section 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. A teacher selected to teach a course under this section shall successfully complete staff development training outlined in Section 21.459. A course under this section may only be taught by a teacher who has successfully completed training under Section 21.459.

(g) For the purpose of a student earning credit for high school graduation, a school district shall grant one-half academic elective credit for satisfactory completion of a course on the Hebrew Scriptures, one-half academic elective credit for satisfactory completion of a course on the New Testament, and one-half academic elective credit for satisfactory completion of a combined course on both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. This subsection applies only to a course that is taught in strict compliance with this section.

(h) If, for a particular semester, fewer than 15 students at a school district campus register to enroll in a course required by this section, the district is not required to offer the course at that campus for that semester.

(i) This section does not prohibit the board of trustees of a school district from offering an elective course based on the books of a religion other than Christianity. In determining whether to offer such a course, the board may consider various factors, including student and parent demand for such a course and the impact such books have had on history and culture.

(j) This section does not prohibit a school district from offering a course, other than the course authorized by this section, in the academic study of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, or both for local credit or for state elective credit towards high school graduation.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., ch. 856, § 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Section 4 of Acts 2007, 80th Leg., ch. 856 provides:

"The provisions of this Act pertaining to a school district do not take effect until the 2009-2010 school year."

§ 28.013. Nature Science Curriculum Project

(a) The State Board of Education shall assist in developing a nature science curriculum, in accordance with this section, the following entities, acting jointly:

(1) the Outdoor School at Texas Tech University Center at Junction;

(2) the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (T-STEM) Center of Texas Tech University; and

(3) South Llano River State Park.

(b) The nature science curriculum must:

(1) be designed for instruction of students in grades six through 12;

(2) provide for grade-level appropriate instruction in essential knowledge and skills identified by the State Board of Education under Section 28.002 for:

(A) science; and

(B) mathematics, social studies, and language arts, to the extent practicable and relevant to nature science studies;

(3) through participation in outdoor experiential learning projects in state parks, provide for the scientific study by students of:

(A) conservation, wildlife or aquatic biology, range ecology, or other areas of nature science; and

(B) problems affecting nature, such as threats to the watershed, and possible solutions to those problems; and

(4) be designed to:

(A) be capable of implementation in any state park;

(B) use state park resources in providing instruction; and

(C) be presented by classroom teachers and state park employees.

(c) The Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (T-STEM) Center of Texas Tech University shall make the nature science curriculum available through the university's Internet website or through a separate Internet website developed by the center for that purpose.

(d) The Texas Tech University Center at Junction, with assistance from South Llano River State Park, shall present to classroom teachers and state park employees staff development courses in providing instruction in the nature science curriculum.