

**SMITHVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

RESOLUTION

Resolution Affirming Our Constitutional and Legal Right to Choose to Pray in School

WHEREAS, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects students' religious freedom in public school. Specifically, the Free Exercise Clause ensures that individuals have the right to practice their religious beliefs, free from government interference, and the Establishment Clause ensures that the government cannot favor any particular religious belief or religion over non-belief; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act, Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code § 110.003, prohibits school districts and other government entities from "substantially burden[ing] a person's free exercise of religion"; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Education Code § 25.901 affirms that "[a] public school student has an absolute right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt the instructional or other activities of the school.;" and

WHEREAS, the Texas Education Code § 25.082(d) establishes a school district's ability to institute a period of silence during which students may choose to "reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student,;"

NOW, LET IT BE HEREBY RESOLVED

THAT the Smithville ISD Board of Trustees wishes to preserve students' flexibility to pray, read scripture, or discuss faith naturally and voluntarily throughout the day, as established by current law.

THAT the Smithville ISD Board of Trustees supports student-led and voluntary Bible studies, prayer groups, and faith-based activities before school, during free time, and after school.

THAT the Smithville ISD Board of Trustees is committed to maintaining a respectful and nurturing school environment for students and employees of any religious background; and

THAT the Smithville ISD Board of Trustees, in consideration of the laws and policies recited above, declines to adopt a resolution establishing state-organized prayer policy for our district, as contemplated by S.B. 11, 89th Legislature, codified at Texas Education Code § 25.0823.

PRESENTED AND APPROVED ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2026

Signature of Presiding Officer of the Board