

SENATE BILL 11

89TH MEETING OF THE

TEXAS LEGISLATURE

SB 11 from the 89th Legislative Session adds Texas Education Code section 25.0823, which allows school boards to designate time each school day at every campus for students and employees to pray and read the Bible or other religious texts. The bill requires that within six months of the effective date (by March 1, 2026), each district's board must take a record vote either to establish the daily prayer time and reading of religious texts by adopting the resolution set out in the new statute or to decline to establish the daily prayer time.

A board wishing to establish a daily period for prayer and reading of religious texts must do so by adopting the statutory resolution.

Sampling of Statutory Requirements

- Cannot substitute for instructional time
- Requires signed consent that includes:
 - *Acknowledgement of choice whether to participate*
 - *No objection to hearing of other's prayers or readings*
 - *"an express waiver of the person's right to bring a claim under state or federal law arising out of the adoption of a policy under this section, including a claim under the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or a related state or federal law, releasing the district or school and district or school employees from liability for those claims brought in state or federal court"*

Sampling of Statutory Requirements

- Requires signed consent that includes (CONT.):
 - *“An employee or parent or guardian of a student may revoke the person’s consent provided under Subsection (b)(1) by informing the appropriate school administrator, as determined by the school district”*
- “Before normal school hours...”
- “Regardless of whether the board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school adopts a policy under Subsection (a), this section does not prohibit a student or employee of the district or school from participating in prayer or reading the Bible or other religious text during a period of the school day that is not designated as a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text.”
