

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 52nd Legislature (2010)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
4 FOR ENGROSSED  
5 HOUSE BILL 2321

By: Russ, Johnson, Thompson and  
Billy of the House

6 and

7 Ivester of the Senate

8  
9 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

10 [ schools - elective courses - Hebrew Scriptures and  
11 New Testament - codification - effective date ]

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14 ~~BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:~~

15 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
16 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.11 of Title 70, unless  
17 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

18 A. A school district may offer to students in grade nine or  
19 above:

20 1. An elective course on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)  
21 and its impact and an elective course on the New Testament and its  
22 impact; or

23 2. An elective course that combines the courses described in  
24 paragraph 1 of this subsection.

1 B. The purposes of courses authorized by this section are to:

2 1. Teach students knowledge of biblical content, characters,  
3 poetry, and narratives that are prerequisites to understanding  
4 contemporary society and culture, including literature, art, music,  
5 mores, oratory, and public policy; and

6 2. Familiarize students with, as applicable:

7 a. the contents of the Hebrew Scriptures or New  
8 Testament,

9 b. the history of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament,

10 c. the literary style and structure of the Hebrew  
11 Scriptures or New Testament, and

12 d. the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures or New  
13 Testament on law, history, government, literature,  
14 art, music, customs, morals, values, and culture.

15 C. The Bible shall be the primary text of the course and may be  
16 supplemented with additional resources. The primary text for the  
17 course will be a parallel translation Bible or multi-translation  
18 Bible that uses more than one translation for side-by-side  
19 comparison chosen by the school district. However, a student may  
20 not be required to use a specific translation as the sole text of  
21 the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament and may use as the basic  
22 textbook a different translation of the Hebrew Scriptures or New  
23 Testament from that chosen by the district board of education or the  
24 student's teacher.

1 D. A course offered pursuant to this section shall follow  
2 applicable law and all federal and state guidelines in maintaining  
3 religious neutrality and accommodating the diverse religious views,  
4 traditions, and perspectives of students in the school district. A  
5 course offered pursuant to this section shall not endorse, favor, or  
6 promote, or disfavor or show hostility toward, any particular  
7 religion or nonreligious faith or religious perspective. Nothing in  
8 this section is intended to violate any provision of the United  
9 States Constitution or federal law, the Oklahoma Constitution or any  
10 state law, or any rules or guidelines provided by the United States  
11 Department of Education or the State Department of Education.

12 E. A teacher of a course offered pursuant to this section must  
13 be certified to teach social studies or literature.

14 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2010.

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