

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 12, 2010

Committee Substitute for
ENGROSSED
Senate Bill No. 1338

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 1338 - By:
IVESTER of the Senate and RUSS of the House.

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

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

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

4 A. Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, independent school districts may offer
5 to students in grade nine or above:

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

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

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

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

4 2. Familiarize students with, as applicable:

5 a. the contents of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament,

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

7 c. the literary style and structure of the Hebrew Scriptures or New
8 Testament, and

9 d. the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament on law,
10 history, government, literature, art, music, customs, morals, values,
11 and culture.

12 C. A student shall not be required to use a specific translation as the sole text of
13 the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament and may use as the basic textbook a different
14 translation of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament from that chosen by the district
15 board of education or the student's teacher.

16 D. A course offered pursuant to this section shall follow applicable law and all
17 federal and state guidelines in maintaining religious neutrality and accommodating the
18 diverse religious views, traditions, and perspectives of students in the school district. A
19 course offered pursuant to this section shall not endorse, favor, or promote, or disfavor or
20 show hostility toward, any particular religion or nonreligious faith or religious
21 perspective. Nothing in this section is intended to violate any provision of the United
22 States Constitution or federal law, the Oklahoma Constitution or any state law, or any

1 rules or guidelines provided by the United States Department of Education or the State
2 Department of Education.

3 E. This section shall not be construed to prohibit a district board of education from
4 offering a course, other than the courses authorized by this section, in the academic
5 study of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, or both for elective credit toward
6 high school graduation.

7 F. The State Board of Education shall require no additional funds for its approval
8 authority as required by this section.

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

10 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON COMMON EDUCATION, dated 04-08-10
11 - DO PASS, As Amended.