

1 THE STATE SENATE
2 Monday, March 29, 2010

3 Committee Substitute for
4 ENGROSSED

5 House Bill No. 2321

6 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL NO. 2321 - By: Russ,
7 Johnson, Thompson and Billy of the House and Ivester of the Senate.

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

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

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

14 A. A school district may offer to students in grade nine or
15 above:

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

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

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

22 1. Teach students knowledge of biblical content, characters,
23 poetry, and narratives that are prerequisites to understanding

1 contemporary society and culture, including literature, art, music,
2 mores, oratory, and public policy; and

3 2. Familiarize students with, as applicable:

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

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

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

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

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

22 D. A course offered pursuant to this section shall follow
23 applicable law and all federal and state guidelines in maintaining

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

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

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

13 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, dated 3-24-10 - DO
14 PASS, As Amended.