

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 52nd Legislature (2010)

HOUSE BILL 2321

By: Johnson

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; directing the State Board of Education to adopt curriculum standards for certain academic study of the Bible courses; specifying standards meet certain requirements; providing for implementation of the course by public school districts; requiring personnel to meet certification requirements; prohibiting assignment of personnel based on certain beliefs or affiliation; establishing conditions for teaching the course; directing the State Textbook Committee to incorporate certain conditions when evaluating textbooks; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

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

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

A. The State Board of Education shall adopt curricular standards for an elective course or courses that may be offered to students in the public schools of this state consisting of a nonsectarian, nonreligious academic study of the Bible and its influence on literature, art, music, culture and politics. The

1 curriculum standards shall meet the academic rigor and standards of
2 other elective courses approved by the Board and shall meet the
3 requirements of the Constitutions of the United States and the State
4 of Oklahoma.

5 B. A public school district that elects to offer an academic
6 study of the Bible course shall implement the course in accordance
7 with the Constitutions of the United States and the State of
8 Oklahoma, including the manner in which the course is taught in the
9 classroom and the assignment of school district personnel teaching
10 the course. Personnel assigned to teach the course shall meet all
11 certification requirements. In addition, no person shall be
12 assigned to teach the course based in whole or in part on any
13 religious test, profession of faith or lack of faith, prior or
14 present religious affiliation or lack of affiliation, or criteria
15 involving particular beliefs or lack of beliefs about the Bible.

16 C. An academic study of the Bible course offered by a public
17 school district shall:

18 1. Be taught in an objective and nondevotional manner with no
19 attempt made to indoctrinate students as to either the truth or
20 falsity of the biblical materials or texts from other religious or
21 cultural traditions;

22 2. Not include teaching of religious doctrine or sectarian
23 interpretation of the Bible or of texts from other religious or
24 cultural traditions; and

1 3. Not disparage or encourage a commitment to a set of
2 religious beliefs.

3 D. When adopting textbooks for academic study of the Bible
4 courses, the State Textbook Committee shall incorporate the
5 conditions set forth in this section into the criteria used to
6 evaluate textbooks for the courses.

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

8

9 52-2-9032 AM 12/29/09

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24