

Senate Bill 11 Explained

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Official Bill Caption

Relating to a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text in public schools.

What it Does

SB 11 allows a governing body of a school district or open-enrollment charter school to require each of their campuses to provide students and employees with daily periods of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious texts. The governing body must vote on the record to require these prayer/Bible reading periods.

Signed consent forms are required from parents or employees for participation. The forms must include a waiver of liability for the school district and its employees and a waiver of individuals' right to sue, including for claims related to a violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The prayer time is not to be conducted over a public address system or within earshot of someone who has not signed a consent/waiver, and may not replace instructional time. SB 11 allows "a person" (a teacher or principal, for example) to encourage attendance at these prayer times, but prohibits them from requiring or coercing attendance.

SB 11 directs the Attorney General to defend the district against lawsuits, and it holds the state liable for associated costs. The law takes effect September 1, 2025.

Why it Matters

This bill is about violating, not protecting, religious freedom. Students and educators already have the right to pray, read religious texts, and express their faith at school. But government-mandated prayer periods in which students are "encouraged" to participate are coercive, strip parents of their right to guide their child's religious upbringing, and saddle taxpayers with the burden of paying for lawsuits.

What's Next

Given the directive to the AG to defend lawsuits against SB 11, the legislature clearly anticipates legal action. You can help fight this attack by telling your local school board you reject state-mandated prayer time in schools.

We're building power to create the Texas we deserve. Join our movement for change at www.tfn.org/join-us!

