

**RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT DECLINING
SENATE BILL 11 PERIOD OF PRAYER AND READING OF THE *BIBLE* OR OTHER
RELIGIOUS TEXT**

WHEREAS Section 25.0823 of the Texas Education Code permits the district to provide a period of prayer and reading of the Bible or other religious text by approving a resolution which states “The Houston Independent School District (HISD) shall adopt a policy requiring every campus of HISD to provide a period of prayer and reading of the *Bible* or other religious text as provided by Section 25.0823, Education Code;”

WHEREAS Senate Bill 11, passed by the 89th Texas Legislature, requires each school board to take a record vote between September 1, 2025, and March 1, 2026, on the resolution provided by Section 25.0823 of the Texas Education Code;

WHEREAS the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects students' religious freedom in public school. Specifically, the Establishment Clause ensures that the government cannot favor any particular religious belief or religion over non-belief, and the Free Exercise Clause ensures that individuals have the right to practice their religious beliefs, free from government interference;

WHEREAS Article I, Section 6, of the Texas Constitution guarantees the separation of church and state and embodies the principle that religion is a matter of private conscience with which the state is forbidden to interfere;

WHEREAS the *Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act* (Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code Section 110.003) prohibits school districts and other government entities from “substantially burden[ing] a person's free exercise of religion;”

WHEREAS Texas Education Code Section 25.901 affirms that “A public school student has an absolute right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt the instructional or other activities of the school. A person may not require or coerce a student to engage in or refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity;” and

WHEREAS Texas Education Code Section 25.082(d) requires a school district to institute a period of silence during which students may choose to “reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student”;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the HISD School Board is committed to cultivating and maintaining a respectful school environment for students and staff of any or no religious background; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HISD School Board, in consideration of the laws recited above, hereby declines to adopt a policy as described in Texas Education Code Section 25.0823.

ADOPTED this 12th day of February 2026.

President
School Board
Houston Independent School District

Attest:

Secretary
School Board
Houston Independent School District