

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

HB 1137 # 4

DIGEST

Religious instruction. Removes certain requirements that students must meet to be released for religious instruction. Provides that an entity offering religious instruction to a student shall, as applicable, work in a collaborative manner with the principal to ensure the period or periods in which the student receives religious instruction are the least disruptive to the instructional time of the student.

1 Page 1, delete lines 10 through 17, begin a new paragraph and
2 insert:

3 "SECTION 2. IC 20-33-2-19, AS AMENDED BY P.L.226-2019,
4 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
5 JULY 1, 2024]: Sec. 19. (a) When the parent of a student who is
6 enrolled in a public school ~~makes a~~ **provides** written ~~request,~~ **notice,**
7 the principal ~~may~~ **shall** allow the student to attend a school for
8 religious instruction that is conducted by a church, an association of
9 churches, or an association that is organized for religious instruction
10 and incorporated under Indiana law.

11 (b) ~~If a principal grants permission~~ **After receiving notice** under
12 subsection (a), the principal shall ~~specify~~ **work in a collaborative**
13 **manner with the parent or entity offering religious instruction to**
14 **provide assistance in determining** a period or periods, not to exceed
15 one hundred twenty (120) minutes in total in any week, for the student
16 to receive religious instruction. **An entity offering religious**
17 **instruction to a student as described in this subsection shall, as**
18 **applicable, work in a collaborative manner with the principal to**
19 **ensure the period or periods in which the student receives religious**
20 **instruction are the least disruptive to the instructional time (as**
21 **defined in IC 20-30-2-1) of the student.** The ~~permission~~ **notice** is
22 valid only for the **school** year in which it is ~~granted.~~ ~~Decisions made by~~
23 ~~a principal under this section may be reviewed by the superintendent.~~
24 **provided.**

25 (c) ~~A school for~~ **An entity providing** religious instruction that
26 receives students under this section:

1 (1) shall maintain attendance records and allow inspection of
2 these records by attendance officers; and

3 (2) may not be supported, in whole or in part, by public funds.

4 (d) A student who attends a school for religious instruction under
5 this section shall receive the same attendance credit that the student
6 would receive for attendance in the public schools for the same length
7 of time.

8 (e) A public secondary school may award academic credit to a
9 student who attends religious instruction under this section if the
10 governing body of the school corporation adopts a policy that allows
11 the awarding of credit. A policy adopted under this subsection must
12 provide the following:

13 (1) Classes in religious instruction are evaluated on the basis of
14 purely secular criteria in substantially the same manner as similar
15 classes taken by a student at a nonpublic secondary school who
16 transfers to a public secondary school are evaluated to determine
17 whether the student receives transfer credit for the classes.
18 Secular criteria may include the following in addition to other
19 secular criteria established by the governing body:

20 (A) The number of hours of classroom instructional time.

21 (B) A review of the course syllabus that reflects the course
22 requirements and materials.

23 (C) Methods of assessment used in the course.

24 (D) Whether the course is taught by a licensed teacher.

25 (2) The decision of whether to award academic credit is neutral
26 as to, and does not involve any test for, religious content or
27 denominational affiliation.

28 (3) A provision that a student who attends religious instruction
29 under this section shall first seek to use a time period during a
30 student instructional day (as defined in IC 20-30-2-2) that is not
31 devoted to student instructional time to attend religious
32 instruction. If a student is not able to attend religious instruction
33 at a time other than during student instructional time, the student
34 may not be released to attend religious instruction for an amount
35 of time per week that exceeds the amount established in
36 subsection (b).

37 A student may be awarded a total of not more than two (2) elective
38 academic credits under this subsection."

39 Delete page 2.

40 Page 3, delete lines 1 through 12.

(Reference is to HB 1137 as printed January 25, 2024.)