



**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT
DIGEST FOR EHB 1137**

Citations Affected: IC 20-33-2-19.

Synopsis: Release for religious instruction. Requires a principal to allow a student to attend religious instruction conducted by certain entities following the principal's receipt of written notice from the student's parent. **(This conference committee report removes provisions concerning school chaplains.)**

Effective: July 1, 2024.



Adopted	Rejected
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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MR. SPEAKER:

Your Conference Committee appointed to confer with a like committee from the Senate upon Engrossed Senate Amendments to Engrossed House Bill No. 1137 respectfully reports that said two committees have conferred and agreed as follows to wit:

that the House recede from its dissent from all Senate amendments and that the House now concur in all Senate amendments to the bill and that the bill be further amended as follows:

- 1 Delete everything after the enacting clause and insert the following:
- 2 SECTION 1. IC 20-33-2-19, AS AMENDED BY P.L.226-2019,
- 3 SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
- 4 JULY 1, 2024]: Sec. 19. (a) When the parent of a student who is
- 5 enrolled in a public school ~~makes a~~ **provides** written ~~request,~~ **notice,**
- 6 the principal ~~may~~ **shall** allow the student to attend a school for
- 7 religious instruction that is conducted by a church, an association of
- 8 churches, or an association that is organized for religious instruction
- 9 and incorporated under Indiana law.
- 10 (b) ~~If a principal grants permission~~ **After receiving notice** under
- 11 subsection (a), the principal shall ~~specify~~ **work in a collaborative**
- 12 **manner with the parent or entity offering religious instruction to**
- 13 **provide assistance in determining** a period or periods, not to exceed
- 14 one hundred twenty (120) minutes in total in any week, for the student
- 15 to receive religious instruction. **An entity offering religious**
- 16 **instruction to a student as described in this subsection shall, as**
- 17 **applicable, work in a collaborative manner with the principal to**
- 18 **ensure the period or periods in which the student receives religious**
- 19 **instruction are the least disruptive to the instructional time (as**

1 **defined in IC 20-30-2-1) of the student.** The ~~permission notice~~ is
 2 valid only for the ~~school~~ year in which it is ~~granted.~~ ~~Decisions made by~~
 3 ~~a principal under this section may be reviewed by the superintendent.~~
 4 **provided.**

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

- 7 (1) shall maintain attendance records and allow inspection of
- 8 these records by attendance officers; and
- 9 (2) may not be supported, in whole or in part, by public funds.

10 (d) A student who attends a school for religious instruction under
 11 this section shall receive the same attendance credit that the student
 12 would receive for attendance in the public schools for the same length
 13 of time.

14 (e) A public secondary school may award academic credit to a
 15 student who attends religious instruction under this section if the
 16 governing body of the school corporation adopts a policy that allows
 17 the awarding of credit. A policy adopted under this subsection must
 18 provide the following:

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

- 26 (A) The number of hours of classroom instructional time.
- 27 (B) A review of the course syllabus that reflects the course
- 28 requirements and materials.
- 29 (C) Methods of assessment used in the course.
- 30 (D) Whether the course is taught by a licensed teacher.

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

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

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

(Reference is to EHB 1137 as reprinted February 27, 2024.)

Conference Committee Report
on
Engrossed House Bill 1137

Signed by:

Representative Culp
Chairperson

Senator Raatz

Representative Behning

Senator Doriot

House Conferees

Senate Conferees