

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2013**

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SENATE BILL 138

Short Title: Bible Study Elective. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Bingham (Primary Sponsor); Allran, Brock, Clark, Cook, Daniel, D. Davis, Goolsby, Hise, Hunt, Jackson, McLaurin, Newton, Parmon, Pate, Randleman, and Sanderson.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

February 27, 2013

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO OFFER TO STUDENTS IN GRADES NINE THROUGH TWELVE AN ELECTIVE COURSE IN BIBLE STUDY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 115C-81 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(g4) Bible Study Elective. – Local boards of education may offer to students in grades nine through 12 elective courses for credit on the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament), the New Testament, or a combination of the two subject matters. A student shall not be required to use a specific translation as the sole text of the Hebrew scriptures or New Testament and may use as the basic textbook a different translation of the Hebrew scriptures or New Testament approved by the local board of education or the principal of the student's school. A course offered by a local board of education in accordance with this subsection shall (i) follow federal and State law in maintaining religious neutrality and accommodating the diverse religious views, traditions, and perspectives of the students of the local school administrative unit and (ii) not endorse, favor or promote, or disfavor or show hostility toward any particular religion, nonreligious faith, or religious perspective. Courses may include the following instruction:

(1) Knowledge of biblical content, characters, poetry, and narratives that are prerequisites to understanding contemporary society and culture, including literature, art, music, mores, oratories, and public policies.

(2) Familiarity with the contents, history, style, structure, and societal influence of the Hebrew scriptures or the New Testament."

SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

