

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 1066

Introduced by Lippincott, 34; Brewer, 43; Clements, 2; Dorn, 30; Dover, 19; Erdman, 47; Halloran, 33; Hansen, 16; Hardin, 48; Holdcroft, 36; Lowe, 37; Murman, 38.

Read first time January 08, 2024

Committee: Education

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to education; to authorize a school board to
- 2 adopt a policy allowing a student in kindergarten through twelfth
- 3 grade to attend released time to participate in an elective course
- 4 in religious instruction conducted off school district property by a
- 5 sponsoring entity as prescribed; to provide powers and duties to
- 6 school boards and the State Board of Education; and to declare an
- 7 emergency.
- 8 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. (1) For purposes of this section:

2 (a) Released time means a period of time during the school day that
3 a student is allowed to participate in an elective course in religious
4 instruction conducted off school district property by a sponsoring
5 entity; and

6 (b) Sponsoring entity means a private entity that sponsors students
7 during released time for an elective course in religious instruction
8 pursuant to this section.

9 (2) A school board may adopt a policy, consistent with this section
10 and with any rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the State
11 Board of Education pursuant to this section, that authorizes a student in
12 kindergarten through twelfth grade to attend released time beginning in
13 the 2024-25 school year if the following are satisfied:

14 (a) The parent or guardian of the student gives written consent;

15 (b) The religious curriculum of the elective course does not
16 undeniably promote licentiousness or practices that are inconsistent with
17 school policy;

18 (c) The sponsoring entity maintains attendance records and makes
19 such records available to the school district the student attends;

20 (d) Transportation to and from the place of instruction is the
21 complete responsibility of the sponsoring entity, parent or guardian, or
22 student;

23 (e) The sponsoring entity makes provisions and assumes liability for
24 a student that attends released time; and

25 (f) No public funds are expended and no public school personnel or
26 employees are involved in providing the religious instruction.

27 (3) While attending released time, a student shall not be considered
28 absent from school. Released time for a student in middle school or high
29 school shall only be for one class period of up to one hour per semester.
30 No student may be released from a core curriculum course as prescribed by
31 the State Board of Education to attend released time.

1 (4)(a) The State Board of Education shall adopt minimum standards
2 for class attendance and criteria necessary for released time to qualify
3 for elective course credit for a course in religious instruction.

4 (b) A policy adopted by a school board pursuant to subsection (2) of
5 this section may authorize students to earn elective course credit for
6 participation in released time in the same manner as other elective
7 course credit is given in the school district and in a manner consistent
8 with the standards for elective course credit adopted by the State Board
9 of Education.

10 (5) The State Board of Education may adopt and promulgate rules and
11 regulations to carry out this section.

12 Sec. 2. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when
13 passed and approved according to law.