

As Introduced

**129th General Assembly
Regular Session
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H. B. No. 219

Representative McClain

Cosponsors: Representatives Huffman, Derickson, Ruhl, Newbold, Hayes

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A B I L L

To enact section 3313.6017 of the Revised Code to 1
permit public school students to attend and 2
receive credit for released time courses in 3
religious instruction conducted off school 4
property during regular school hours. 5

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3313.6017 of the Revised Code be 6
enacted to read as follows: 7

Sec. 3313.6017. (A) As used in this section, "released time" 8
means a period of time during which a student is excused from 9
school to attend a course in religious instruction conducted by a 10
private entity off school district property. 11

(B) A school district board of education may adopt a policy 12
that authorizes a student to be excused from school to attend a 13
released time course in religious instruction, provided that each 14
of the following applies: 15

(1) The student's parent or guardian gives written consent. 16

(2) The sponsoring entity maintains attendance records and 17
makes them available to the school district the student attends. 18

(3) Transportation to and from the place of instruction, 19

including transportation for students with disabilities, is the 20
complete responsibility of the sponsoring entity, parent, 21
guardian, or student. 22

(4) The sponsoring entity makes provisions for and assumes 23
liability for the student. 24

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

(6) The student assumes responsibility for any missed 27
schoolwork. 28

While in attendance in a released time course in religious 29
instruction, a student shall not be considered absent from school. 30
No student may be released from a core curriculum subject course 31
to attend a religious instruction course. 32

(C) A policy adopted under division (B) of this section may 33
authorize high school students to earn up to two units of high 34
school credit for the completion of a released time course in 35
religious instruction. In determining whether to award credit for 36
completion of such a course, the board shall evaluate the course 37
based on purely secular criteria that are substantially similar to 38
the criteria used to evaluate similar nonpublic high school 39
courses for purposes of determining whether to award credit for 40
such courses to a student transferring from a nonpublic high 41
school to a public high school. The decision to award credit for a 42
released time course of religious instruction shall be neutral to, 43
and shall not involve any test for, religious content or 44
denominational affiliation. 45

For purposes of this division, secular criteria may include, 46
but are not limited to, the following: 47

(1) The number of hours of classroom instruction time; 48

(2) A review of the course syllabus that reflects course 49

<u>requirements and materials used;</u>	50
<u>(3) The methods of assessment used in the course;</u>	51
<u>(4) The qualifications of the course instructor.</u>	52
<u>Notwithstanding division (C)(7) of section 3313.603 of the</u>	53
<u>Revised Code, high school credit awarded to a student for a</u>	54
<u>released time course in religious instruction may substitute for</u>	55
<u>the same amount of credit in subjects listed in that division.</u>	56