

STEPS THAT STUDENTS AND PARENTS CAN TAKE

1. Contact the school board members you know in your district. Ask them to read the information on this website. Provide them with a copy of:
 - a. the U.S. Department of Education’s “Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools” (“Prayer Guidance”),
 - b. the Texas Law (which includes the Model Policy as part of the law), and
 - c. any other documents from the website that you would like to provide.
2. The goal is to have the school board adopt the Model Policy for your school district.
3. Ask the school board members to put the matter of adopting the Model Policy on the official agenda for an upcoming school board meeting.
4. In talking with school board members, there are several factors that should motivate their action on this matter:
 - a. receipt of future federal funding by the school district depends upon the Board having policies that follow the U.S. Department of Education’s Prayer Guidance. Most schools do not currently have a policy that fully embraces the U.S. Department of Education’s Prayer Guidance,
 - b. if they are a Texas School Board, they need to adopt the Model Policy part of the Texas Act to be in compliance with the law,
 - c. the issue here is one of fairness to students of faith. The issue is one of non-discrimination against such students. The issue is one of government neutrality in matters of voluntary faith-based expression by students, and
 - d. the Model Policy does not promote prayer or other faith-based speech by students, it just protects such students from being threatened, disciplined or otherwise made to feel like “second-class citizens” for expressing a religious viewpoint on otherwise permissible topics and subjects.
5. Get others involved to support the effort, ask them to contact and/or write a letter to school board members asking them to vote for adoption, perhaps start a petition (having a copy of the Model Policy attached), and attend the school board meeting with as many supporters as possible. Get some students and parents lined up to speak at the school board meeting. This is an anti-discrimination measure, and that is how this should be approached.

6. In most States, during the school board meeting there is a period called the “Open Forum” in which individuals may address the school board for up to 5 minutes each on any subject. Unless the school board directs otherwise, the Open Forum will be the appropriate time for people to speak in favor of adoption of the Model Policy. Those speaking must sign up to speak shortly before the meeting begins. Remarks should focus on fairness, educational benefits, and other secular (non-religious) reasons that support adoption of the Model Policy.
7. If you do not live in Texas, talk to your legislators and ask them to introduce their own Bill in your state using the language of the Texas Bill as a template.