

**H. B. 2499**

(By Delegate Rodighiero)

[Introduced January 29, 2015; referred to the  
Committee on Education then the Judiciary.]

A BILL to amend and reenact §18-2-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to  
courses of instruction in all schools located within this state; and making available elective  
courses on the history of the old and new testaments of the bible.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

That §18-2-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted  
to read as follows:

**ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

**§18-2-9. Required courses of instruction; violation and penalty.**

(a) In all public, private, parochial and denominational schools located within this state, there  
shall be given prior to the completion of the eighth grade at least one year of instruction in the history  
of the State of West Virginia. The schools shall require regular courses of instruction by the  
completion of the twelfth grade in the history of the United States, in civics, in the Constitution of  
the United States, and in the government of the State of West Virginia for the purpose of teaching,

1 fostering and perpetuating the ideals, principles and spirit of political and economic democracy in  
2 America and increasing the knowledge of the organization and machinery of the government of the  
3 United States and of the State of West Virginia and making available, as an elective course of  
4 instruction, the history of the old and new testaments of the bible. The state board shall, with the  
5 advice of the state superintendent, prescribe the courses of study covering these subjects for the  
6 public schools. It shall be the duty of the officials or boards having authority over the respective  
7 private, parochial and denominational schools to prescribe courses of study for the schools under  
8 their control and supervision similar to those required for the public schools. To further such study,  
9 every high school student eligible by age for voter registration shall be afforded the opportunity to  
10 register to vote pursuant to section twenty-two, article two, chapter three of this code.

11 (b) The state board shall cause to be taught in all of the public schools of this state the subject  
12 of health education, including instruction in any of the grades six through twelve as considered  
13 appropriate by the county board, on: (1) The prevention, transmission and spread of acquired  
14 immune deficiency syndrome and other sexually transmitted diseases; (2) substance abuse, including  
15 the nature of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, tobacco products, and other potentially harmful drugs,  
16 with special instruction as to their effect upon the human system and upon society in general; (3) the  
17 importance of healthy eating and physical activity to maintaining healthy weight; and (4) education  
18 concerning CPR and First Aid. The course curriculum requirements and materials for the instruction  
19 shall be adopted by the state board by rule in consultation with the Department of Health and Human  
20 Resources. The state board shall prescribe a standardized health education assessment to be  
21 administered within health education classes to measure student health knowledge and program  
22 effectiveness.

1           An opportunity shall be afforded to the parent or guardian of a child subject to instruction  
2 in the prevention, transmission and spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome and other  
3 sexually transmitted diseases to examine the course curriculum requirements and materials to be  
4 used in the instruction. The parent or guardian may exempt the child from participation in the  
5 instruction by giving notice to that effect in writing to the school principal.

6           (c) Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and,  
7 upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not exceeding \$10 for each violation, and each week during  
8 which there is a violation shall constitute a separate offense. If the person so convicted occupy a  
9 position in connection with the public schools, that person shall automatically be removed from that  
10 position and shall be ineligible for reappointment to that or a similar position for the period of one  
11 year.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to make available elective courses of instruction in all schools located within this state on the history of the old and new testaments of the bible.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.