



HB 0243

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to education; authorizing individual district school boards by resolution to allow invocation or benediction at specified secondary school-related events; providing legislative intent; providing severability; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Any district school board is authorized to adopt a resolution allowing the use of an inspirational message, including an invocation or a benediction, at a secondary school commencement exercise or a secondary school-related noncompulsory student assembly. The resolution must provide:

(1) That the use of an invocation or a benediction shall be at the discretion of the students.

(2) That an invocation or a benediction, if used, shall be given by a student volunteer.

(3) That an invocation or a benediction shall be nonsectarian and nonproselytizing in nature.

(4) That school personnel shall not participate in, or otherwise influence the exercise of the discretion of the students in, the determination of whether to use an invocation or a benediction.

Section 2. It is the purpose of this act to provide for the solemnization and memorialization of secondary school events and ceremonies, and this act is not intended to advance or endorse any religion or religious belief.

Section 3. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the



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31 invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of  
32 the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision  
33 or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are  
34 declared severable.

35       Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2003.