

By the Committee on Judiciary; and Senators Siplin and Evers

590-01845-12

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to education; authorizing district
3 school boards to adopt resolutions that allow
4 inspirational messages, including, but not limited to,
5 prayers of invocation or benediction, at secondary
6 school events; providing requirements to be included
7 in the resolution; providing legislative intent;
8 providing for severability; providing an effective
9 date.

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

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13 Section 1. Any district school board may adopt a resolution
14 allowing the use of an inspirational message, including, but not
15 limited to, prayers of invocation or benediction, at secondary
16 school commencement exercises or any other noncompulsory student
17 assembly. The resolution must provide that:

18 (1) The use of an inspirational message is at the
19 discretion of the student government.

20 (2) All inspirational messages will be given by student
21 volunteers, and the content of any inspirational message will be
22 at the discretion of the student volunteer.

23 (3) School personnel may not:

24 (a) Participate in, or otherwise influence any student in,
25 determining whether to use a prayer of invocation or benediction
26 as an inspirational message;

27 (b) Participate in selecting which student volunteer will
28 give an inspirational message; or

29 (c) Influence the content of an inspirational message.

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

34 Section 3. If any provision of this act or its application
35 to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity
36 does not affect other provisions or applications of the act
37 which can be given effect without the invalid provision or
38 application, and to this end the provisions of this act are
39 severable.

40 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.