

By Senator Baxley

12-00745B-20

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to moments of silence in public
3 schools; amending s. 1003.45, F.S.; providing
4 legislative findings; requiring that public school
5 principals require teachers to set aside time for a
6 moment of silence at the beginning of each school day;
7 specifying the duration of the required moment of
8 silence; prohibiting teachers from making suggestions
9 as to the nature of any reflection that a student may
10 engage in during the moment of silence; deleting a
11 provision authorizing district school boards to
12 provide a brief period of silent prayer or meditation;
13 requiring certain teachers to encourage parents to
14 discuss the moment of silence with their children and
15 to make suggestions as to the best use of this time;
16 providing an effective date.

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

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20 Section 1. Section 1003.45, Florida Statutes, is amended to
21 read:

22 1003.45 Permitting study of the Bible and religion;
23 requiring a moment of silence ~~permitting brief meditation~~
24 ~~period.~~—

25 (1) The district school board may install in the public
26 schools in the district a secular program of education
27 including, but not limited to, an objective study of the Bible
28 and of religion.

29 (2) The Legislature finds that in the hectic society of

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30 today, too few persons are able to experience even a moment of
31 quiet reflection before plunging headlong into the activities of
32 daily life. Young persons are particularly affected by the
33 absence of an opportunity for a moment of quiet reflection. The
34 Legislature finds that our youth, and society as a whole, would
35 be well served if students in the public schools were afforded a
36 moment of silence at the beginning of each school day.

37 (3) The principal of each public school shall require
38 teachers in first-period classrooms in all grades to set aside
39 at least 1 minute, but ~~district school board may provide that a~~
40 ~~brief period,~~ not more than to exceed 2 minutes, daily, for a
41 moment ~~the purpose~~ of silence, during which students may not
42 interfere with other students' participation. A teacher may not
43 make suggestions as to the nature of any reflection that a
44 student may engage in during the moment of silence ~~silent prayer~~
45 ~~or meditation be set aside at the start of each school day or~~
46 ~~each school week in the public schools in the district.~~

47 (4) Each such teacher shall encourage parents to discuss
48 the moment of silence with their children and to make
49 suggestions as to the best use of this time.

50 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.