

By the Committee on Judiciary; and Senators Baxley and Albritton

590-03551-21

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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 certain teachers to set aside time  
6           for a moment of silence at the beginning of each  
7           school day; specifying the duration of the required  
8           moment of silence; prohibiting teachers from making  
9           suggestions as to the nature of any reflection that a  
10          student may engage in during the moment of silence;  
11          deleting a provision authorizing district school  
12          boards to provide a brief period of silent prayer or  
13          meditation; requiring certain teachers to encourage  
14          parents or guardians to discuss with their children  
15          how to best use the moment of silence; providing an  
16          effective date.

17  
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 today's hectic society

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30 too few persons are able to experience even a moment of quiet  
31 reflection before plunging headlong into the activities of daily  
32 life. Young persons are particularly affected by the absence of  
33 an opportunity for a moment of quiet reflection. The Legislature  
34 finds that our youth, and society as a whole, would be well  
35 served if students in the public schools were afforded a moment  
36 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 first-period classroom teacher shall encourage  
48 parents or guardians to discuss with their children how to best  
49 use the moment of silence.

50 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.