

By Senator Grall

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to school chaplains; creating s.
3 1012.461, F.S.; authorizing school districts and
4 charter schools to adopt a policy to allow volunteer
5 school chaplains; establishing the requirements for
6 such policy; requiring district school boards and
7 charter school governing boards to assign specified
8 duties to such volunteer school chaplains; requiring
9 volunteer school chaplains to meet certain background
10 screening requirements; requiring each district school
11 board and charter school governing board to vote by a
12 specified date on the adoption of a volunteer school
13 chaplain policy; requiring school districts that adopt
14 volunteer school chaplain policies to publish certain
15 information on their websites; amending s. 1012.465,
16 F.S.; providing background screening requirements for
17 volunteer school chaplains; providing an effective
18 date.

19
20 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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22 Section 1. Section 1012.461, Florida Statutes, is created
23 to read:

24 1012.461 School chaplains.—

25 (1) Each school district or charter school may adopt a
26 policy to authorize volunteer school chaplains to provide
27 supports, services, and programs to students as assigned by the
28 district school board or charter school governing board. The
29 school district or charter school policy must, at a minimum:

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30 (a) Describe the supports, services, or programs that
31 volunteer school chaplains may be assigned;

32 (b) Require that principals of schools with a volunteer
33 school chaplain inform all parents of the availability of such
34 supports, services, and programs; and

35 (c) Require written parental consent before a student
36 participates in or receives supports, services, and programs
37 provided by a volunteer school chaplain. Parents must be
38 permitted to select a volunteer school chaplain from the list
39 provided by the school district, which must include the
40 chaplain's religious affiliation, if any.

41 (2) Each volunteer school chaplain must meet the
42 requirements of s. 1012.465.

43 (3) No later than January 1, 2025, each district school
44 board and charter school governing board shall vote on whether
45 to adopt a policy authorizing the school district or charter
46 school to allow volunteer school chaplains.

47 (4) Any school district that adopts a volunteer school
48 chaplain policy shall publish the list of volunteer school
49 chaplains, including any religious affiliation, on the school
50 district's website.

51 Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 1012.465, Florida
52 Statutes, is amended to read:

53 1012.465 Background screening requirements for certain
54 noninstructional school district employees, ~~and~~ contractors, and
55 volunteer school chaplains.-

56 (1) Except as provided in s. 1012.467 or s. 1012.468,
57 noninstructional school district employees, ~~or~~ contractual
58 personnel, or volunteer school chaplains who are permitted

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59 access on school grounds when students are present, who have
60 direct contact with students or who have access to or control of
61 school funds must meet the screening requirements of s. 1012.32.
62 Contractual personnel shall include any vendor, individual, or
63 entity under contract with a school or the school board.

64 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.