

CHAPTER 2021-89

House Bill No. 529

An act relating to moments of silence in public schools; amending s. 1003.45, F.S.; providing legislative findings; requiring that public school principals require certain teachers to set aside time for a moment of silence at the beginning of each school day; specifying the duration of the required moment of silence; prohibiting teachers from making suggestions as to the nature of any reflection that a student may engage in during the moment of silence; deleting a provision authorizing district school boards to provide a brief period of silent prayer or meditation; requiring certain teachers to encourage parents or guardians to discuss the moment of silence with their children and to make suggestions as to the best use of this time; providing an effective date.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(4) Each first-period classroom teacher shall encourage parents or guardians to discuss the moment of silence with their children and to make suggestions as to the best use of this time.

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

Approved by the Governor June 14, 2021.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 14, 2021.