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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Jacob Oliva

DATE: August 13, 2021

SUBJECT: House Bill 529 – Moments of Silence in Public Schools

Contact Information:
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DPS: 2021-118

The Legislature passed House Bill 529 and it became law on July 1, 2021. It amends section 1003.45, Florida Statutes, *Permitting study of the Bible and religion; requiring a moment of silence*. The bill text can be found at <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2021/529/BillText/er/PDF> and a bill summary is available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7749/urlt/21LegReviewBook.pdf>.

The Legislature finds the following:

- “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.”
- “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.”

The bill mandates each public school principal to require teachers in first-period classrooms in all grades to set aside one to two minutes daily for a moment of silence. 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. Each first-period teacher shall encourage parents or guardians to: 1) discuss the moment of silence with their children, and 2) make suggestions as to the best use of this time.

JO/he

JACOB OLIVA
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS