

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4346

By Delegate Holstein

[Introduced January 10, 2024; Referred to
the Committee on Education then Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §18-2-44, relating to requiring a moment of silence at the beginning of each
 3 school day; providing legislative findings; forbidding teachers from making suggestions as
 4 to the nature of the reflection that students may engage in during the moment of silence;
 5 and encouraging parents to discuss with their children what they should consider during
 6 the moment of silence.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

§18-2-44. Requiring a moment of silence.

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

7 (b) The principal of each public school shall require teachers at the beginning of the day in
 8 all grades to set aside at least one minute, but not more than two minutes, daily for a moment of
 9 silence, during which students may not interfere with other students' participation. A teacher may
 10 not make suggestions as to the nature of any reflection that a student may engage in during the
 11 moment of silence.

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

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide for a moment of silence at the beginning of each school day. The bill prevents teachers from being able to discuss the substance of what children engage in during the moment of silence. Finally, the bill encourages parents to discuss with their children the substance of their use of time during the moment of silence.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.