



## 96TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2009 and 2010

SB1658

Introduced 2/19/2009, by Sen. Kimberly A. Lightford

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 20/0.01	from Ch. 122, par. 770
105 ILCS 20/0.05 new	
105 ILCS 20/1	from Ch. 122, par. 771
105 ILCS 20/5	

Amends the Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act. Changes the short title of the Act to the Student Silent Reflection Act. Adds General Assembly findings. Provides that the period of silence that a teacher is required to observe must not exceed one minute. Provides that this period shall be an opportunity for silent reflection or meditation (instead of an opportunity for silent prayer or for silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day). Allows students to reflect or meditate on any topic of their choosing. Provides that, during the period of silence, students shall remain seated and must not engage in any activity that distracts or interferes with other students. Removes a caption to a Section concerning the right of a student to the free exercise of religion. Effective immediately.

LRB096 11092 NHT 21428 b

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Silent Reflection and Student Prayer Act is  
5 amended by changing Sections 0.01, 1, and 5 and adding Section  
6 0.05 as follows:

7 (105 ILCS 20/0.01) (from Ch. 122, par. 770)

8 Sec. 0.01. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
9 Student Silent Reflection ~~and Student Prayer~~ Act.

10 (Source: P.A. 92-832, eff. 1-1-03.)

11 (105 ILCS 20/0.05 new)

12 Sec. 0.05. The General Assembly finds that it is beneficial  
13 to students to have a brief period of silence at the beginning  
14 of the school day to collect themselves as they begin their  
15 day, to contemplate the anticipated activities of the day, and  
16 to reflect or meditate about any topic of their choosing to  
17 provide a brief respite from other activities and sounds. The  
18 General Assembly recognizes that students have a First  
19 Amendment right to pray silently during any part of the school  
20 day; however, this Act is not intended and may not be used to  
21 encourage or discourage students from using the period of  
22 silence for silent prayer or any other reflection or

1 meditation.

2 (105 ILCS 20/1) (from Ch. 122, par. 771)

3 Sec. 1. In each public school classroom, the teacher in  
4 charge shall observe a brief period of silence, not to exceed  
5 one minute, with the participation of all the pupils therein  
6 assembled at the opening of every school day. This period shall  
7 not be conducted as a religious exercise but shall be an  
8 opportunity ~~for silent prayer or~~ for silent reflection or  
9 meditation ~~on the anticipated activities of the day.~~ Students  
10 may reflect or meditate on any topic of their choosing. During  
11 the period of silence, students shall remain seated and must  
12 not engage in any activity that distracts or interferes with  
13 other students.

14 (Source: P.A. 95-680, eff. 10-11-07.)

15 (105 ILCS 20/5)

16 Sec. 5. ~~Student prayer.~~ In order that the right of every  
17 student to the free exercise of religion is guaranteed within  
18 the public schools and that each student has the freedom to not  
19 be subject to pressure from the State either to engage in or to  
20 refrain from religious observation on public school grounds,  
21 students in the public schools may voluntarily engage in  
22 individually initiated, non-disruptive prayer that, consistent  
23 with the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses of the United  
24 States and Illinois Constitutions, is not sponsored, promoted,

1 or endorsed in any manner by the school or any school employee.

2 (Source: P.A. 92-832, eff. 1-1-03.)

3 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
4 becoming law.