

1 HB1  
2 156664-4  
3 By Representatives Butler, Rowe, Williams (D), Farley,  
4 Sanderford, Rich, Whorton (R), Wilcox and Sessions  
5 RFD: Education Policy  
6 First Read: 03-MAR-15  
7 PFD: 01/15/2015



1 the ~~district~~ local board of education treats a student's  
2 voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an  
3 otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against  
4 the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the  
5 student on an otherwise permissible subject.

6 Section 3. Students may express their beliefs about  
7 religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral  
8 assignments free from discrimination based on the religious  
9 content of their submissions. Homework and classroom  
10 assignments shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of  
11 substance and relevance and against other legitimate  
12 pedagogical concerns identified by the ~~school-district~~ local  
13 board of education. Students may not be penalized or rewarded  
14 on account of the religious content of their work. If an  
15 assignment requires a student's viewpoint to be expressed in  
16 coursework, artwork, or other written or oral assignments, a  
17 public school may not penalize or reward a student on the  
18 basis of religious content or a religious viewpoint. In such  
19 an assignment, a student's academic work that expresses a  
20 religious viewpoint shall be evaluated based on ordinary  
21 academic standards of substance and relevance to the course  
22 curriculum or requirements of the coursework or assignment.

23 Section 4. (a) Students in public schools may pray  
24 or engage in religious activities or religious expression  
25 before, during, and after the school day in the same manner  
26 and to the same extent that students may engage in  
27 nonreligious activities or expression. Students may organize

1 prayer groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole"  
2 gatherings, or other religious gatherings before, during, and  
3 after school to the same extent that students are permitted to  
4 organize other noncurricular student activities and groups.  
5 Religious groups shall be given the same access to school  
6 facilities for assembling as is given to other noncurricular  
7 groups without discrimination based on the religious content  
8 of the students' expression. If student groups that meet for  
9 nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce  
10 meetings of the groups, the ~~school district~~ local board of  
11 education may not discriminate against groups that meet for  
12 prayer or other religious speech. A ~~school district~~ local  
13 board of education may disclaim school sponsorship of  
14 noncurricular groups and events in a manner that neither  
15 favors nor disfavors groups that meet to engage in prayer or  
16 religious speech.

17 (b) Students in public schools may wear clothing,  
18 accessories and jewelry that display religious messages or  
19 religious symbols in the same manner and to the same extent  
20 that other types of clothing, accessories and jewelry that  
21 display messages or symbols are permitted.

22 Section 5. In order to ensure that a ~~school district~~  
23 local board of education does not discriminate against a  
24 student's publicly stated voluntary expression of a religious  
25 viewpoint, if any, and to eliminate any actual or perceived  
26 affirmative school sponsorship or attribution to the ~~school~~  
27 district local board of education of a student's expression of

1 a religious viewpoint, if any, each ~~school district~~ local  
2 board of education shall adopt a policy governing voluntary  
3 religious expression in its schools.

4 Section 6. This act shall not be construed to  
5 authorize this state or any of its political subdivisions to  
6 do either of the following:

7 (1) Require any person to participate in prayer or  
8 in any other religious activity.

9 (2) Violate the constitutional rights of any person.

10 Section 7. This act shall not be construed to limit  
11 the authority of any public school to do any of the following:

12 (1) Maintain order and discipline on the campus of  
13 the public school in a content and viewpoint neutral manner.

14 (2) Protect the safety of students, employees, and  
15 visitors of the public school.

16 (3) Adopt and enforce policies and procedures  
17 regarding student speech at school provided that the policies  
18 and procedures do not violate the rights of students as  
19 guaranteed by the United States and Alabama constitutions and  
20 laws.

21 Section 8. This act shall apply to all religions. It  
22 shall not be construed as establishing a particular religion  
23 nor as prohibiting the free exercise of a particular religion.

24 Section 9. This act shall apply beginning with the  
25 2015-16 school year.

1                   Section 10. This act shall become effective on the  
2           first day of the third month following its passage and  
3           approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.

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House of Representatives

Read for the first time and re-  
ferred to the House of Representa-  
tives committee on Education Policy  
..... . . . . 03-MAR-15

Read for the second time and placed  
on the calendar 2 amendments ..... . . . . 05-MAR-15

Read for the third time and passed  
as amended..... . . . . 11-MAR-15

Yeas 80, Nays 11, Abstains 6

Jeff Woodard  
Clerk