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Saving Lives Camarillo (A Quiet Moment)
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Dear Saving Lives Camarillo (A Quiet Moment),

Thank you for coming to NCSL with your request for research and information. Below you will find a summary of the states where statute either requires or permits public schools to observe a moment of silence during the school day.

At least 34 states address moments of silence in legislation. At least 14 states require that all public school classrooms observe a moment of silence during the school day, usually at the beginning of the day. One state delegates authority to the state education agency to require a moment of silence. At least 19 states permit teachers, schools, or school boards to offer or require a moment of silence, meditation, or prayer. The details of this legislation vary and are summarized below:

- [Alabama](#) – **Requires** teachers or administrators to conduct a one-minute period of quiet reflection at the beginning of each school day, athletic event, or graduation ceremony. All students must remain silent during this period; statute specifies that the period is not intended as a religious exercise.
- [Arizona](#) – **Delegates power** to the State Governing Board of Education to **require** teachers to conduct a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of the school day. If required, all students must remain silent during this period.
- [Arkansas](#) – **Requires** schools to observe a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period, and are permitted to reflect, pray, or engage in a silent activity.
- [Connecticut](#) – **Requires** school boards to provide an opportunity for quiet reflection at the beginning of each school day. Students and teachers who wish to participate may observe that time period in silent meditation.
- [Delaware](#) – **Permits** schools to offer up to a two-minute period of silence during the first period of each school day to be used according to students' individual conscience. If offered, no other activities may take place during the period of silence.
- [Florida](#) – **Permits** school boards to offer up to a two-minute period of silence at the start of each school day or each school week for the purpose of silent prayer or meditation.
- [Georgia](#) – **Requires** teachers to conduct up to a one-minute period of quiet reflection at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period; statute specifies that the period is not intended as a religious exercise.
- [Illinois](#) – **Requires** teachers to observe a brief period of silence at the beginning of each school day as an opportunity for silent prayer or reflection. All students must remain silent during this period; statute specifies that the period is not to be conducted as a religious exercise.

- [Indiana](#) – **Requires** school boards to establish a moment of silence to be observed each school day in the classroom or on school grounds. All students must remain silent during this period; students may meditate, pray, or engage in other silent activity according to their choice.
- [Kansas](#) – **Permits** teachers to observe a period of silence at the beginning of the school day. If observed, all students must remain silent; statute specifies that the period is not to be conducted as a religious exercise but as an opportunity for silent prayer or reflection.
- [Kentucky](#) – **Permits** teachers to observe a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of each school day.
- [Louisiana](#) – **Permits** schools to offer a period of silence at the start of each school day. If observed, students and teachers who wish to do so may observe time in silent prayer or meditation. Statute specifies that the period of silence shall not be promoted as a religious exercise.
- [Maryland](#) – **Permits** principals and teachers to require students to participate in a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of each school day. During this period of silence, students or teachers are permitted to pray or read scripture.
- [Massachusetts](#) – **Requires** teachers to observe a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of each school day for personal thoughts. All students must remain silent during this period.
- [Maine](#) – **Permits** school boards to require a period of silence at the start of each school day for reflection or meditation. If required, all students must remain silent.
- [Michigan](#) – **Permits** school boards to offer an opportunity for silent meditation during the school day for students who wish to participate.
- [Minnesota](#) – **Permits** schools to observe a moment of silence.
- [Mississippi](#) – **Permits** teachers and administrators to allow voluntary participation by students in prayer.
- [Montana](#) – **Permits** teachers and administrators to open the school day with prayer or readings from religious materials.
- [Nevada](#) – **Requires** school districts to set aside a period of silence for voluntary meditation, prayer, or reflection at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period.
- [New Hampshire](#) – **Permits** schools to offer up to five minutes prior to the beginning of instruction each day for students who wish to participate in the free exercise of religion to do so. [Separate statute](#) permits school districts to authorize the voluntary recitation of the Lord’s Prayer in public elementary schools.
- [New Mexico](#) – **Permits** students to voluntarily engage in student-initiated moments of silent meditation.
- [New York](#) – **Permits** teachers to conduct periods of meditation at the beginning of each school day, during which all students must remain silent. Permits school boards to direct teachers to conduct such periods. Statute specifies that the period of silence is not intended as a religious exercise, but as an opportunity for silent meditation or silent reflection.
- [North Carolina](#) – **Permits** school boards to adopt policies that allow teachers to require students to observe a one-minute moment of silence at the beginning of each school day. If observed, all students must remain silent and the period of silence must be unstructured and free of influence from any sources.
- [North Dakota](#) – **Permits** school boards to allow teachers to require students to observe a minute of silence for meditation, reflection, or prayer at the beginning of each school day.
- [Ohio](#) – **Permits** school boards to provide for a moment of silence each school day for prayer, reflection, or meditation upon a moral, philosophical, or patriotic theme. Students may not be required to participate.
- [Oklahoma](#) - **Requires** school boards to ensure that schools observe a minute of silence at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period and may meditate, pray, or engage in other silent activity. Attorney General is authorized to enforce the requirement.
- [Pennsylvania](#) – **Permits** teachers to conduct a period of silent prayer or meditation at the beginning of each school day. Permits school boards to require such observation. If observed, all students must remain silent; statute specifies that the period of silence is not to be conducted as a religious exercise.
- [Rhode Island](#) – **Requires** teachers to observe up to a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period.

- [South Carolina](#) – **Requires** schools to provide for a mandatory minute of silence at the beginning of each school day.
- [Tennessee](#) – **Requires** schools and teachers to observe a one-minute period of silence at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period and teachers are not permitted to suggest action for students to take during this time.
- [Texas](#) – **Requires** school boards and charter school governing boards to provide for a minute of silence at the beginning of each school day. All students must remain silent during this period, and may reflect, pray, or meditate.
- [Utah](#) – **Permits** teachers to provide a period of silence each day.
- [Virginia](#) – **Requires** school boards to establish a one-minute period of silence in each classroom during each school day. All students must remain silent during this period and may meditate, pray, or engage in other silent activities.

I hope you find this information useful. Please contact NCSL if you have further questions regarding state legislation or if there is more information we can provide.

Sincerely,

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National Conference of State Legislatures

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