

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
89th General Assembly
First Extraordinary Session, 2013

As Engrossed: H3/4/15
A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1273

By: Representative Harris

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE VOLUNTARY STUDENT
EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL
DISTRICT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO PROVIDE FOR THE VOLUNTARY STUDENT
EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS IN A
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 16, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-16-146. Student religious liberties.

(a) A public school district shall not:

(1) Discriminate against a student or a parent of a student on the basis of the student's religious viewpoint or religious expression; or

(2) Prohibit a student from expressing a religious viewpoint or belief in the student's coursework, artwork, or other written or oral assignments.

(b) A public school district shall:

(1) Allow a student to voluntarily express a religious viewpoint in his or her coursework, artwork, and other written or oral assignments; and

(2) Evaluate the coursework, artwork, or assignment according to ordinary academic standards, relevance to the assignment, and whether or not the coursework, artwork, or assignment meets the requirements of the assigned task.



(c) A student in a public school may:

(1) Voluntarily express a religious viewpoint in his or her coursework, artwork, or other written or oral assignments;

(2) Organize, attend, and participate in prayer groups, religious clubs, or religious gatherings under § 6-21-201 et seq.; and

(3) Wear clothing, accessories, or jewelry associated with a sincerely held religious belief and that complies with the school uniform policy, if applicable, under § 6-18-102.

(d) A public school may take an action contrary to this section if the public school documents a circumstance that:

(1) Causes a material and substantial disruption to a class or school activity; or

(2) Constitutes infringement on the rights of other students.

/s/Harris