A bill to be entitled
An act relating to religious expression in public
schools; providing a short title; prohibiting a school
district from discriminating against students,
parents, or school personnel on the basis of religious
viewpoints or expression; prohibiting penalty or
reward for a student's religious expression in
coursework, artwork, or other specified assignments;
authorizing a student to wear clothing, accessories,
and jewelry displaying religious messages or symbols;
authorizing a student to pray or engage in religious
activities or expression; authorizing a student to
organize prayer groups, religious clubs, and other
religious gatherings; prohibiting a school district
from preventing school personnel from participating in
voluntary, student-initiated religious activities on
school grounds under specified circumstances;
requiring that a school district provide religious
groups with equal access to school facilities;
authorizing religious groups to advertise or announce
meetings in the same manner and to the same extent as
secular groups; requiring that a school district adopt
a limited public forum policy and deliver a disclaimer
at school events; requiring that the Department of
Education develop and publish a model policy regarding
a limited public forum and religious expression;
requiring that each district school board adopt and
implement such model policy; providing an effective
date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Religious expression in public schools.—
(1) This section may be cited as the "Florida Student and
School Personnel Religious Liberties Act."
(2) A school district may not discriminate against a
student, parent, or school personnel on the basis of a religious
viewpoint or religious expression. A school district shall treat
a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint on an
otherwise permissible subject in the same manner that the school
district treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular
viewpoint.
(3)(a) A student may express his or her religious beliefs
in coursework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments
free from discrimination. A student's homework and classroom
assignments shall be evaluated, regardless of their religious
content, based on expected academic standards relating to the
course curriculum and requirements. A student may not be
penalized or rewarded based on the religious content of his or
her work if the coursework, artwork, or other written or oral
assignments require a student's viewpoint to be expressed.

(b) A student may wear clothing, accessories, and jewelry that display a religious message or symbol in the same manner and to the same extent that secular types of clothing, accessories, and jewelry that display messages or symbols are permitted to be worn.

(4)(a) A student may pray or engage in religious activities or religious expression before, during, and after the school day in the same manner and to the same extent that a student may engage in secular activities or expression. A student may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, and other religious gatherings before, during, and after the school day in the same manner and to the same extent that a student is permitted to organize secular activities and groups.

(b) 1. A school district may not prevent school personnel from participating in religious activities on school grounds that are initiated by students at reasonable times before or after the school day if such activities are voluntary and do not conflict with the responsibilities or assignments of such personnel.

2. A school district shall comply with the federal requirements in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee on the basis of religion.

(c) A school district shall give a religious group access
to the same school facilities for assembling as given to secular
groups without discrimination based on the religious content of
the group's expression. A group that meets for prayer or other
religious speech may advertise or announce its meetings in the
same manner and to the same extent that a secular group may
advertise or announce its meetings.

(5)(a) A school district shall adopt a policy that
establishes a limited public forum for student speakers at any
school event at which a student is to speak publicly. The
limited public forum policy shall require the school district
to:

1. Provide the forum in a manner that does not
discriminate against a student's voluntary expression of a
religious viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject;

2. Provide a method based on neutral criteria for the
selection of student speakers at school events, activities, and
graduation ceremonies;

3. Ensure that a student speaker does not engage in
obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech; and

4. State in written or oral form that the student's speech
does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or
expression of the school district.

(b) The school district shall deliver the disclaimer
required in subparagraph (a)4. at all graduation events and any
other event at which a student speaks publicly.
(c) Student expression of a religious viewpoint on an otherwise
permissible subject may not be excluded from the limited public forum.

(6) The Department of Education shall develop a model policy regarding a limited public forum and voluntary expression of religious viewpoints by students and school personnel in public schools pursuant to this section. The department shall publish the model policy on its website. Each district school board shall adopt and implement the department's model policy.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.