



Proposal for a Quiet Start to the School Day Gains New Attention

MINEOLA, NY, UNITED STATES, December 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- RABBI ANCHELLE PERL CALLS FOR CONSIDERATION OF A MOMENT OF SILENCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"A simple, content-neutral practice that may strengthen student well-being."

Rabbi Anchelle Perl is encouraging Long Island public schools to consider adopting a daily Moment of Silence, a concept he discussed in his recent Newsday guest essay (Newsday, Dec. 4, 2025, Page A25).

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/dhrt7l28j3fxi54xwhihv/Newsday-Guest-Essay-by-Rabbi-Perl.pdf?rlkey=vr4pvq874j8j1ftyippukxvj&st=yihyg6j3&dl=0>

Rabbi Perl notes that today's students often experience significant "digital, political, and emotional noise," and suggests that a brief period of quiet may help them begin their day with calm and focus.

"Children rarely get a moment to simply pause," he said. "A Moment of Silence is not silence for its own sake, but an opportunity for students to collect their thoughts."

He acknowledged that community questions and concerns about introducing any new activity into the school day are valid and deserve careful consideration. "Whenever something new is proposed, people naturally ask whether it will be inclusive and respectful of all families. Those questions are important," he said.

Reflection Practices Already Exist in Schools

Rabbi Perl observes that many Nassau County districts already offer mindfulness corners, quiet rooms, breathing exercises, SEL lessons, restorative circles, and wellness programs. He views a Moment of Silence as an additional option within the broader landscape of reflection-based practices.

He poses the question: "If guided mindfulness is widely accepted, why is a content-neutral Moment of Silence viewed differently?"

He emphasizes that a Moment of Silence: instructs no one on what to think, does not involve prayer, imposes no ideology, and invites each student to reflect in a way consistent with their family's values.

Supporting Student Well-Being

Given rising concerns about anxiety, overstimulation, and distraction among young people, Rabbi Perl suggests that a brief pause may help students ground themselves before the school day begins.

"A Moment of Silence offers students time to breathe, reset, and reflect—whether on kindness, gratitude, responsibility, or simply on preparing for the day ahead," he said. "It is not instruction; it is a pause."

Addressing Community Concerns

Rabbi Perl acknowledges that some community members worry such a practice might raise constitutional questions or appear religious in nature.

"These concerns reflect genuine care for maintaining appropriate boundaries," he noted.

He points out that the United States Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of a neutral Moment of Silence, provided schools do not direct students on how to use the time.

"The school provides the silence; the student determines the meaning," he said, "This approach respects all backgrounds and beliefs."

A Calming Practice in a Complex Environment

With schools managing numerous sensitive issues—including recent legal disputes over district policies—Rabbi Perl views a Moment of Silence as a potentially unifying practice.

"It is not political or ideological," he said. "It is simply a shared pause at the start of the day."

Potential Benefits

Rabbi Perl notes that similar reflection practices have been associated with improvements in focus, behavior, emotional regulation, and overall readiness for learning. "It can offer a steady beginning to the school day," he said.

Invitation for Dialogue. Rabbi Perl emphasizes that the proposal is not prescriptive. "It is an invitation to consider whether a brief period of quiet reflection could support student well-being," he said. "In a world filled with constant noise, one minute of silence may offer students a useful tool."

He encourages school leaders, parents, and community members to explore the idea collaboratively. "Let us give thoughtful consideration to this option," Rabbi Perl concluded.

Rabbi Anchelle Perl is the Director of Chabad of Mineola, Long Island, and serves as a chaplain for the Nassau County Correctional Center and NYU Langone Long Island Hospital. He is a commissioner on the Nassau County Human Rights Commission and hosts the weekly "Jewish Talk" program on 90.3 WHPC.

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