



# DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF PASCO COUNTY

Kurt S. Browning, Superintendent of Schools

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Office For Teaching & Learning  
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Memorandum  
OTL-SS-002-15

DATE: September 9, 2014

TO: All Principals

FROM: Tina Stavrou, K-12 Social Studies, Office for Teaching and Learning *TSK*  
Vanessa Hilton, Director, Office for Teaching and Learning *VH*

SUBJECT: Constitution Day, September 17, Justice Teaching, and Celebrate Freedom Week,  
September 22-26, 2014

As a reminder, federal legislation (Federal Public L. 108-447) requires educational institutions to recognize Constitution Day in their instructional program on September 17 each year by commemorating the original signing of the *U.S. Constitution* on September 17, 1787. As the foundation of our nation, the *Constitution* provides the framework of government for our country through its seven articles and further outlines citizens' rights in Amendments I-XXVII.

**This legislation is in addition to the state mandate for Celebrate Freedom Week (dedicated to the *Declaration of Independence*), which will be observed September 22-26, 2014.**

Florida Statute 1003.421 designates the last full week of classes in September as Celebrate Freedom Week. The statute directs schools to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country, as well as the values on which this country was founded. Celebrate Freedom Week must include an in-depth study of the intent, meaning, and importance of the *Declaration of Independence*. In order to focus attention on the importance of this week, school principals and teachers shall conduct a daily oral recitation by students of the following section of the *Declaration of Independence*:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.*

All K-12 Social Studies teachers may access a list of resources to support their instruction on the *Declaration of Independence & Constitution on the Elementary and Secondary Learning network* in Social Studies Resources. Additional supports and resources may be found at the FLDOE link <http://www.fl DOE.org/bii/humanities/celebratefreedom.asp> and the Justice Teaching website <http://www.justiceteaching.org/>. Each school also has an assigned Justice Teaching volunteer who would love to share their passion for the *Constitution* with your students during Freedom Week.

If you have questions or need further assistance, please contact Tina Stavrou, OTL, by email or at Ext. 42247

TS/ch

cc: Amelia Van Name Larson, Assistant Superintendent for Student Achievement  
David Seanga, Ed.D, Learning Community Executive Director  
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