

WHAT IS “I SIGNED THE CONSTITUTION”?



Since 1993, the National Constitution Center (NCC) has sponsored “I Signed the Constitution” events each year during the national celebration of Constitution Week, the third week of September. Over the last few years more than 500 sites in all 50 states participated. At national parks, libraries, schools and malls across America, an estimated 1.7 million people have reaffirmed their citizenship by placing their signatures next to the signatures of our Founders. Signers receive a pocket-sized Constitution, educational material and a commemorative “I Signed the Constitution” button. Every site is asked to return the signed parchment scrolls to the NCC where they will become part of the permanent archives at the National Constitution Center’s Museum, scheduled to open July 4, 2003.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association, in conjunction with the National Constitution Center and LEAP-Kids, is coordinating the fourth annual statewide “I Signed the Constitution” program. Schools representing dozens of Pennsylvania counties will participate in this year’s signing - with over 30,000 student signers statewide. Many county bar associations are partnering with schools by helping them to sponsor signing programs. Judges, lawyers and legislators across the commonwealth will be working with schools to participate in the activities.

The theme for this year’s celebration is “One Nation Indivisible.” The events of September 11, 2001, left a lasting impact on all Americans, including our children. As we work together to heal as a nation, we now have the opportunity and responsibility to teach children about our country’s strength and history. Words like freedom, democracy and equality can become commonplace in the classroom as we work with schools and parents to foster the spirit of America in our children.

This year’s celebration will begin on Tuesday, September 17, with a unique kick-off program that will be broadcast on cable television by the Pennsylvania Cable Network. This program will feature prominent federal and state elected officials, the president of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and a member of Pennsylvania’s judiciary who will talk with students statewide about the importance of the Constitution and its relevance to their lives. There also will be student speakers and special live performances.

The “I Signed the Constitution” program will continue from September 17 through December 16, which is the beginning of “Bill of Rights Week.” Schools may hold signing events throughout the fall.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association thanks you for participating in the fourth annual “I Signed the Constitution” program. It should be an exciting one!

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL RESPONSE FORM



To help us keep track of all participants in the statewide "I Signed the Constitution" signing program, please take a few moments to complete this form and return it to the Pennsylvania Bar Association at your earliest convenience. All forms must be received no later than Friday, December 13, 2002, so that all schools and students can be properly credited. Thank you for your assistance!

School name & district: _____

Address: _____

_____ County: _____

Program organizer/position: _____

Date of signing program: _____

Number of student signers: _____ Grade level(s) of students: _____

Did/will you hold an assembly or classroom program?: _____

Did/will you watch the kick-off program on September 17?: _____

Did/will you partner with your local county bar association?: _____

Did/will judges, lawyers and/or legislators participate in your program? If yes, please list their names:

General comments about the program (please feel free to use additional paper):

Please return this form by mail or fax no later than Friday, December 13, 2002 to:
Pennsylvania Bar Association
Communications Department
P.O. Box 186, Harrisburg, PA 17108
Fax: (717) 238-2342

PLANNING A MOCK CONSTITUTION SIGNING: PART I



Every school has its own unique personality and way of doing of things. As such, it's important for you to think about what type of mock signing program will work best for your school. This section is designed to help you plan a mock Constitution signing program.

STEP #1: THE FACTS

Here is some helpful information as you begin to formulate your program:

Date: The program kicks off on September 17 and continues through December 16.

Materials: You should register for the program with the NCC in order to receive one 4' x 6' Constitution scroll for display; smaller scrolls for signing; and "I Signed the Constitution" buttons and pocket Constitutions for students. The NCC charges a small shipping fee. You may call the NCC at 215-923-0004 for more information.

Kick-Off

Program: The kick-off program will be held on September 17 and will be broadcast on cable television by the Pennsylvania Cable Network. This program will feature prominent federal and state elected officials, the president of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and a member of Pennsylvania's judiciary who will talk with students statewide about the importance of the Constitution and its relevance to their lives. There also will be student speakers and special performances. The program will take approximately 60 minutes.

Theme: The theme for this year's celebration is "One Nation Indivisible." The events of September 11, 2001, left a lasting impact on all Americans, including our children. As we work together to heal as a nation, we now have the opportunity and responsibility to teach children about our country's strength and history. Words like freedom, democracy and equality can become commonplace in the classroom as we work with schools and parents to foster the spirit of America in our children.

STEP #2: TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Listed below are two types of mock Constitution signing programs that schools have found to be successful.

- Assembly: The assembly program brings together all student signers for a formal program and signing. School officials should welcome all of the students and then ask local judges, lawyers and/or legislators to talk with them about the importance of the Constitution. Each speaker, in approximately five minutes, should relate how the Constitution is applied to his or her own job and focus on the ways in which the students' lives are affected everyday by the Constitution. The speaking portion of the program should conclude with a question and answer session.

Following the Q&A, the entire group should sign the mock Constitution together.* After the signing, students and teachers may return to their classrooms to take part in any or all of the lesson plans included in this guide.

- Classroom: The classroom program begins with the one of the enclosed lesson plans. Teachers should think about asking local judges, lawyers and/or legislators to visit their classes and talk with students about the Constitution and assist them with the lessons. Once students have completed their activities, they can participate in the mock signing in one of two ways: 1) the mock Constitution scroll can be displayed in the school lobby with classes taking turns signing the scrolls; or 2) the smaller scrolls can be passed from classroom to classroom for signing. (*Making your own school scrolls is a great art project!*)

PLANNING A MOCK CONSTITUTION SIGNING: PART II



STEP #3: DESIGNING YOUR SCHOOL'S PROGRAM

These questions are designed to help you think about what type of program will work best in your school.

General Questions:

- How many students will participate in the program?
- Will you choose all of the students from one grade level or students from different grade levels?
- Will judges, lawyers and/or legislators be asked to participate in the program and/or classroom activities? (arranging this through your local bar association is explained later in the guide)
- Will the media be invited to attend the program/signing activities?
- Will you watch the kick-off program?
- Where will the mock Constitution scrolls be displayed after the students have signed them?

Assembly Program:

- Is your school conducive to an assembly?
- Does the assembly room have cable access to view the kick-off program (if you want to watch it live)?
- What types of program speakers would your students enjoy? Should someone from your school district's administration emcee the program?
- Will educators be asked to introduce the lesson plans on the day of the mock signing program?

Classroom Program:

- Will students sign the Constitution scrolls in a displayed location or will the scrolls be passed to individual classrooms?
- Will the classes be asked to use the lesson plan activities on the same day as the signing?
- Do the participating classrooms have cable access to view the kick-off program (if they want to watch it live)?

INVOLVING THE MEDIA & LEGAL COMMUNITY



Once your school has picked a program, it's time to start getting the media and local legal community involved.

THE LEGAL COMMUNITY

"I Signed the Constitution" offers your school a unique opportunity to involve members of the legal community in your classroom activities and/or assembly program. Bringing years of legal experience to this project, local judges and lawyers can help you create enhanced learning opportunities for your students.

Assembly program -- think about asking a local judge, lawyer and/or legislator to talk with your students about the Constitution. Ask them to focus on this year's theme. They also could assist your students with the mock Constitution signing. Following the assembly program, these individuals could work with classes on the individual lesson plans.

Classroom program -- members of the legal community could have a more intimate dialogue with students about the Constitution and answer questions they may have regarding legal issues. They then could work with students on the individual lesson plans and then help them sign the mock Constitution.

Your local county bar association can help you identify judges and lawyers in your community who would be willing to take part in your activities. If you are not already partnering with your local county bar association, please call the PBA at (800) 932-0311, ext. 2226, to find the appropriate person to contact in your county. (Hint... elementary and middle school students typically respond well to judges who wear their robes into the classroom.) Make sure to invite these people well in advance of your program -- their calendars fill up quickly.

THE MEDIA

The media can help schools demonstrate their commitment to excellence in learning by reporting on the "I Signed the Constitution" events and activities in local newspapers and television news programs. The following are some tips to help you get started with involving the media. If you are partnering with your local county bar association on this project, make sure to work with it on this -- county bars are great resources since they have relationships established with local media and may be willing to help you with some of the following:

- 1) Compile a current list of local newspaper editors, t.v. assignment editors and radio station managers. Make sure that you have their fax and phone numbers.
- 2) One week prior to your program, mail or fax your media advisory to the local media (a sample media advisory is included in this packet -- please feel free to use it and fill in the blanks.) Include a contact person on the advisory and a daytime phone number as the media may have questions prior to the program.
- 3) One day prior to the program, make follow-up calls to the media that received the advisory -- ask for the newsroom when you call. During the call you want to confirm that they received the advisory, offer to fax it if they did not and mention how exciting the program will be for students. (It's always good to put in a last-minute pitch.)
- 4) Prepare a news release to give to the media at the program (a sample news release is included in this packet -- please feel free to use it and fill in the blanks.) After the program is over, mail or fax the news release to any invited media that did not attend.

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY



The media advisory can be issued by your school or partnering county bar association. Make sure to include the issuing party's address at the top -- using letterhead is always a good idea.

MEDIA ADVISORY

Contact: Name
Phone Number

OF STUDENTS SCHOOL NAME STUDENTS TO SIGN **THE U.S. CONSTITUTION**

of students School Name students will join with list local judges, lawyers, legislators in signing the U.S. Constitution as part of the national "I Signed the Constitution" program on date at time at location (include place, address and city). The Constitution scrolls signed by the students will be sent to the new National Constitution Center in Philadelphia for display.

The activities will feature (list any special activities, if any).

Sponsored statewide by the Pennsylvania Bar Association, in conjunction with the National Constitution Center and LEAP-Kids, the "I Signed the Constitution" program is part of a national celebration commemorating the signing of the Constitution. Since 1993, an estimated 1.7 million people have participated in mock Constitution signings at national parks, libraries, schools and malls across America. The purpose of the program is to increase awareness and understanding of the Constitution, its history and its relevance.

Pennsylvania's "I Signed the Constitution" program runs from September 17 through December 16. Hundreds of schools and over 30,000 students are expected to take part in signing programs throughout the fall.

For more information on Pennsylvania's "I Signed the Constitution" program, visit the Pennsylvania Bar Association Web site at www.pabar.org.

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SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE



The news release can be issued by your school or partnering county bar association. Make sure to include the issuing party's address at the top -- using letterhead is always a good idea.

N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Name
Daytime Phone Number

OF STUDENTS SCHOOL NAME STUDENTS SIGN THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

CITY/TOWN (Date) -- # of students School Name students today joined with list local judges, lawyers, legislators in signing the U.S. Constitution as part of the national "I Signed the Constitution" program at location. The Constitution scrolls signed by the students will be sent to the new National Constitution Center in Philadelphia for display.

"Quote from school official"

Sponsored statewide by the Pennsylvania Bar Association, in conjunction with the National Constitution Center and LEAP-Kids, the "I Signed the Constitution" program is part of a national celebration commemorating the signing of the Constitution. Since 1993, an estimated 1.7 million people have participated in mock Constitution signings at national parks, libraries, schools and malls across America. The purpose of the program is to increase awareness and understanding of the Constitution, its history and its relevance. Pennsylvania's "I Signed the Constitution" programs runs from September 17 through December 17. Hundreds of schools and over 30,000 students are expected to take part in signing programs throughout the fall.

"Quote from county bar president" -- if applicable

(For assembly program) -- The students participated in an assembly program, which included presentations by the featured speakers and a mock signing of the Constitution. (List any other activities).

(For classroom program) -- The students participated in classroom activities focusing on the Constitution. The featured speakers assisted the students with the concepts and writing. Each class then joined in a mock signing of the Constitution.

"Quote from a participating judge, lawyer or legislator"

For more information on the "I Signed the Constitution" program, visit the National Constitution Center's Web site www.constitutioncenter.org and the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Web site www.pabar.org.

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I Signed the Constitution Poster Contest

The Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) is pleased to announce its second annual “I Signed the Constitution” Poster Contest. This year’s theme is “One Nation Indivisible.” The events of September 11, 2001, left a lasting impact on all Americans, including our children. As we work together to heal as a nation, we now have the opportunity and responsibility to teach children about our country’s strength and history. Words like freedom, democracy and equality can become commonplace in the classroom as we work with schools and parents to foster the spirit of America in our children. Elementary school students are asked to create a poster that shows what “One Nation Indivisible” means to them.



The winning poster will be displayed on the PBA Web site and used as the cover of the 2003 “I Signed the Constitution” guide. The winning student will be asked to take part in the PBA’s formal Law Day ceremony in May 2003.

The deadline for entry is Friday, December 13, 2002.

This contest helps schools meet Proposed Academic Standards for Civics and Government 5.1.K across all grade levels, as well as Proposed Academic Standards for History 8.2.B across all grade levels and 8.3.3.B.

Contest Rules

- 1) The contest is open to all public and nonpublic elementary schools in Pennsylvania.
- 2) One entry per elementary school will be accepted. Schools may want to hold their own contest to determine which poster will be submitted to the statewide competition. An entry form must be completed in full and attached to the back of the poster. The entry form must be signed by the student artist, the student’s teacher and by a parent or guardian of the student. The entry form is included.
- 3) Students should create posters that show what “One Nation Indivisible” means to them. Each poster must be an original art composition created by a child. The entry must be the actual work of only one student. Adults may support the student’s effort with suggestions and other forms of verbal assistance. The work produced, however, must be the product of the student’s own effort.
- 4) The poster must be 8.5 inches x 11 inches. The design should be vertical in order for reproduction on the front of the “I Signed the Constitution” guide. The “One Nation Indivisible” message may be communicated as creatively as possible using ink, tempera, powder paint, water colors, oil or magic marker. No computer generated posters will be considered. The actual words, “One Nation Indivisible,” may not be used on the poster.

- 5) Entries will be judged by a review panel from the PBA's Law-Related Education Committee. The first place winner will have his or her poster featured on the cover of next year's "I Signed the Constitution" guide and will receive an award during the PBA's formal Law Day ceremony in May 2003.
- 6) All entries must be postmarked by Friday, December 13, 2002. Entrants will be notified of the winners by March 14, 2003. The winning student will be asked to attend the May 2003 PBA Law Day ceremony.
- 7) All entries, including posters and other submitted materials, become the property of the PBA and will not be returned. Entries may be reproduced by the PBA in any form and for any purpose. The PBA reserves the right to modify any poster for reproduction purposes.
- 8) Entry into this contest constitutes permission for the artwork and artists to be photographed for publicity purposes without any compensation to the child, teacher, parents or guardians.
- 9) All federal, state and local regulations apply. Void where prohibited by law. Taxes on any prizes are the responsibility of the winners and their families.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR POSTER AND ENTRY FORM POSTMARKED BY
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2002, to:
Pennsylvania Bar Association
I Signed the Constitution Poster Contest
100 South Street
P.O. Box 186
Harrisburg, PA 17108**

I Signed the Constitution Poster Contest Official Entry Form *(please print clearly)*

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Home Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone Number: _____

School: _____

School Mailing Address: _____

School Phone: _____

Teacher's Name: _____ Teacher's E-mail: _____

Student Signature: _____ Teacher Signature: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

This form must be attached to the back of each entry.

Who's In? Who's Out?

Looking at the Constitution as an Evolving Document of Inclusion

LESSON OVERVIEW: This lesson tracks the groups that have been given and denied rights under the U.S. Constitution over the past 215 years.

GRADE LEVEL: This lesson is designed for students in grades 3-12 .

ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Proposed Standards for Civics and Government 5.1, Principles and Documents of Government.

MATERIALS:

Materials vary based on how you design the lesson. This lesson works best if there are copies of the United States Constitution for each student. Free pocket versions of the U.S. Constitution often are available for free from your local member of Congress.



PROCEDURES/ACTIVITIES:

Students should make a list of the different kinds of people they see in their school, in the news and on television. This list might include men, women, adults, children, persons of color, Native Americans, immigrants and differently abled individuals.

Next, ask the students to look at the language of the U. S. Constitution to see what types of people are mentioned in it. Have the students circle or list everything they find in the document that distinguishes among different groups of individuals. The list should encompass at least some of the following:

- Although there are three major compromises over slavery in the original document (the 3/5ths compromise in Article I, Section 2, Paragraph 3; the ban on the importation of slaves after 1808 in Article I, Section 9, Paragraph 1; and the Fugitive Slave Act in Article IV, Section 2, paragraph 3), the Constitution does not mention the words “slave” or “slavery.” Older students can explore the words that are used in place of those terms and discuss possible reasons why the founders might have avoided those terms.
- Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment declares that “all persons born or naturalized in the United States...are citizens.”
- Section 2 of the Fourteenth Amendment discusses the right to vote of “the male inhabitants...being twenty-one years of age.”
- The Fifteenth Amendment extends the right to vote to African American men and says that voting rights “shall not be denied or abridged...on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”
- The Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed women the right to vote.

- Native Americans are mentioned twice in the Constitution as originally ratified. Under Article 1, Section 2, Paragraph 3, “Indians not taxed” were excluded from state populations for the purposes of apportioning taxes and representatives in Congress. Also under Article 1, Section 8, Paragraph 3, Congress had the power to “regulate commerce with foreign nations, among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.” The implication of these two provisions as interpreted by the Supreme Court was that Native Americans were not citizens of the United States and did not have the rights afforded citizens under the Constitution.
- The Twenty-sixth Amendment gives the right to vote to citizens 18 years of age and older.

VARIATION 1:

Have students create a timeline showing when different groups are mentioned in the Constitution and discuss whether each mention reflects secured rights or the absence of rights.

VARIATION 2:

Have students create a collage showing different kinds of people using pictures from old magazines or the Internet. Have them note when each group pictured won the right to vote under the Constitution.

VARIATION 3:

Have students debate whether other groups, not specifically mentioned in the Constitution, require special protection under the law.

Analyzing the Pledge of Allegiance

GRADE LEVELS: K-12 (for younger grades, ask them to recite the pledge and discuss its meaning with them)

ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Proposed Academic Standards for Civics and Government 5.1 % 5.2

For Americans, the most familiar expression of citizenship is taking the Pledge of Allegiance. The pledge is something you have recited countless times and probably know by heart:



“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

The original draft of the Pledge of Allegiance was written by James B. Upham in 1888 and revised slightly four years later by Francis Bellamy, who included it in the 400th anniversary celebration of Columbus’ first voyage to the new world. The phrase “under God” was added to the Pledge of Allegiance by an act of Congress in 1954.

Ask the students to consider the following questions:

1. What is involved in pledging allegiance? What does allegiance mean? What does the taking of the pledge say about your relationship to government?
2. Why do we pledge allegiance to the American flag? Why not to the president of the United States, our members of Congress or the justices of the Supreme Court?
3. Do we have the right to withhold our allegiance? What would be the consequences of doing that? If you were born here, when and how do you decide to be an American citizen? If you were not born an American citizen, how do you become one? How is a citizen different from someone else living in this country?
4. What is a “republic?” Does the pledge define what that word means? How does a republic differ from a democracy?

This lesson comes from the Center for Civic Education’s “We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution.”

For more lesson plans and information on civics and government as they relate to the Constitution, please contact the following organizations:

Pennsylvania Bar Association

Contact: David Keller Trevaskis
Pennsylvania Bar Association
100 South Street, P.O. Box 186
Harrisburg, PA 17108-0186
Phone: (800) 932-0311, ext. 2236
Fax: (717) 238-4134
E-mail: david.trevaskis@pabar.org
www.pabar.org/educationprograms.shtml

The Pennsylvania Bar Association's law-related education programs are designed to help Pennsylvania schools lay a foundation for teaching civics and government in the classroom. The PBA partners with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, National Constitution Center, county bar associations, judges and lawyers to accomplish this goal. The cornerstone LRE projects include, I Signed the Constitution, Project PEACE, Law Day, Mock Trial and Stepping Out. To learn more about these programs and to view past lesson plans, visit the PBA's K-12 Law-Related Education home page on the PBA's Web site.

National Constitution Center

Contact: Beth A. Twiss-Garity, Vice President, Interpretation
National Constitution Center
The Bourse, Suite 560
111 South Independence Mall East
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: (215) 923-0004
Fax: (215) 923-1749
E-mail: btwiss@constitutioncenter.org
www.constitutioncenter.org

The NCC, established by Congress through the Constitution Heritage Act as an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, will open July 4, 2003. The NCC was established to increase awareness and understanding of the U.S. Constitution, its history and its relevance to our daily lives so that all of us will better understand and exercise our rights and responsibilities. The NCC's current Web site contains a teacher resource area with lesson plans and curriculum ideas for the classroom. A new web site will launch in fall 2002.

LEAP-Kids (Law, Education & Peace for Children)

Contact: Leon Stimpson, Program Director
P.O. Box 428
6 Royal Avenue
Glenside, PA 19038-0428
Phone: (215) 885-1610
Fax: (215) 885-1036
E-mail: leon@leap-kids.com
www.leap-kids.com

LEAP-Kids is the successor organization to the statewide law-related and civic education program formerly housed at Temple-LEAP. LEAP-Kids develops innovative educational programs aimed at empowering young people through LRCE study. LRCE is a unique blend of substance and strategy: students learn substantive information about laws, the legal system and their rights and responsibilities through strategies that promote cooperative learning, critical thinking and positive interaction between young people and adults. LEAP-Kids conducts a wide variety of teacher trainings and also produces general and Pennsylvania-specific curricula related to civics and government.

We The People...The Citizen and the Constitution

Contact: George W. Franz, Pennsylvania State Coordinator
Penn State Delaware County
25 Yearsely Mill Road
Media, PA 19063-5596
Phone: (610) 892-1411
Fax: (610) 892-1357
E-mail: gwf1@psu.edu
www.de.psu.edu/pawtp

We the People... was developed by the Center for Civic Education and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by an Act of Congress. The primary goal of the program is to promote civic responsibility and competence in students by emphasizing student involvement and encouraging students to relate important concepts and principles to historical and contemporary situations as well as to their own experiences. The We the People... instructional program complements the regular school curriculum by providing upper elementary grades, middle school and high school students with a course of instruction on the history and principles of democracy in the United States. Every teacher in Pennsylvania can receive a free class set of books on the Constitution through this program by contacting district coordinators in each congressional district.