



# WEST CHICAGO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

*Together for Excellence ★ ¡Juntos por la Excelencia!*

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## Board of Education

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**TO:** Board of Education  
**FROM:** Jenny Brunke, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning  
**DATE:** September 17, 2026  
**RE:** Constitution Day

**This memo is:**

- ☒ Information only  
☐ Information with a recommendation and a request for Board approval by vote.

Date by which a Board decision is needed:

Previous memos on this topic can be found:

- ☐ in previous Board packet(s) dated.  
☐ or attached to this memo

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| <b>Basic Information:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| This memo outlines the activities that students engaged with in honor of Constitution Day, which took place on September 17th, 2026.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Background/Historical Context:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Constitution Day (or Citizenship Day) is an American federal observance that recognizes the ratification of the United States Constitution and those who have become U.S. citizens. It is observed on September 17th, the day the U.S. Constitutional Convention signed the Constitution in 1787. All institutions receiving federal funding, including funding through the U.S. Department of Education, are required to hold an educational program pertaining to the United States Constitution on September 17th of each year (or in the preceding or following week if the date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday). The purpose of Constitution Day is to help students learn about and appreciate the U.S. Constitution.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Previous decisions, actions, or parameters that relate to this topic or issue:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <p>The law establishing the holiday was created in 2004 with the passage of an amendment by Senator Robert Byrd to the Omnibus Spending Bill of 2004. Before this law was enacted, the holiday was known as "Citizenship Day." In addition to renaming the holiday, "Constitution Day and Citizenship Day," the act mandates that all publicly funded educational institutions provide educational programming on the history of the American Constitution on that day. In May 2005, the United States Department of Education announced the enactment of this law and that it would apply to any school receiving federal funds of any kind. The U.S. Department of Education provides examples of activities for school districts to utilize, but does not require any particular lesson plans, curricular resources, or activities.</p> <p>Listed below are activities District 33 students engaged in by grade level.</p> <p><b>Preschool:</b> Each preschool classroom held discussions regarding good citizenship (safety, kindness, and working together). This conversation is in line with the PBIS/ Pyramid expectations and develops precursory understandings of governmental topics to be addressed throughout the elementary years.</p> |

**Kindergarten - 5th grade:** Kindergarten through 5th-grade classrooms across the district were provided a [choice board](#) of activities to utilize with students in their classrooms. The purpose of the choice board is to offer autonomy for teachers in each classroom while still providing consistency in student experience across the district. The choice board included a variety of options such as recommended texts to be read aloud to students by the classroom teacher or guest reader, videos providing information about the U.S. Constitution and our government, and various online activities aligned to the K-2 and 3-5 grade bands. The online activities provided information about the three branches of government, discussion prompts, and sentence stems regarding rules, freedoms, and various imaginative scenarios, primary source/image analysis, and even mathematical story problems related to the U.S. Constitution. Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures were used in conjunction with these activities to deepen understanding and improve student oracy skills, which is in alignment with our district ACCESS and literacy goals.

**6th grade:** In 6th-grade classrooms, students activated their background knowledge by watching a 5-minute video all about the fundamental laws of the U.S., the federal government, and the Constitution. Students will complete a reflection activity, making connections to what they have learned.

**7th grade:** In 7th-grade social studies classrooms, students studied the First Amendment freedoms by completing their own choice board activities related to the five freedoms. Students will refer to this knowledge throughout the year as they explore various progressions in US history in which these freedoms were put into question. In English Language Arts, students used information from a NewsELA article to complete an interactive activity that helped students understand the importance of the United States Postal Service and its establishment in regard to the U.S. Constitution.

**8th grade:** In 8th-grade classrooms, students completed choice activities in which they continued to explore constitutional components such as the Bill of Rights and legislative processes. They will refer to this knowledge throughout the year as they complete a portfolio of learning, connecting their knowledge of the US Constitution to various current events.

**Recommendations:**

N/A