



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



SERIES 2007-2008

CIRCULAR LETTER: C-2

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education

DATE: August 3, 2007

SUBJECT: U.S. Constitution Day and Youth and Democracy Month

The Constitution of the United States of America, signed on September 17, 1787, represents the most important written document for promoting democratic government in the world today. **A provision enacted by Congress in 2004, requires that all U.S. education facilities receiving federal funds must offer an educational program based on the U.S. Constitution on September 17.** Information on the federal requirement and resources can be found at <http://www.cclce.org>.

The Honorable M. Jodi Rell, Governor of the State of Connecticut, has proclaimed September 17, 2007, as the designated day for schools to offer education programs and September 2007 as Youth and Democracy Month. DemocracyWorks, the Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, League of Women Voters of Connecticut and the Connecticut State Department of Education serve as partners in developing and distributing appropriate resources for Connecticut schools.

In 2001, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted a high school graduation requirement of one-half credit in civics, beginning with the class of 2004. **Effective July 1, 2007, Public Act 07-138 requires, "... elementary schools to include in their fourth or fifth grade curriculum a program on democracy in which students engage in a participating manner in learning about all branches of government."**

While Constitution Day and Youth and Democracy Month has been designated as a kickoff time for educational institutions to focus on the activities and programs related to the Constitution and civic learning, it is understood that principles and practices embedded in our democratic way of life should be carried out in the Pre-K-12 school curriculum throughout the year.

The Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education has distributed information on educational activities to all schools as part of a statewide effort to provide a common activity for Constitution Day and Youth and Democracy Month. For additional information and resources to celebrate Constitution Day and Youth and Democracy Month and the new legislation, go to the Connecticut Consortium for Law and Citizenship at <http://www.cclce.org> and DemocracyWorks at <http://www.democracyworksct.org>. If you have any questions, please contact Dan Gregg at 860-713-6744 or dan.gregg@ct.gov.

MKM:dg

Enclosure