



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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(X) Informational

BULLETIN NO. 076-17 LEARNING AND TEACHING

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School Principals
School District Curriculum Directors
K–12 Teachers and Librarians

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: 2017–18 School District Annual Recognized Civic Observances

CONTACT: Carol Coe, Social Studies Program Supervisor
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PURPOSE/ BACKGROUND

This notice provides information from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for K–12 teachers and administrators regarding five (5) annual Washington civic observances in state law.

There are many excellent resources available to assist teachers and administrators with the implementation of these observances annually. The OSPI social studies website (<http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/CivicObservances.aspx>) includes links to such resources, as well as links to resources specifically targeted for civic education and citizenship observances.

The five observances are:

- 1. Constitution and Citizenship Day, September 17, 2017 (observed Friday, September 15, 2017):** [RCW 28A.230.170](#) requires the study of the Constitution of the United States and the Washington State Constitution as a prerequisite for graduation from public and private high schools in Washington.

Additionally, federal law enacted in December 2004 states: “Each educational institution that receives federal funds for a fiscal year shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on September 17 of such year for the students served by the

educational institution” to commemorate the signing of the United States Constitution on September 17, 1787.

The federal law is included in Section 111 of Public Law 108-447 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005. The U.S. Department of Education has published additional information about the law at:

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/constitutionday.html>.

2. **Disability History Month, observed the month of October:** [RCW 28A.230.158](#) requires that all Washington public schools conduct or promote educational activities that provide instruction, awareness, and understanding of disability history and people with disabilities. The activities may include, but not be limited to, school assemblies or guest speaker presentations.
3. **Veterans Day, observed Friday, November 10, 2017:** [RCW 28A.230.160](#) requires that all Washington public schools observe Veterans Day by providing educational activities during the school week preceding the 11th day of November of each year. The responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the activities will be with the principal or head teacher of each school building. The law dictates that activities be at least 60 minutes total throughout the week and embrace topics tending to instill a loyalty and devotion to the institutions and laws of this state and nation.
4. **Temperance and Good Citizenship Day, observed Tuesday, January 16, 2018:** [RCW 28A.230.150](#) states that on January 16 of each year (or the preceding Friday when January 16 falls on a non-school day) each public school will observe Temperance and Good Citizenship Day.

The original language of the 1923 Washington law included specific language regarding education of the effects of alcohol and drug use; however this language was removed when the law was revised in 1969. While many interpret “temperance” to mean prohibition, as defined above, instruction on “temperance” may include information about prohibition, but it is not a specific requirement of the law. The 2013 Legislature added the expectation that Temperance and Good Citizenship Day include opportunities in our schools for eligible students to register to vote.

Many districts recognize this day by discussing temperance in connection with good citizenship, specifically addressing self-restraint. This idea of self-restraint is closely tied with many of the activities associated with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. For example, a district may choose to discuss the accomplishments of peaceful, nonviolent protests in

the civil rights movement of the 1960s. With the 2013 addition, schools will provide opportunities for eligible students to register to vote.

- 5. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, observed Monday, January 15, 2018:** In January 2004, the Washington State House of Representatives passed [House Resolution 4676](#) to recognize Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, honoring the importance of the life and work of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The resolution calls on the people of the state of Washington to study, reflect on, and celebrate Dr. King’s life and ideals in order to fulfill his dream of civil and human rights for all people and urges “all the citizens of our state to make Martin Luther King, Jr. Day a day of service—a day on, not a day off.” There is no state law or specific regulation that requires school districts to observe this day in any particular way.

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Carol Coe, Social Studies Program Supervisor, at 360-725-6351 or email carol.coe@k12.wa.us. The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

This bulletin is also available on the OSPI website at <http://www.k12.wa.us/BulletinsMemos/bulletins2017.aspx>.

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