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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Dr. Frances Haithcock

**DATE:** August 20, 2010

**SUBJECT:** C**onstitution Day and Celebrate Freedom Week 2010**
**September 17, 2010 and September 20-24, 2010**

In response to Public Law 108-447, which designated September 17 as "Constitution Day", the Florida Legislature designated the last full week in September as "Celebrate Freedom Week." This week of celebration is intended to allow for appropriate instruction and activities that will help to reinforce the principles and ideals on which our nation was founded. The provisions of the Statute include:

- The last full week of classes in September shall be recognized in public schools as "Celebrate Freedom Week."
- Celebrate Freedom Week must include at least three hours of appropriate instruction in each social studies class, as determined by the school district, which shall include an in-depth study of the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence.
- During the last full week of September, at the beginning of each school day or homeroom, public school principals and teachers shall conduct an oral recitation by students of the following words from 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 powers from the consent of the governed."

- Upon written request by a student's parent, the student must be excused from recitation of the Declaration of Independence excerpt.

School districts are encouraged to schedule appropriate instructional and celebratory activities for this week. The Department has compiled the Governor's Proclamation, online resources, and a recommended reading list at http://www.fldoe.org/BII/Humanities/celebratefreedom.asp.

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding the implementation of these requirements, please contact Patty Ceci at Patty.Ceci@fldoe.org or (850) 245- 0903.

FH/pc