

Superior Court of California
County of Santa Clara

CONTACT

JESSICA KELLOGG

Communications Program Manager

jkellogg@scscourt.org

(408) 334-9236



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Santa Clara County Celebrates Constitution Month: A Statewide Initiative by California’s Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero

SAN JOSÉ, California (September 17, 2024): The Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara is pleased to announce the launch of its month-long celebration of Constitution Month. Celebrated on September 17, Constitution Day celebrates the signing of the document that forms the basis for our democracy. Based on the success of previous years' Constitution Day activities, the Court, in collaboration with educators, schools, and the Santa Clara Office of Education, expanded its outreach to provide educational presentations throughout the entire month of September to promote awareness of the U.S. Constitution and civic responsibility.

This expansion aligns with California Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero’s [*Power of Democracy Civic Learning Initiative*](#), which encourages civic learning and civic engagement for all of California’s students.

Throughout Constitution Month, nearly half of all sitting judges at the Santa Clara County Superior Court—34 judicial officers—along with justice partners, will visit approximately 60 fifth grade classrooms. Together, they will engage 3,286 students in interactive, in-person lessons on the Constitution, the judicial branch, and the crucial role courts play in upholding democratic values.

Judge Julia Alloggiamento, Chair of the Court Community Outreach and Vice-Lead of the Power of Democracy Initiative stated, “Civic education provides these students with an understanding of our democracy and the importance of their role in it. These students, who will be our future jurors, lawyers, litigants, and leaders, receive education about their fundamental rights and responsibilities, the separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary and other key concepts from judges who use the Constitution every day to guide their decisions.”

Since 2014, the *Power of Democracy* initiative has strengthened connections between the judicial branch, educators, and school administrators, with the goal of fostering civic learning and engagement. Chief Justice Guerrero's leadership has been instrumental in driving the

statewide efforts, and Santa Clara’s Court Community Outreach Committee is proud to support these activities, meeting increasing community demands for civic education.

In reflecting on the impact of the recent educational visit, Ms. Kendra Johnson Moore, a 5th grade teacher at Windmill Springs Elementary School, shared her appreciation, "The students had countless 'aha!' moments and were brimming with questions when we returned to class. They gained a deeper understanding of the legal system, learning that judges handle a wide range of cases—not just sentencing people to prison or death row. They were especially curious about their rights as minors and were surprised to learn that, at one time, only white men could vote. We truly appreciate how the presentation made the legal system more relatable and emphasized the critical importance of the Constitution for everyone."

Ms. Johnson Moore’s comments underscore the profound educational value of the Court’s outreach efforts to engage young minds in understanding the judicial system and its historical context.

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Figure 1- Hon. Christopher Rudy discussing the origin of the U.S. Constitution.

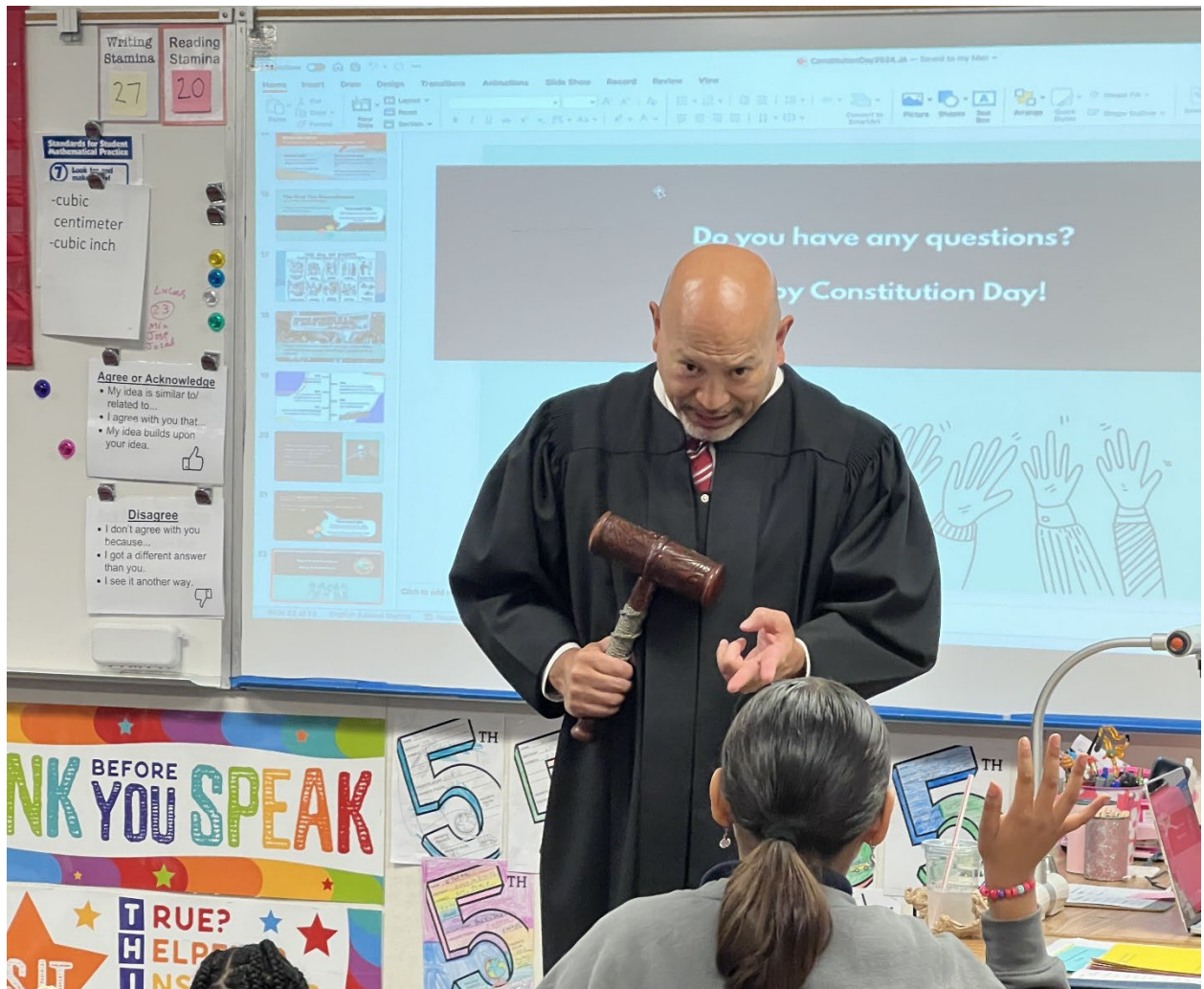


Figure 2- Hon. Johnny Gogo testing his audience's constitutional knowledge.



Figure 3- Hon. Roberta Hayashi with a class of eager 5th grade students.