



Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future: 9/11's Place in America250

Florida Organization of Instructional Leaders

May 2026



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org

www.FLDOE.org

Session Objectives

- Participants will...
 - Explore the significance of America250 celebration in classrooms and schools.
 - Analyze primary sources, including excerpts from Declaration of Independence and President George W. Bush's 9/11 Address to the Nation.
 - Connect key principles from the Declaration of Independence to modern historical events such as 9/11.



- What is the difference between a commemoration and a celebration?
- When you think about what it means to be an American, what values or principles come to mind and where do we see those in action today?



Celebrating America250 and Commemorating 25 Years Since September 11, 2001

America250's Mission

“America250’s mission is to celebrate and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, marking America’s Semiquincentennial. We aim to inspire our fellow Americans to reflect on our past, strengthen our love of country, and renew our commitment to the ideals of democracy through programs that educate, engage, and unite us as a nation. America250 will foster shared experiences that spark imagination, showcase the rich tapestry of our American stories, inspire service in our communities, honor the enduring strength, and celebrate the resilience of the United States of America.”

-The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission

Overview of America250 in Florida Classrooms

- Promote civic literacy and historical understanding.
- Encourage student voice through storytelling and creative expression.
- Reflect on the uniqueness of the American experience.
- Inspire future leadership and community engagement.

9/11 Heroes' Day

Section 683.335, Florida Statutes

- Requires the Governor to proclaim September 11 of each year as “9/11 Heroes’ Day,” to be observed in all public schools.
- Additionally, it requires all middle and high school students enrolled in a Civics or United States Government class to receive at least 45 minutes of instruction on “9/11 Heroes’ Day” topics.
- The Civics workgroup was convened to create standards specific to “9/11 Heroes’ Day.”
- Civics and Government Benchmarks were created and adopted for grades 6-12.



Context and Purpose

Declaration of Independence



September 11, 2001

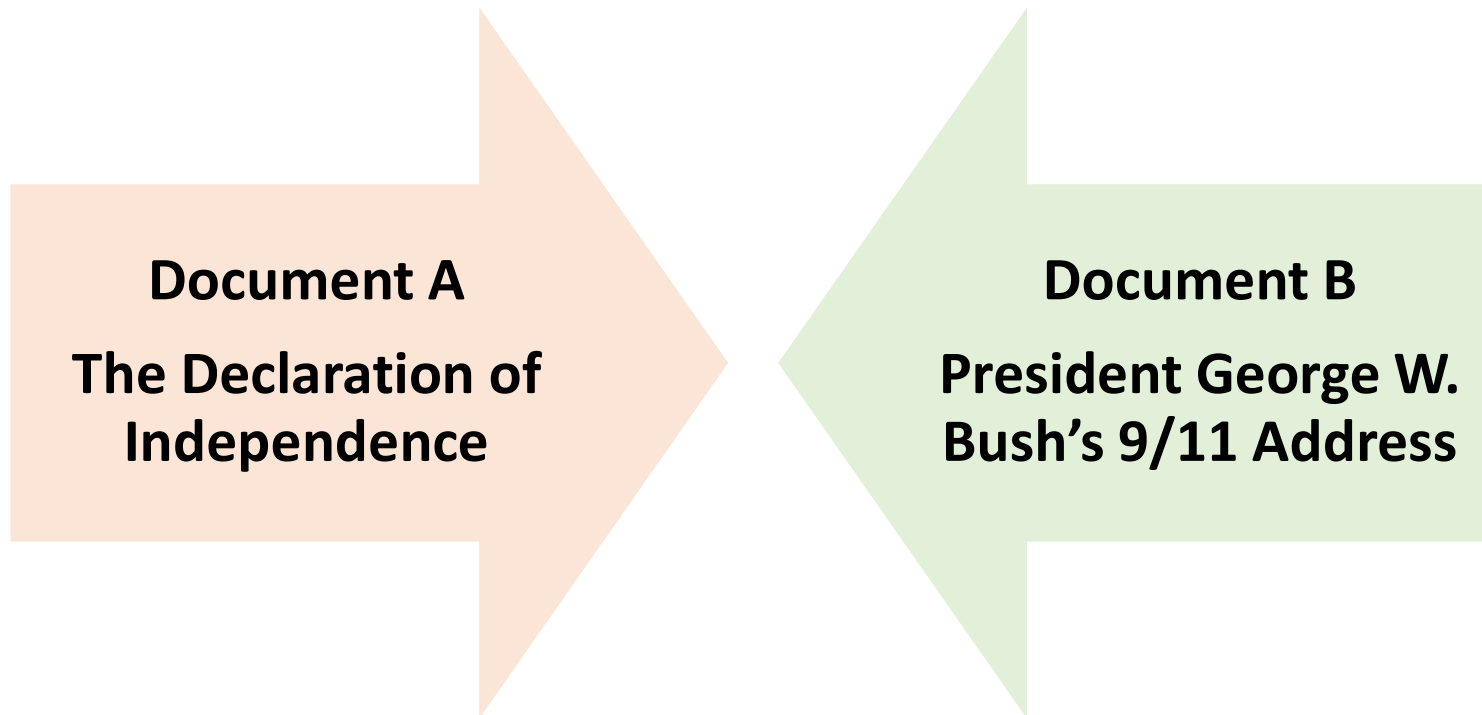




Primary Source Analysis

Primary Source Essential Question

- How are the ideals embedded in the Declaration of Independence reflected in responses to modern events such as 9/11?



Analyzing the Declaration of Independence

- Highlight:
 - Statements about rights
 - Complaints about government
 - Evidence of unity/collective action
- Identify Key Ideas:
 - What are the natural rights identified?
 - What is the purpose of government?
- Reflect:
 - What values do colonists believe are worth defending?
 - What are citizens willing to risk or sacrifice?



George W. Bush Addresses the Nation

- Highlight:
 - Statements about rights
 - Complaints about government
 - Evidence of unity/collective action
- Identify Key Ideas:
 - How are Americans described in the speech?
 - What actions or responses are emphasized?
 - What values are reinforced?
- Reflect:
 - What actions show service and sacrifice?
 - How is unity described or encouraged?



Identify Enduring Principles

Principle	Evidence from Declaration	Evidence from 9/11 Address
Natural Rights		

Unity

Colonies acting
together

Nation coming
together after
attacks

Service and Sacrifice

Implied through
commitment to
independence



Compare and Connect: Celebrating our Future through Commemorating our Past

Table Discussion

- Which principle is most enduring across time?
Why?
- In what ways have Americans advanced democratic ideals, particularly in moments when those ideals were tested?
- How do service, sacrifice and unity strengthen democracy?



Reflection



- Why is it important for students to see connections between founding ideals and modern events like 9/11?
- How can teaching both celebration (America250) and remembrance (9/11) deepen students' civic understanding?



Additional Support

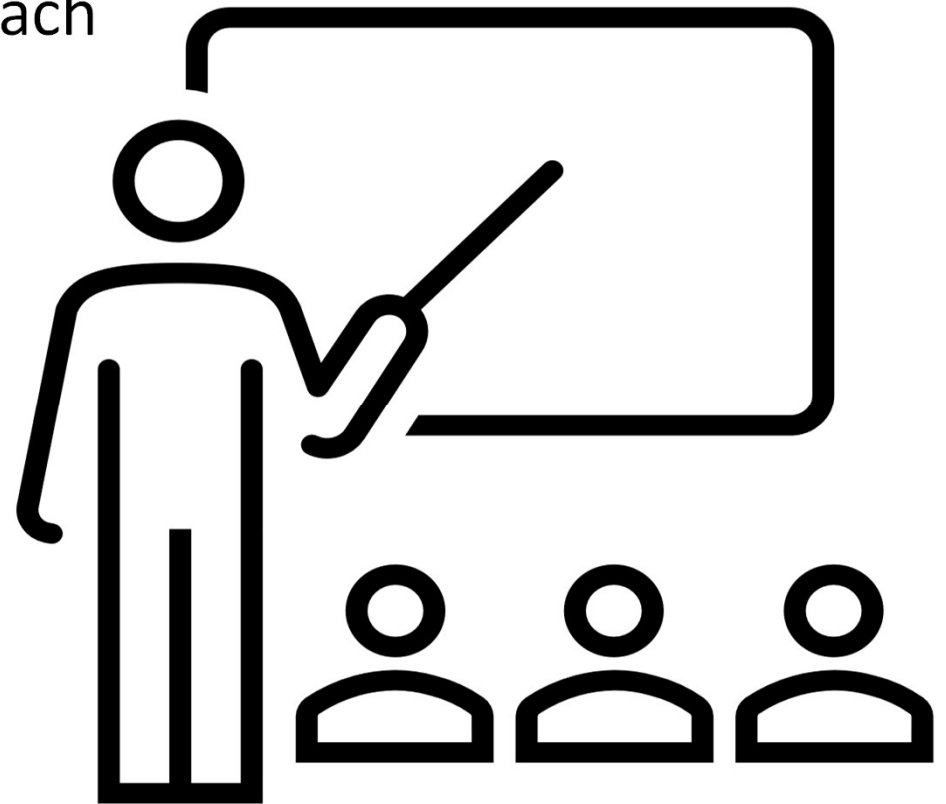
BSIS Summer Professional Learning 2026

Dates and Locations:

- June 15-18 – Panama City Beach
- July 13-16 – Riverview
- July 20-23 – Ft. Myers

Tracks:

- Leadership
- Math (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12)
- Various breakout sessions
- Expo



floridalearns.org/2026/summer

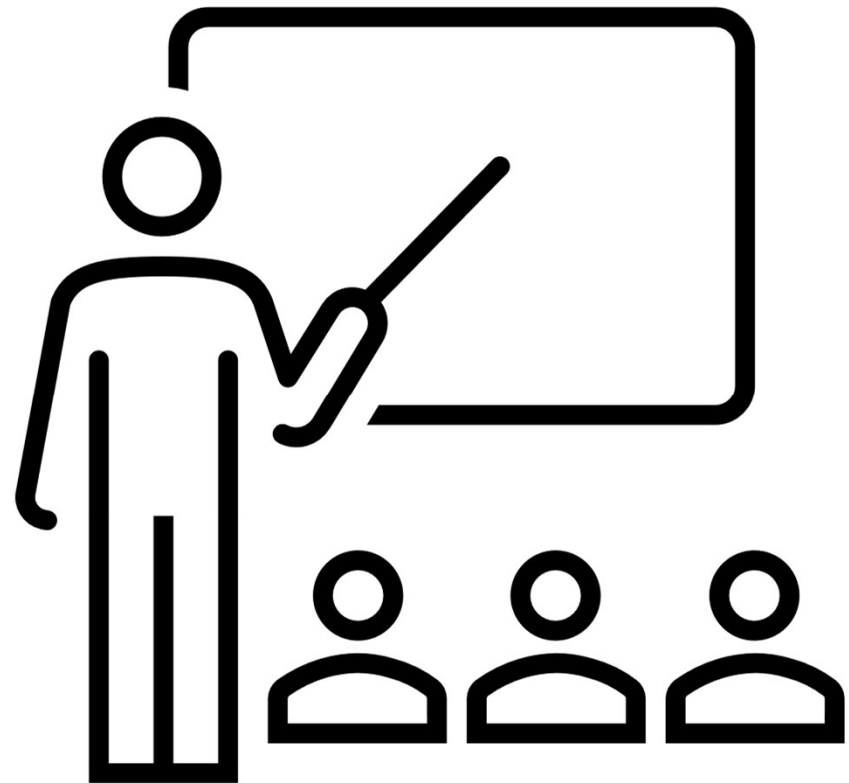
Civics Summer Professional Learning 2026

Dates and Locations:

- June 11 – Sarasota
- June 18 – Jacksonville
- July 9 – Orlando

Tracks:

- New to Civics (0-3 years)
- K-5
- 6-12



floridalearns.org/2026/summer



Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future: 9/11's Place in America250

Florida Organization of Instructional Leaders

May 2026



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org

www.FLDOE.org

Civics Literacy Support Contact Information

Civics Literacy Directors

Lauren Kappler – Lauren.Kappler@fldoe.org

Traci Mulitsa – Traci.Mulitsa@fldoe.org

Civics Literacy Coaches

Carly Branning – Carly.Branning@fldoe.org

Conner Albert – Conner.Albert@fldoe.org

Jennifer Halter – Jennifer.Halter@fldoe.org

Katelyn Rodd – Katelyn.Rodd@fldoe.org

Robin Siegers – Robin.Siegers@fldoe.org

Rosita Salazar – Rosita.Salazar@fldoe.org

Stephanie Mathieu – Stephanie.Mathieu@fldoe.org



Office of Social Studies and the Humanities

- Timothy MacGregor; Director
 - Timothy.MacGregor@fldoe.org
- Barbara Cook; Specialist
 - Barbara.Cook@fldoe.org
- Michael Rosen; Specialist
 - Michael.Rosen@fldoe.org
- Jennie Ladner-Jones; Specialist
 - Jennie.Jones@fldoe.org

We Want Your Feedback!

Access the Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support (BSIS) professional learning feedback survey using the QR code below.





www.FLDOE.org