

News Advisory

From the Rhode Island Judiciary



Chief Justice to visit Providence school for Constitution Day

September 15, 2011: “You have the right to remain silent.”

If you watch any of the police shows on television, chances are you have heard this “right” uttered numerous times. But where did this “right” originate?

The answer, of course, is the Constitution of the United States, which is being observed for Constitution Day on Friday, September 16. Rhode Island Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell will travel to a Providence school at 10:30 a.m. on Friday to meet with students to explore the document that still guides our government and our laws more than 200 years after it was written.

Chief Justice Suttell will visit the classroom of teacher Soljane Quiles at the Highlander Charter School, the first independent charter school in Rhode Island. Ms. Quiles recently attended a one-week summer session co-sponsored by the Judiciary that featured the iCivics program. Retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor founded iCivics in 2010 as a way to enhance civics education for middle school students through free lesson plans and Web-based video games. Chief Justice Suttell is the Rhode Island chair of the iCivics program.

The Chief Justice and the 7th and 8th graders will look at the United States Constitution, which is the oldest written constitution still in use today. It is also one of the shortest constitutions in the world at a little over 4,500 words, yet it directs how our government should work.

Media coverage is invited for the event at 10:30 a.m. at Highlander Charter School, 42 Lexington Ave., Providence. Retired Family Court Associate Justice Howard I. Lipsey and attorney Donna Lamontagne, state co-coordinator of iCivics, are also expected.

Note: Constitution Day is September 17, but because it falls on a weekend this year it is being observed on Friday.

#