

Subject: Civics Report—April 2026

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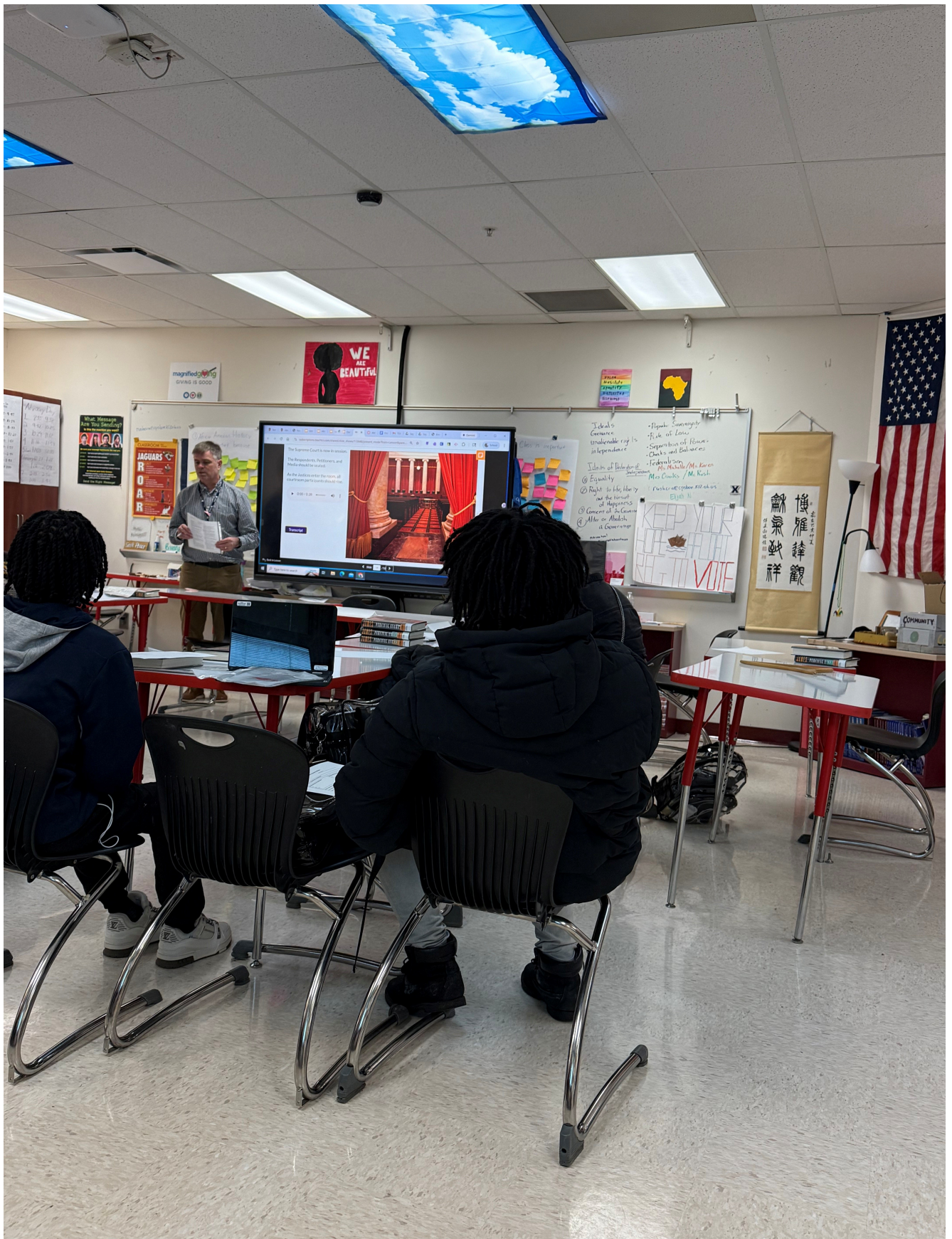
From: Federal Bar Association

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April 2026

Thank you to all our Chapters for continuing to educate our communities, and especially our students. The Rule of Law is paramount to the success of our democracy, and our efforts to provide civics education help our judiciary stay the course during times of divisive public discourse. To learn more about the wealth of resources available to FBA chapters, visit the [Educational Activities page](#) on the U.S. Courts. If your Chapter completed a civics program and you would like to be featured, or if you have questions about our civics programs, please reach out to [Jenn French](#).



On Thursday, November 20, and Friday, November 21, 2025, members of the Civics Committee of the John W. Peck Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Chapter visited three government classes at Shroder High School led by teacher Craig Rush and provided feedback to students as they argued cases centered on the First Amendment. Thursday's arguments featured *Hazelwood School District et al. v. Kuhlmeier et al.*, 484 U.S. 260 (1988) (school newspaper censorship), and *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38 (1985) (silent prayer in schools). Friday's arguments featured *Bethel School District v. Fraser*, 478 U.S. 675 (1986) (free speech during a school assembly), and *Board of Education of Westside Community Schools v. Mergens*, 496 U.S. 226 (1990) (after-school religious club meeting at a public school). Students played the roles of Supreme Court justices, appellate advocates, members of the press, and the Marshal of the Court. Civics Committee Chair Eburn Taiwo noted, "it was wonderful to see so many students engaged on these topics. Mr. Rush should be celebrated for making civics come alive by selecting cases that resonated with the students." In addition to Taiwo, participants included Chapter President Judge Rich Moore, Chapter Secretary Katherine Neff, Chapter Board Member Darren Ford, Member Julia Bley, and Northern Kentucky University Salmon P. Chase College of Law Student Members Lauren Hart and Ciara Gomez.

For more information on the program or how you can get involved with the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Chapter, please contact [Eburn Taiwo](#).





On January 22, 2026, judges from the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio and members of the Dayton Chapter traveled to Oakwood Junior High School and Oakwood High School—near Dayton, Ohio—to meet with students and preside over a citizenship naturalization ceremony. This is the third time in three years the Court has conducted a naturalization ceremony at Oakwood schools. The events this year were done to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The entire eighth grade class attended the student meeting, where they met with United States District Judge Michael Newman and United States Magistrate Judges Peter Silvain, Jr. and Caroline Gentry. The students learned what judges do every day, the different jurisdictional requirements of state courts versus federal courts, and how judges are selected. They also discussed, and asked questions about, the Rule of Law and careers in the courts. The judges invited them to attend the annual Court Camp, to be held in July 2026. The students also saw a demonstration by the U.S. Marshals. They learned about Flower, a U.S. Marshals canine trained to detect explosives and watched a demonstration of Flower navigating a room seeking scents associated with danger and how she alerts her handler when she finds them.

The Oakwood High School students then watched a naturalization ceremony with 35 new citizens from 18 different countries. The new citizens were greeted at the school by the high school's Honors Orchestra. The high school's a cappella group, *Synonym*, sang the National Anthem; the high school

Orchestra. The high school's a capella group, Synergy, sang the National Anthem, the high school marching band played congratulatory music following the taking of the oath; and finally, the school district's superintendent, Dr. Neil Gupta, gave remarks in which he fondly remembered the day his parents from India became naturalized citizens in the early 1990s.

The Southern District of Ohio judges are excited to participate in the civics events—both in their courtrooms and in local schools in the eight counties they serve—along with continuing their efforts to the celebrate the Declaration of Independence's 250th anniversary.

Any school or civic group in the Southern District of Ohio interested in hosting a naturalization ceremony or connecting with the Court can do so by emailing Public Information Officer [Parker Perry](#). For more information on the Dayton Chapter's civics education, please contact [Dana Branstetter](#).



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