

State Representative Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer)



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Thatcher Focus on Constitution During National Back To School Week

(Salem) "What a great learning opportunity for the students and me," said State Representative Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer) as she prepared to attend classes in the [Newberg School District](#) this week as part of the [National Conference of State Legislature's Back To School Program](#). Thatcher will visit [Ewing Young Elementary School](#), 17600 NE North Valley Road in Newberg and [Dundee Elementary School](#), 140 SW 5th Street in Dundee on **Friday September 22nd**.

In addition September 17th-23rd is National Constitution Week which kicked off with National [Constitution Day](#). "As a state legislator, I think it's important to talk with students about getting involved in their community and their government," noted Thatcher. "I know some kids think politics are boring which is probably why there is such a low voter turnout among young adults. If we get them engaged early in life, I think it makes a difference."

Newberg schools have a great reputation for emphasizing civics in the classroom. A few months ago Chehalem Valley Middle School won the state contest for the [We the People: Project Citizen](#) program in Oregon. A group of students, representing Chehalem Valley, went to the [National Project Citizen Contest](#) in Nashville, Tennessee and received the highest marks possible. The team [was awarded a Superior ranking](#) which was only given to 12 states.

In June, Representative Thatcher participated in the [day-long competition](#) for the Project Citizen program sponsored in Oregon by the [Classroom Law Project](#). "I was very impressed with the amount of hard work and commitment demonstrated by the students from Newberg," explained Thatcher. Terry McElligott, the teacher for that award winning program, is now the District's Director of Curriculum. She is taking Thatcher to Ewing Young and Dundee to hear what kinds of questions the students will ask and observe the things they will learn from Thatcher.

"As I look to the 2007 Legislative Session I plan to work on efforts to strengthen our civics education programs in Oregon," added Thatcher. "We will be retooling our high school standards and it seems like this should be incorporated into the basics."

The [Legislators Back to School Program](#) kicks off the third week in September. It was created in 1999 to provide students with a new way to understand the value of democracy. Today more than 320,000 students and 1,300 legislators across the country participate every year.

This is the 50th [Constitution Week](#) as [proclaimed by President Bush](#) and enacted by [Congress](#) in 1956. The delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia ratified the document on September 17th, 1787, and sent it to the states for their approval.

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