



## Office of Paula S. O'Neil Clerk & Comptroller Pasco County, Florida

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### Clerk & Comptroller Announces the 2017 Constitutional Essay Contest



On September 17, 1787, 37 brave patriots signed the United States Constitution, inaugurating the resounding phrase, "We the people." The Constitution establishes the foundation for freedoms we enjoy today. In celebration of Constitution Day, September 17, the Honorable Paula S. O'Neil, Ph.D., Pasco Clerk & Comptroller, is sponsoring the fourth annual Clerk & Comptroller's Constitutional Essay Contest. Dr. O'Neil invites Pasco students in the fifth grade to participate.

Contest winners will be selected by a judging panel based on their entries. First-, second-, and third-place winners will be awarded a trophy. The first-place winner will enjoy lunch with Dr. O'Neil, and receive an escorted tour of the Pasco County courthouse location of his/her choice. Contest rules and deadlines are provided below.

#### **Essay Question: Why is the United States Constitution Important?**

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**Eligibility:** All Pasco County **fifth-graders** are eligible for the contest. Students may be enrolled in public or private school. Homeschoolers are also welcome to participate.

**Deadline for Submissions:** Essays must be submitted by September 22.

#### **Rules:**

1. Each essay should be no longer than 300 words. This will be strictly enforced; essays longer than 300 words *shall be disqualified*.
2. Submissions will be judged on the participant's understanding of the issue, clarity, presentation, grammar, and spelling. The participant should respond to the question, "Why is the United States Constitution Important?"
3. Submissions must include the writer's name, age, grade, school, school address, contact telephone, and parent email address. (These are not counted against the 300-word limitation.) The contest winner will be notified by telephone.
4. One essay per student. Each essay should be the sole product of the student's work.
5. Each essay must be submitted to the following email address: [essaycontest@pascoclerk.com](mailto:essaycontest@pascoclerk.com). Only MS-Word and PDF documents will be accepted.
6. The winner will be announced on October 13.

*The Florida Constitution established a Clerk & Comptroller as an elected public trustee in 1838 and established at the county level a system of checks and balances to serve and protect the interests of the public. The Pasco County Clerk & Comptroller, Paula S. O'Neil, Ph.D., is an elected Constitutional Officer who, under Florida Statutes, provides information management, record keeping, and financial management to the Circuit Court, County Court, and County Government. The Mission Statement of the Office is, "We serve with integrity, professionalism, and compassion as we safeguard our customers' interests."*