

Dear Families,

We have been working on our Government and Civics Unit, which will take us to the end of the year. Students have been building background knowledge about our Federal system of government and how the Framers designed our Constitution to protect our rights by limiting the power of the government. As we move forward, we will be bringing the idea of government and civics closer to home. There are several standards crossing both fourth and fifth grades that deal with the concepts of civic responsibility, good citizenship, and volunteerism.

***What does this mean for my student?***

After Spring Break, each student will be choosing a topic/issue that interests him/her. These issues should have some component that will allow the student to participate in a service project. We have included a list of possible choices, but please do not feel limited by the list. After choosing a topic, each student will research the topic and write a short essay describing the chosen issue and how it affects our community. After researching the topic, the student will participate in a service project relating to the issue. After participating in the service project, each student will write a reflection of the experience, including next steps that can be done. Finally, each student will create a presentation documenting the issue, the service project, and the reflection.

***Is there a simpler way to keep track of that?***

<b>Dates</b>	<b>What needs to be done</b>
March 31 <sup>st</sup> - April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Choose a topic
April 7 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup>	Research topic and write short essay describing the issue and its effect on our local community. Make arrangements to complete a service project.
April 21 <sup>st</sup> - May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Participate in and complete a service project, document the project (reflections, pictures, video, etc...), and write a reflection of the experience (including ideas for next steps).
May 5 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup>	Create presentation and practice giving the presentation.
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> grade class presentations
May 16 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> grade presentations

***Why are you giving me this now?***

We want everyone to be aware of where we are heading. We also want to give you time to discuss the project with your child over Spring Break so that everyone has a topic/issue in mind when we return on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

***What about that list of ideas?***

**Community Service Project Options**

<b>In School</b>	<b>Out of School</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Book Buddies</li><li>• Cafeteria helpers</li><li>• Food Banks</li><li>• Campus Clean-up</li><li>• Tumbling Creek Clean-up</li><li>• Backpack Buddies</li><li>• Gathering Supplies for Pet Rescue</li><li>• Where your congressman/politician about an issue</li><li>• Write an editorial for the Gainesville Sun</li><li>• Friends of the Library</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• St. Francis help</li><li>• Road Clean-up</li><li>• Read to Lead</li><li>• Natural disaster recovery efforts</li><li>• Retirement/Nursing Homes volunteer</li><li>• Pet Rescue (animal shelters)</li><li>• Cancer Society</li><li>• Shands Pediatrics (hospital)</li><li>• Boys and Girls Club</li><li>• Crisis Center</li><li>• Women's shelters</li><li>• Ronald McDonald House</li><li>• Red Cross</li></ul>

Remember, these are just suggestions. There are a lot of other issues and topics that would lend themselves to this type of project. If your child chooses a topic from the "out of school" list, you will need to approve the project and agree to help them get to and from the project site.

***What next?***

If you have any questions, please email your child's advisory teacher.

Thanks,

*The Treehouse Teachers*