

# Powerful Signatures

The United States Constitution provides the framework for our government's structure and all of our laws. It is referred to as a "living document" because it can be changed or amended. Since the original Constitution was signed in 1787, 27 amendments have been signed into law. We refer to the first ten as the Bill of Rights. Review these examples of important amendments, and then create your own school amendment.



- **First Amendment:** Promised freedom of religion, press, and expression
- **Thirteenth Amendment:** Abolished slavery
- **Nineteenth Amendment:** Granted women the right to vote

Write an amendment to your school rules that you think would bring about important and positive change.

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## Answer the following questions:

1. How would your amendment benefit the students at your school?

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2. Do you think many students would sign your amendment? Why or why not?

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3. Do you think that teachers would support your amendment? Why or why not?

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4. What would be the short-term effects of this amendment?

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5. What would be the long-term effects of this amendment?

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Signatures can lead to sweeping social change!

In 1958, Martin Luther King, Jr., and other leaders of the civil rights movement organized The Petition for Integrated Schools. This petition encouraged the integration of black and white students in schools. Thousands of high school and college students worked to gather signatures on a petition, which they sent to President Eisenhower and Congress. Reflect: How do you think these thousands of signatures helped to strengthen the civil rights movement? **(Write a response on a separate sheet of paper.)**

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**Contest!**  
**Now collect signatures**  
**for a chance to win \$5,000**  
in supplies for your school!

Go to  
[www.sharpie.com/scholastic](http://www.sharpie.com/scholastic)  
for complete details and rules.  
Deadline: December 31, 2007