



2015 Annual Report

California Civic Learning Partnership Committee
of Butte County

Milestones

Governance

Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye teamed with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson to establish the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning. The Task Force was charged with making recommendations elevating the status of civic learning in schools, so that all students in California gain the knowledge, skills and values they need to protect and participate in our republic. The Task Force was overseen by the Power of Democracy Steering Committee. The Power of Democracy Steering Committee formed in July 2013 and was charged with implementing policies on civic education adopted by the Judicial Council. The Power of Democracy Steering Committee accepted the Task Force's final report, *Revitalizing K-12 Civic Learning In California: A Blueprint for Action*, released in August 2014.

Butte County is one of six pilot counties selected to create a local Civic Learning Partnership committee to develop and implement a plan for promoting civic learning in their County. The Butte County Civic Learning Partnership was formed in February 2015 with the goal of developing civic literacy, disposition and participation of all K-12 students by integrating the *Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning* into instructional practice and school life, and also by providing civic learning models and resources that can be used by teachers and schools.

The California Civic Learning Partnership (CCLP) of Butte County is a nonpartisan committee consisting of approximately sixty well-respected leaders in Butte County. The committee is led by Presiding Judge Kristen A. Lucena of the Butte County Superior Court, Tim Taylor, Butte County Superintendent of Schools and Michael Dailey, Financial Advisor for Morgan Stanley. Together, they assembled a dynamic cross section of community members including fellow judges, the District Attorney, the County Clerk, a County Supervisor, a City Council person, Representatives from Senator's, Assemblyman's, and Congressman's offices, lawyers, business owners, former and current high school principals, members of the League of Women Voters, teachers and high school students.

There have been three full committee meetings since the February kick-off breakfast. At the May 13, 2015 meeting, members separated into four groups where members joined one of four subcommittees to which they felt they could best contribute with their individual skillset, experience and knowledge. The goal was to create four specific, well-developed programs. The full committee met again on August 26, 2015 and November 4, 2015; again separating into the four subcommittee groups to plan, strategize, and share ideas. A fourth, full-committee meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2016.

Policy Setting

The CCLP of Butte County announced that all fourteen of the county's fourteen school districts and the Butte County Office of Education adopted civic learning resolutions aimed at supporting a comprehensive civic learning curriculum and programs in all K-12 schools in Butte County, and was the first County in the

state in which all school districts have adopted civic learning resolutions. The passage of these fifteen resolutions directly impacts over 31,000¹ K-12 students countywide.

The CCLP of Butte County developed four programs utilizing three guiding principles:

1. To be inclusive of all students in the county; including those in charter schools, private schools, continuation high schools and students attending high school in Juvenile Hall.
2. To focus on expanding current programs.
3. To provide educators with easy to implement programs and accompanying resources that satisfy existing curriculum standards.

Programs

The members of the CCLP of Butte County focused on developing four distinct programs that would incorporate and interact with the six proven practices in civic education. It is the CCLP's belief that each of the six proven practices are represented within the four programs. These practices are: classroom instruction in government, history, law and economics; service learning projects tied to the curriculum; simulations of democratic processes; extracurricular activities that have a strong civic dimension; student participation in school governance, and discussions of current events and controversial topics.

Below is a summary of each of the four programs, including notable achievements to date.

I. Student Voter Program

Mission: To increase the percentage of young voters by providing students with an understanding of the voting process and their constitutional right. To encourage disengaged students to recognize the importance of their vote and why it matters.

Program Description: The United States is a democracy, governed by the people, for the people, and cannot function without the voice of the people. Young voters represent a critical demographic that will one day run the country and become future lawmakers. It is vital that young Americans realize the importance of their own voices and the privilege one has in the right to vote.

The Student Voter Program will focus on the questions of why young Americans should vote and why their vote makes a difference. The program will encourage disengaged students to participate and understand that every vote makes a difference. By providing a better understanding of how government works, the ultimate goal will be to narrow the thought process of “Why vote?” to “Vote because you can.”

¹ <http://www.ed-data.org/county/Butte>

Achievements:

- a. **Survey (PVHS)** – A survey was distributed to students at Pleasant Valley High School. Seventy-one (71) responses were received. The responses provided the CCLP committee with data to ascertain students’ backgrounds, interests, and needs, with respect to voter education.
- b. **Mock Presidential Election (PVHS)** – On September 22, 2015 a mock presidential election was held at Pleasant Valley High School during the lunch hour in the main quad area. Three hundred thirteen (313) votes were cast by students participating in this mock election.
- c. **League of Women Voters Voter Registration (PVHS)** – On September 22, 2015 an informational table was set up at Pleasant Valley High School during the lunch hour in the main quad area to distribute Voter Registration cards. Fifty-seven (57) cards were distributed.
- d. **Resolution Recognizing September 14-25, 2015 as California High School Voter Education Weeks** – On September 15, 2015 the Butte County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution encouraging all Butte County High Schools to participate in California High School Voter Education Weeks.

Proven Practices: All six proven practices are incorporated into the program.



II. Mentoring Civic Engagement

Mission: To promote civic engagement with students through business and community leadership mentoring programs. To acquire knowledge of local city council meetings and learn how community issues and problems are solved.

Program Description: By definition, a mentor is someone who forms a relationship, especially with a younger generation, to act as an advisor, a guide, or a trainer and provides knowledge and education through his or her skillset.

The Mentoring Civic Engagement Program will focus on mentoring young people through the vital hours of after school programs such as the Boys and Girls Club, establishing a connection with alternative education students at locations such as Fairview High School, and revitalize troubled adolescents that might reside in Juvenile Hall with positive programs to promote individual development and improve self-esteem as well as encourage community involvement and interest in local government.

The program will focus on finding teachers and administrators willing to be the initiators or point persons, citizens who are willing to volunteer time and skillsets, and civic leaders such as business owners and government administrators, who are willing to provide resources and facilities for such things as

jury duty education programs, mock city council meetings, and field trips to various community facilities and local businesses.

The subcommittee developed a goal to launch the pilot program for mentoring students involved in the Chico Boys and Girls Club. “Talking points” were created for the students and the mentors. The program mentors set up a city council election amongst the students at the Chico Boys and Girls Club. The students that are elected meet with their mentors to understand the needs of the citizens (children of the Boys and Girls Club) and then work with a member of City Council to create the Boys and Girls Club of Chico City Council Meeting Agenda. A member of City Council will host the students at the City Chambers, in conjunction with their mentors, to hold the Boys and Girls Club of Chico City Council Meeting. It will be a three-week program centered around mentors and students understanding the civic process on a City level.

Achievements:

a. **Boys and Girls Club (Chico)** - On September 23, 2015 mentors visited the Boys and Girls Club in Chico for the initial introduction to the program that will include a Mock City Council Meeting. On October 7, 2015 mentors visited Chico City Chambers with Boys and Girls Club members to discuss what a City Council Meeting looks like; students worked with mentors to elect a student Mayor, develop an agenda, budget, etc. On October 14, 2015 students, with assistance from mentors, conducted a Mock City Council Meeting in City Chambers.

Proven Practices: All six proven practices are incorporated into the program.



III. Mock Trial

Mission: To provide the mock trial experience to every student in our local school districts. To have each student engaged in the judicial branch by first-hand experience with due process and equal protection.

Program Description: A scholastic mock trial is an academic event imitating the legal process used for teaching students about court trials and the judicial branch. It promotes the comprehension and due process of a trial in the legal system through academic competition by emulation of legal professionals such as attorneys and judges, court staff, and playing the part of the accused or witnesses.

The Mock Trial Program will focus on expanding the existing programs by branching out to more schools and providing similar programming to different school levels with the opportunity to compete in the Constitutional Rights Foundation’s California High School Mock Trial event and possibly further competition in the National High School Mock Trial event.

The subcommittee's work emphasized two different programs:

□ **High School Mock Trial.** Each February the local high schools compete in a mock trial sponsored by the Constitutional Rights Foundation. The yearly program introduces a criminal case with variances that allow high school students to learn how to prepare opening arguments, argue pretrial motions, and examine witnesses. Each team consists of lawyers, witnesses, and courtroom staff. The Butte County competition takes place at the Butte County Superior Court with a Superior Court Judge presiding and deciding the matter. The winning team then moves onto a state competition that takes place in March.

□ **Elementary Mock Trial.** At the fifth and eighth grade school levels, classrooms would incorporate a classroom mock trial simulation within the current curriculum. The students would be taught the three branches of government, roles in a courtroom, and the flow of a trial. Currently, each May, elementary students from local schools in Butte County participate in Law Day with a similar mock trial simulation at the Butte County Superior Court.

The goals of the Mock Trial Program will be to expand the existing programs and encourage participation in all schools in Butte County, to include curriculum related to the judicial branch from kindergarten to high school, and to ultimately answer the question of why rules and fairness are valuable in a child's life.

Achievements:

a. **Elementary School Mock Trial Simulation (Parkview Elementary School/PVHS/CHS)** – On May 20, 2015 a mock trial was held at the North Butte County Courthouse in celebration of Law Day. The Presiding Judge presided and approximately thirty (30) students participated. A classroom visit preceded the trial on May 13, 2015. At the classroom visit the Presiding Judge and two high school students, who wrote the mock trial script, presented on the three branches of government, checks and balances and the U.S. Supreme Court.

b. **Elementary School Mock Trial Simulation (Notre Dame Catholic School/PVHS)** – On May 20, 2015 a mock trial was held at the North Butte County Courthouse in celebration of Law Day. The Presiding Judge presided and approximately twenty-three (23) students participated. A classroom visit preceded the trial on May 13, 2015. At the classroom visit the Presiding Judge and two high school students, who wrote the mock trial script, presented on the three branches of government, checks and balances and the U.S. Supreme Court.

c. **Elementary School Mock Trial Simulation (Chico Country Day School/CHS)** – On November 18, 2015 a mock trial was held at Chico Country Day School in Chico. A Butte County Judge presided and approximately twenty (20) students participated. The event was covered by local news media.

d. **High School Mock Trial (LPHS/PVHS)** – The Butte County Office of Education, in conjunction with the Superior Court of California, County of Butte, will host the annual high school mock trial competition in February 2016. Each school is actively engaged in preparing the students with the assistance of attorney mentors and the school advisor. The Program includes approximately twenty (20)

students from Las Plumas High School and approximately twenty (20) students from Pleasant Valley High School.

Proven Practices: All six proven practices are incorporated into the program.



IV. Justice Sayings Classroom Unit

Mission: To bring to life the ideals of great democratic thinkers (philosophers, writers, and leaders) throughout history and to introduce our students to the judicial branch of government in Butte County.

Program Description: Currently there are seventy-five (75) historic Justice Sayings (quotes) etched in stainless steel plates embedded in the floor throughout the new North Butte County Courthouse in Chico. Each saying identifies the source or individual and the date in which it was written or spoken. Quotes range from California Civil Code, to famous presidents, to important political figures, and other popular cultural personalities, all with various thoughts on justice and law.

The Justice Sayings Classroom Unit will focus on encouraging teachers to bring students on a tour of the new courthouse and use the Justice Sayings as an emphasis for future educational opportunities, such as essays, research, and presentations determined by the age groups and grade levels of the students.

The target grades for the program are 3rd, 5th, 8th, and 12th. During the fall semester, teachers will bring their students to the courthouse. The students will spend twenty to thirty (20-30) minutes to view and read the quotes located at the new North Butte County Courthouse and make a paper “rubbing” of the stainless steel tiles throughout the courthouse; students spend fifteen to twenty (15-20) minutes with a Superior Court Judge and take a short tour. Once back at school, students will prepare a presentation, essay or research paper, depending on grade level. Additional grade appropriate activities could be added such as finding an additional quote by the same author, finding a related quote, and for older students - a competition may be an option.

Achievements:

a. **Educator’s Guide Developed** – The Court developed a Justice Sayings Project: Educator’s Guide for educators to use with their students that includes a map of the North Butte County Courthouse (NCCH) identifying the location of each quote, a brief description of the context of each quote, suggestions for essay topics and further research, and references.

b. **12th Grade Government Class (Inspire High School)** – On December 4, 2015, the first class visited the new North Butte County Courthouse for the Justice Sayings Classroom Unit under the

California Civic Learning Partnership of Butte County. Forty-four (44) students and six (6) adults attended. The Presiding Judge provided introductions and a brief overview of the courthouse and judicial system in the jury assembly room. Students were then escorted into the public hallways of the two-story courthouse to locate quotes that resonated with them. Court staff were present to assist if necessary. The group reconvened in a courtroom for a Questions and Answers session with the Presiding Judge.

Proven Practices: All six proven practices are incorporated into the program.



Other CCLP Member Achievements

In addition to the four CCLP developed programs, committee members have actively embraced a variety of other civic activities:

- a. **Philosophical Chairs, a Method of Debate (Achieve Charter School, Chico Country Day School, Parkview Elementary School, pending Hooker Oak Elementary School)** – Retired teacher and CCLP member Charles Copeland has volunteered in five (5) schools to facilitate and mentor teachers in this method of public policy debate. Approximately one hundred-twenty (120) students and six (6) teachers have participated.
- b. **Youth Summit (Paradise High School, Inspire School of the Arts, Achieve Charter School)** – Butte County Superintendent of Schools Tim Taylor, CCLP Co-Chair is also a member of the Paradise Citizen’s Alliance. The Paradise Citizen’s Alliance has spearheaded a Youth Summit where middle and high school students come together to brainstorm challenges and opportunities for youth in the Paradise/Magalia community. Small groups were facilitated by community leaders. The first Youth Summit was held April 9, 2015 and the next summit is scheduled for January 28, 2016.
- c. **Town Hall Meeting (CSUC)** – California State University Chico Director of Civic Engagement and CCLP member Ellie Ertle is also the faculty coordinator for the Town Hall Meeting program since 2009. The program is embedded in the first year American Government course required at CSUC. The Town Hall Meeting is a forum for discussion of political issues and public policies. Breakout sessions and roundtable workshops during the program are designed to provide students the opportunity to engage in civic discourse and begin to develop the tools needed for lifelong political participation. The program includes 650-800 college students per semester and approximately 100 community members including CCLP members Judge Candela, Charles Copeland, and District Attorney Michael Ramsey.
- d. **High School Leadership Luncheons (PVHS/CHS/PHS/OHS)** – Butte County Superior Court Judges including CCLP members Judges Kristen Lucena, Michael Candela and Clare

Keithley, District Attorney Michael Ramsey, Vice Mayor Sean Morgan, Ellie Ertle, John Shepherd and Mark Beebe continued and expanded their annual High School Leadership Luncheons. The luncheons bring together high achieving high school seniors interested in government with Superior Court Judges and local leaders in an informal setting. The luncheons provide a platform to commend the achievements of exceptional students, as well as provide guidance to enhance their future endeavors. Students learn firsthand experiences from community leaders and discover what inspired them to choose their specific career paths. The atmosphere prompts enthusiasm and encourages students to explore roles of opportunity in their community. Four schools participated: Pleasant Valley High School, Chico High School, Paradise High School and Oroville High School.

Future

The full committee will meet on February 10, 2016. Members of the CCLP of Butte County will continue to strive to improve the quality and effectiveness of civic learning in schools. It is the committee's desire that the Six Proven Practices in Civic Learning are implemented and that together we can:

1. Provide instruction in government, history, law and democracy;
2. Discuss current local, national, and international issues and events in the classroom, particularly those that young people view as important in their lives;
3. Design and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to apply what they learn through performing community service that is linked to the formal curriculum and classroom instruction;
4. Offer extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for young people to get involved in their schools or communities;
5. Encourage student participation in school governance; and
6. Encourage students' participation in simulations of democratic processes and procedures.