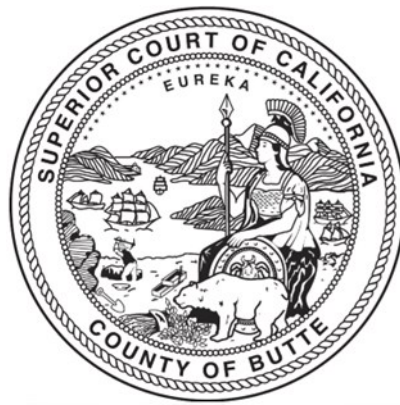


2020-2023 Outreach Report:

Creating a Culture of Civic Competency



Butte County Superior Court Outreach Report



Historical Perspective






The Butte County Superior Court collaborates with Butte County Schools to offer a myriad of interactive civic learning opportunities including Mock Trials, Judges in the Classroom program, Butte County Office of Education Art Show, Career Fairs, High School Leadership Luncheons, CSU Chico Moot Court Competition, teach at Cal Northern School of Law and the North County Courthouse Justice Sayings Tours.

“In conformity with the canons of Judicial Ethics our court has a longstanding commitment to supporting civic and legal education in elementary school, high school, the university and the law school. It is a proud tradition fully embraced by our judicial officers and court administration.”

- Judge Merrifield, Presiding Judge

2020-2023 Outreach Statistics

The Butte County Superior Court 2020-2023 (through June 2023) Outreach Report highlights the success of these efforts which were encouraged by the Judicial Council of California’s Power of Democracy initiative which began in 2013 when then Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye teamed with then State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. Together, the Chief and Superintendent, established the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning. The

	Judges In The Classroom	51 Visits
	Mock Trials	3 Held
	Art Shows	2 Held
	Moot Court	3 Held
	Leadership Luncheons	12 Held

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 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. “We can all agree that civic participation is both a right and a responsibility. Unfortunately, in our nation and our state, civic participation is not where we need it to be in order to sustain our democracy and flourish in the 21st century global economy. In fact, by nearly every measure—news readership, voting, political engagement, philanthropy, volunteering, church attendance—civic engagement has been declining since the end of World War II.” (*Revitalizing K-12 Civic Learning in California: A blueprint for Action, August 2014 page 14*)

“Judges are in a unique position to provide non-partisan civic instruction in the schools that educators can use as a springboard for further inquiry into a student’s future role in our democracy as voters, jurors, taxpayers and active leaders in their community. Our court’s relationships with state and federal leaders in the area of civics provides expertise, innovation and support to our local endeavors.”

—Judge Lucena

January of 2023, two weeks after now Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero was sworn in she announced her intention to continue to sponsor the work of the Power of Democracy. Judge Kristen Lucena of the Butte County Superior Court sits as one of three Superior Court Judges on the Power of Democracy Committee.

In the nearly ten years since the publication of the *Blueprint* the problem nationally has not abated. On May 3, 2023 Ben Chapman wrote the article to below in *The Wall Street Journal* notating the decline in eighth grade U.S. History and Civics scores demonstrating the urgent need for civic learning in classrooms at all grade levels.

Locally, extraordinary challenges have stymied progress. The deadly 2018 Camp Fire followed by Covid-19 Pandemic had substantial impacts on the Butte County education system through displacement, school closures, illness, social distancing, masking, and virtual learning. The Covid-19 Pandemic also impacted the civic outreach programs of Butte County. Nearly all events were canceled or had to be held virtually in the height of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Nonetheless, the county was resilient and adapted to these changes. This report covers the outreach events between the Butte County Superior Court and Butte County schools from 2020-2023 in which the judiciary lends its support to educators committed to developing an informed and engaged citizenry ready to participate as jurors, witnesses and litigants.





Mock Trials

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

This program supports the Constitutional Rights Foundation county competitions which produces a new set of mock trial materials based on important issues facing America's youth. The Mock Trial subcommittee would like to enhance the program by encouraging participation by all high schools in Butte County. High School Mock Trials have been held yearly at the Butte County Superior Court except for 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

"The collaboration with the Butte County Office of Education in facilitating the high school mock trials at the courthouse provide an opportunity for students to present evidence and argument in a courtroom under simulated conditions of a trial.

The students take their roles and preparation very seriously."

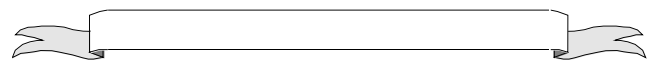
-Judge Mosbarger



Butte County Superintendent of Schools Mary Sakuma and Judge Mosbarger pictured with students in 2023 mock trial



Commissioner Gingery judges the 2023 high school mock trial

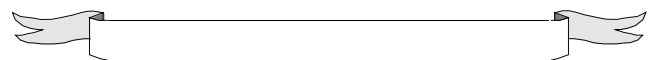


High School Winners

2020: Las Plumas High School

2022: Las Plumas High School

2023: Las Plumas High School



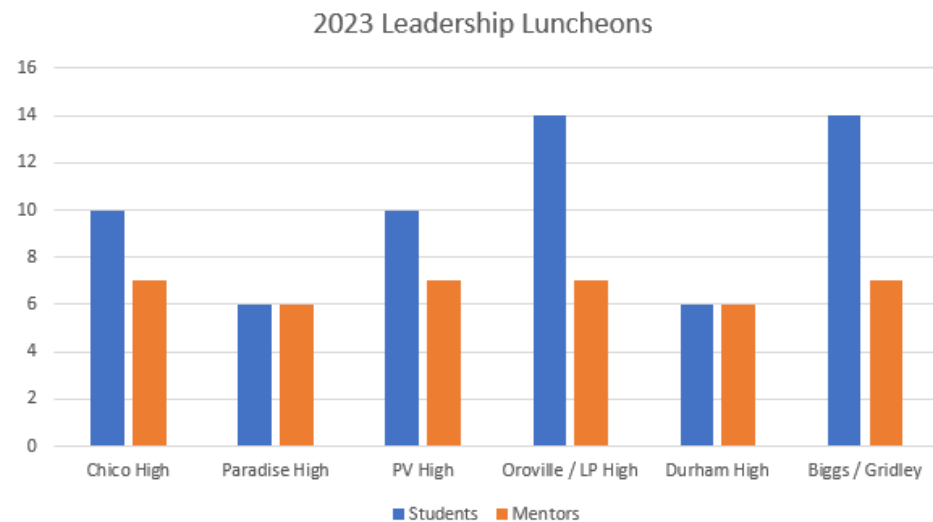
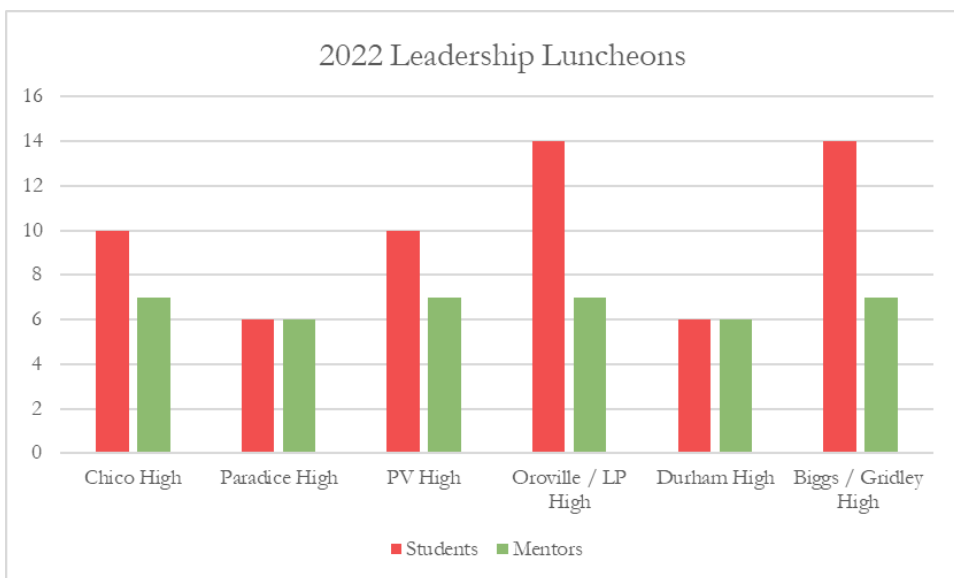


Leadership Luncheons

Annual high school leadership luncheons have continued with the generous support of a grant from the California Judges Foundation (CJF), Butte County Superior Court judges, and numerous community members. 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 mentor exceptional students as well as to recognize their achievements. Students hear firsthand experiences from community leaders and discover what inspired them to choose their specific career paths. A key message to students is this: pursue active leadership roles in the future, whether it be in local politics, philanthropy, or community service. The luncheons prompt enthusiasm and encourage civic engagement for students in their community. The Covid-19 Pandemic forced all luncheons to be canceled from 2020 to 2021. In 2022 Luncheons resumed and grant funds that were previously obtained in 2020 from the CJF were utilized.

“Robert Ingersoll is credited with saying that ‘We rise by lifting others.’ Through our annual Leadership Luncheons, I have felt tremendous joy, hope and satisfaction watching our local high school students begin to realize their potential to change the world for the better.”

- Judge Candela





Pleasant Valley High School Leadership Luncheon on April 20, 2022 hosted by Judge Lucena. Special guest mentor Chief Judge Kimberly Mueller from the US District Court, Eastern District



Paradise High School Leadership Luncheon on April 17, 2023 hosted by Judge Keithley



Chico High School Leadership Luncheon on May 13, 2022 hosted by Judge Caraway



Gridley/Biggs High School Leadership Luncheon on May 13, 2022 hosted by Judge Rodriguez

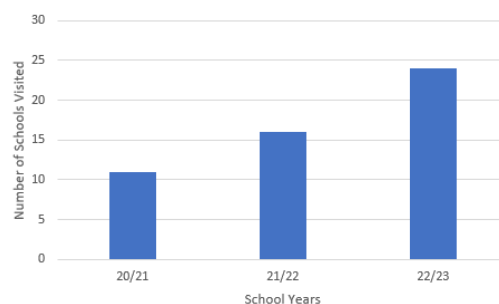
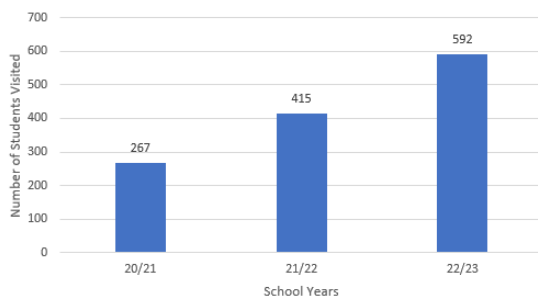
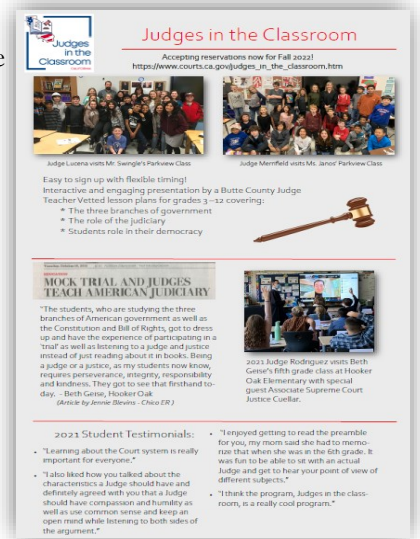


Judges in the Classroom

In 2018, Butte County was one of two counties in California selected to begin piloting a new program called [Judges in the Classroom \(JIC\)](#). The JIC program connects judges with teachers who submit an online request to have a judge visit their classroom and speak to their class about: a) the role of the court within the three branches of government, b) constitutional due process, and c) the importance of fair and equal access to the court system to ensure that each side is heard by an impartial, fair third party. The lessons are designed for a one time, one hour long visit by a judge. The judge utilizes different teaching methods, including interactive games and theater style role-play, to further educate the students on the judiciary.

Since its inception in Butte County **81 classes and 2,254 students have participated** in the Judges in the Classroom program. The Butte County Superior Court has also distributed 2,254 pocket sized constitutions to participating students

JIC was adapted due to the Covid-19 Pandemic to allow for remote delivery. Judges joined students via zoom and adapted lesson plans as needed. Eleven of the twelve lesson plans delivered in the 2020-2021 school year were virtual. Due to the ease of virtual presentations they are still being offered post-pandemic however most post-pandemic visits have been in person. Prior to the 2022-2023 school year the court made a concerted effort to market the JIC program. The program developed a flyer promoting the program which was distributed to superintendents, principals and teachers across the county. As a result the number of classroom visits increased by 50%



How to Request a Visit from a Judicial Officer:

1) Review the available lesson plans:

<https://www.judgesintheclassemm.org/lessons>

2) Submit a request:

<https://www.judgesintheclassemm.org/make-a-request>

3) Coordinate the visit:



Scan the above QR Code to make a request.

An Administrative Services Specialist will contact you once a volunteer has confirmed availability. Teachers will have the opportunity to discuss in advance the learning needs of the classroom.

Judges in the Classroom

“I also liked how you talked about the characteristics a Judge should have and definitely agreed with you that a Judge should have compassion and humility as well as use common sense and keep an open mind while listening to both sides of the argument.”

-Student



Judge Merrifield Virtually Visits Hooker Oak on December 14, 2020.



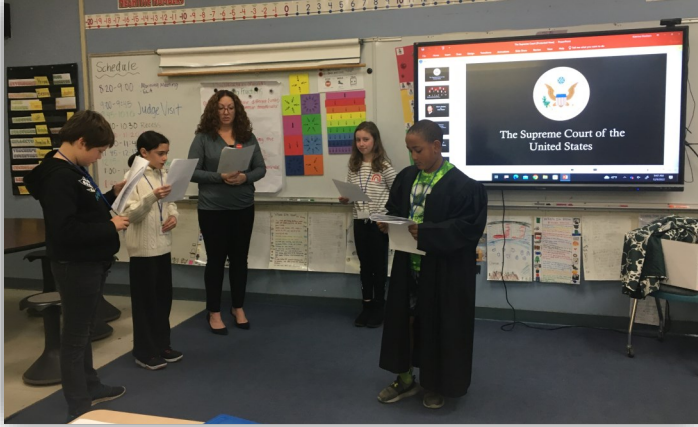
Judge Lucena Virtually Visits Little Chico Creek on December 11, 2020.



Judge Merrifield Visits Golden Hills on October 14, 2022.

“Being a judge or justice, as my students now know, requires perseverance, integrity, responsibility and kindness. They got to see that first hand today.”

-Teacher



Commissioner Gingery Visits Parkview on
December 9, 2022.



Judge Mosbarger Visits Little Chico Creek on
January 19, 2022.



Judge Rodriguez Visits Rosedale on
September 21, 2021.

“Learning about the Court system is really important for everyone.”
-Student

“I enjoyed getting to read the preamble for you, my mom said she had to memorize that when she was in the 6th grade. It was fun to be able to sit with an actual Judge and get to hear your point of view of different subjects.”
-Student



Judges in the Classroom

Judges In The Classroom 2020-2021 School Year

School	Date	Teacher	Judge
Little Chico Creek	12/11/2020	Seana Velasco	Judge Lucena
Little Chico Creek	12/11/2020	Beatriz Sehorn	Judge Lucena
Hooker Oak	12/14/2020	Melinda Hildebrandt	Judge Merrifield
Rosedale	12/17/2020	Don Kinslow	Judge Rodriguez
Emma Wilson	2/1/2021	Kelly Morrison/Kristine Cowan	Judge Merrifield
Shasta	2/2/2021	Kelli Voss	Judge Mosbarger
Shasta	2/4/2021	Kelli Voss	Judge Mosbarger
Emma Wilson	3/12/2021	Laurie Barnes	Judge Rodriguez
Forest Ranch Charter	3/24/2021	Lisa Sellu	Judge Lucena
Hooker Oak	4/7/2021	Beth Geise	Judge Lucena
Bishop Elementary *Inyo County	5/6/2021	Becky Rosen	Judge Rodriguez
Sierra Avenue	5/14/2021	Kristin Drake	Judge Lucena

Judges In The Classroom 2021-2022 School Year

School	Date	Teacher	Judge
Rosedale	9/21/2021	Krizia Garcia	Judge Rodriguez
Little Chico Creek	9/22/2021	Katy Azevedo	Judge Lucena
Hooker Oak	9/27/2021	Melinda Hildebrandt	Judge Merrifield
Cedarwood	10/4/2021	Lynn Pitman	Judge Merrifield
Shasta	10/6/2021	Alison Woods	Commissioner Gingery
Hooker Oak	10/18/2021	Beth Geise	Judge Rodriguez
Parkview	10/26/2021	Tammy Janos	Judge Mosbarger
Hooker Oak	10/27/2021	Katie Yancy	Commissioner Worley
Shasta	11/5/2021	Jenny Cox	Commissioner Gingery
Rosedale	11/18/2021	Lucia Hernandez	Judge Rodriguez
Marigold	12/1/2021	Melissa Carriere	Commissioner Worley
Marigold	12/1/2021	Steve Christiansen	Commissioner Worley
Rosedale	12/16/2021	Don Kinslow	Judge Rodriguez
Little Chico Creek	1/19/2022	Kristen Thomas	Judge Mosbarger
Hamilton High *Glenn County	1/19/2022	Rina Gonzalez	Judge Lucena
Little Chico Creek	5/6/2022	Seana Velasco	Judge Lucena

Judges in the Classroom

Judges In The Classroom 2022-2023 School Year

School	Date	Teacher	Judge
Richvale	9/29/2022	Jill Pearson	Judge Rodriguez
Golden Hills	10/10/2022	Rebekah Zarzynski	Commissioner Gingery
Golden Hills	10/12/2022	Kristen Russell	Commissioner Worley
Golden Hills	10/14/2022	Michaela Weston	Judge Merrifield
Marigold	10/28/2022	Melissa Carriere	Judge Mosbarger
Sierra View	11/1/2022	Whitney Toste	Judge Lucena
Sierra Avenue	11/2/2022	Kristen Drake	Judge Lucena
Sierra View	11/7/2022	Emily Akimoto	Commissioner Gingery
Parkview	11/7/2022	Bailey Lawrence	Judge Lucena
Marigold	11/8/2022	Willow DeFranco	Judge Lucena
Hooker Oak	11/8/2022	Katie Yancy	Judge Rodriguez
Biggs	11/14/2022	Tammie Loftin	Commissioner Worley
Pine Ridge	12/5/2022	Mariah Gist	Commissioner Gingery
Sierra View	12/8/2022	Gabe Mullins	Judge Rodriguez
Parkview	12/9/2022	Katrina Holzen	Commissioner Gingery
Sierra View	12/12/2022	Julie Crum	Commissioner Worley
Sierra Avenue	12/13/2022	Judy Yang	Judge Rodriguez
Parkview	12/16/2022	Tammy Janos	Judge Mosbarger
Biggs	1/24/2023	Heidi Cammack	Judge Rodriguez
Hooker Oak	3/22/2023	Beth Geise	Judge Lucena
Hooker Oak	3/24/2023	Lindsey Lundberg	Judge Mosbarger
Little Chico Creek	4/28/2023	Seana Velasco	Judge Mosbarger
Little Chico Creek	5/12/2023	Kristen Thomas	Commissioner Gingery
Little Chico Creek	5/22/2023	Beatriz Sehorn	Judge Mosbarger

Achievements

Judges In The Classroom Achievements:



Hooker Oak Elementary School – On October 18, 2021, Hon. Jesus A. Rodriguez, Judge of the Butte County Superior Court, conducted a Judges in the Classroom visit with Ms. Beth Geise’s 5th grade class. The students were also joined via zoom by California Associate Supreme Court Justice Mariano Florentino Cuéllar (ret’d). The students participated in the mock Salem witch trials lesson plan and wore costumes to match the roles. The event was published in the Chico Enterprise Record with an article by Jennie Blevins.



California Council for the Social Studies Elementary Outstanding Teacher of the Year -

Ms. Beth Geise of Hooker Oak Elementary School was awarded the 2023 Elementary Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award from the California Council for the Social Studies (CCSS). Ms. Geise has been a leader in Civic Engagement in Butte County. Ms. Geise helped pilot the Judges in the classroom program and has been a fundamental partner in the Court’s Elementary School Mock Trial Program. The Court issued a News Release February 27, 2023 congratulating Ms. Geise on her award and thanking her and other local educators for their continued commitment to teaching students about the role of the Judicial Branch in our society.

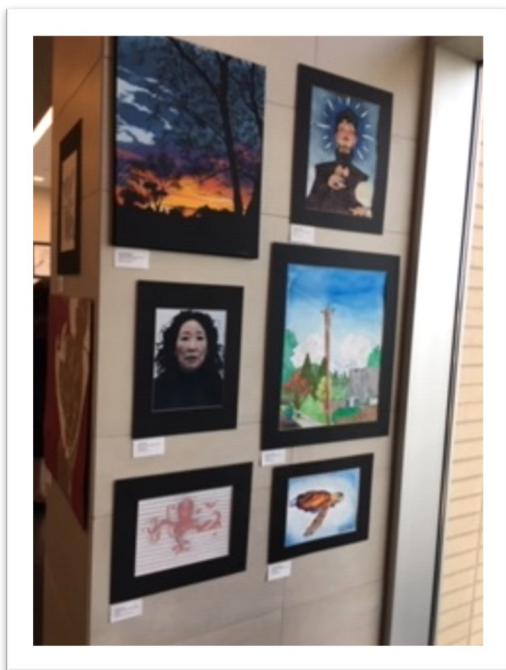




Butte County Office Of Education Art Show

Butte County based high school art teachers are invited to submit student work for the annual Superintendent's High School Art Show that typically occurs in March, National Youth Art Month. This event showcases the finest art work in the county and a team of jurors select especially impressive works for awards. The goal of the show is to demonstrate what students can accomplish when provided with an opportunity to fully develop their artistic, cultural, and creative abilities through quality, standards-based arts learning. It's also to recognize high school visual art students, teachers, and programs in the county and to recognize the importance of providing arts education in public schools. ¹

The Butte County Office of Education hosted their 2020 Art Show at the North Butte County Courthouse. The Art Show included an awards presentation for participating students by the Superintendent of Schools and CCLP co-chair Mary Sakuma, and a reception followed. Unfortunately due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the 2021 art show was canceled. In 2022 the art was displayed at the North Butte County Courthouse and a video was made as an alternative to the reception for the art to be awarded offsite.





Career Fair

Parkview Elementary School of Chico hosts a career fair for their students annually in April. In 2022 Judge Lucena attended and in 2023 Judge Rodriguez attended. Various other community members participated including nurses, the Butte County Sheriff, the Butte County District Attorney, EMT, attorneys, FBI agents, NFL players, Physicists, video editors and many more. The members shared insights to the students of Parkview what a day in the life of their career is like.



Judge Lucena 2022



Judge Rodriguez 2023

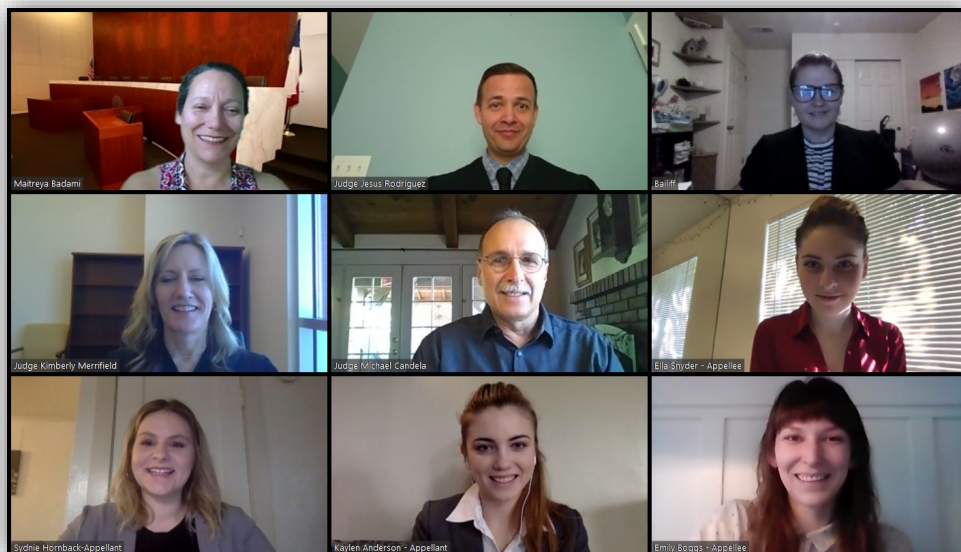


Moot Court

The California State University Chico Political Science Department's Moot Court Competition is based upon the model from law schools and from the undergraduate Moot Court Competition Nationals. Students in this program are provided a fact situation and citable authority about a month before the actual competition. During that month they prepare their arguments, author an appellate brief, and go about honing their presentation to be made in a single elimination tournament in May. In that tournament up to 32 teams (64 students) compete in this weeklong, single elimination tournament.¹ The champions from the tournament proceed to the Butte County Superior Court where a panel of Judicial Officers score their arguments. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Moot Court event was held virtually in 2020, and was canceled in 2021. The event was able to be back in person in 2022 and 2023 at the Butte County Superior Court in Oroville.

"It's been an incredibly rewarding experience for me to sit as a judge for the annual CSU, Chico Moot Court competition over the last several years. I competed in this annual event as an undergraduate student at CSU, Chico more than twenty years ago and have firsthand knowledge of the time and effort that every participant puts into their arguments during the weeklong competition. The feedback and encouragement that I received as a student from the judges so many years ago was instrumental in my decision to pursue a legal career. I now have the privilege of sharing my perspective and encouraging the next generation of attorneys along their path towards a career in the law."

-Judge Rodriguez



2020 Virtual CSU Chico Moot Court hosted by Judge Merrifield, Judge Candela and Judge Rodriguez

¹ Information provided from the California State University Chico



Script Writers Program

Before the Elementary School Mock Trials occur high school students are recruited from various schools to meet with a Judicial Officer to write the trial scripts. Six writing sessions are held in the conference room of the North County Courthouse. In 2020 California Supreme Court Justice Cuéllar (ret'd) met virtually with local students who presented their script.

“The students from Butte County were enormously impressive,” said Cuéllar. “Their civics presentation showcased their deep understanding of the law. I was inspired by their passion to learn about and improve their world.” An article from the Judicial Council of California can be found at the following link regarding Justice Cuellar’s virtual visit:

<https://newsroom.courts.ca.gov/news/no-classroom-no-problem>



2020 Elementary Script Writers Program hosted by Judge Lucena with guest Justice Cuéllar



Cal Northern School of Law

Cal Northern School of Law is the only law school between Sacramento and the Oregon border. It offers a part-time evening law program, where students can maintain their employment and be near their families while studying the law. Taught by judges, lawyers and other professionals, the Law School's curriculum is designed to expose students to the day-to-day application of the law and to prepare them to pass the California Bar Examination and be ethical successful members of the legal profession.¹ Currently Judge Rodriguez teaches Trial Advocacy, Commissioner Gingery teaches Legal writing, and Commissioner Worley teaches Criminal Law. Judge Keithley has taught trial advocacy in the past.



“Teaching criminal law at Cal Northern School of Law allows me the opportunity to openly encourage future lawyers to foster a deep appreciation for justice and an abiding respect for their duties and obligations as advocates.”

- Commissioner Worley

¹ Information provided from Cal Northern School of Law website. Image from Law Dragon.

Goals

1. Reimplement Elementary School Mock Trials:

The last Elementary Mock Trial was held May 3, 2019. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic halted the program. The Court would like to reimplement this program in the 2023-2024 school year. A scholastic mock trial is an academic event imitating the legal process and is used for teaching students about trials and the judicial branch. It promotes the comprehension of due process of a trial in the legal system through academic theater style play by students emulating legal professionals, such as attorneys, judges, court staff, and playing the part of the accused, the witnesses and jurors. Adult mentors from each discipline assist the students.

The Elementary School Mock Trial Program encourages young students to ultimately answer the question of why rules and fairness are valuable in their life.

2. North County Courthouse Tours:

Currently there are seventy-five historic Justice Sayings (quotes) throughout the 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 has been in place since August of 2015 and has seen a diminishing number of requests yearly, with no events held since the Covid-19 Pandemic. The goal for the 2023-2024 school year is to have a revised Justice Saying Classroom Unit that is self guided by the school or homeschool student in an effort to have more students view the courthouse and be inspired by the justice sayings. Check back next school year for a new self guided opportunity.



JUSTICE IS THE TRUTH IN ACTION.
- Joseph Joubert

Goals

3. Civic Learning Award:

The awards recognize and celebrate public schools K-12 who demonstrate a commitment to providing rich civic learning opportunities for students.

The awards are part of a statewide collaborative effort aimed at revitalizing civic education for all California students. The program is coordinated by the Power of Democracy Civic Learning Initiative, a body of state and federal jurists, members of the State Bar, educators, and students appointed by the Chief Justice.¹

Two Butte County schools have obtained the Civic Learning Award in 2016, 2018 and 2019. The goal of the Court is to help schools implement programs, and assist with the application process to be able to obtain this award for Butte County again.



4. State Seal of Civic Engagement:

On September 10, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted criteria and guidance to award a State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE) to California students who demonstrate excellence in civics education and participation, and an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. By adopting these criteria, California joined a small but growing number of states that formally recognize and promote student civic engagement with seals to affix to student transcripts, diplomas, or certificates of completion.²

The goal of the court is to help schools implement programs, and assist with the application process to be able to obtain this award for their students.

2020-2023 Acknowledgements

The Butte County Superior Court would like to thank all parties involved in making the events listed in this report possible. A special thanks to the Butte County Officer of Education, The Judicial Council of California, California State University of Chico, The Judicial Officers of the Butte County Superior Court, The Administrative Services Division of the Butte County Superior Court, participating teachers, students, mentors, justice partners and the Butte County Bar Association.

“With your help we can elevate civic learning and invigorate a vibrant civic culture in California, for our children and all Californians.”

- Hon. Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, Chief Justice of CA (ret.d)

¹Information provided by the Judicial Branch of California

²Information provided by the CDE