



Winter 2010

Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center Educator Newsletter

CALENDAR

Feb 15	Closed, State Holiday
Mar 9–11	Michigan Supreme Court (MSC) Oral Arguments; Public Administrative Conference (Mar 11)
Apr 6–8	MSC Oral Arguments; Public Administrative Conference (Apr 8)
May 3	Law Day
Jun 21–25	Exploring Careers in the Law, 10th–12th Grades
Jul 19–23	Exploring Careers in the Law, 7th–9th Grades

*Proceedings of the Michigan Supreme Court are broadcast on Michigan Government Television (MGTV). The State Bar of Michigan also archives proceedings online at www.michbar.org/courts/virtualcourt.cfm.

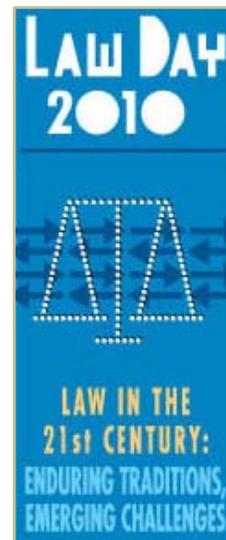


The Learning Center has Michigan Studies resources for grade three!

Law Day 2010

Law in the 21st Century: Enduring Traditions, Emerging Challenges

Visit the Learning Center with your students to celebrate our nation's heritage of liberty under law. Activities will demonstrate how the judicial branch of government applies the core democratic values of justice, equality, and diversity. Groups will meet with members of the judiciary and other legal experts to discuss the importance of these values and citizens' access to justice. Call 517-373-7171 for reservations.



Resources for Grade Three

Tours, Lesson Plans, and Online Activities

Are you or your colleagues teaching Michigan Studies in grade three? If so, check out the Learning Center's newest resources for this level:

Tours for grade three emphasize the big ideas:

- Why Michigan needs courts (interpret the law, resolve conflicts).
- What happens in a courtroom.
- Public policy issues (government making decisions that affect citizens, using the common good).

Lesson plans, brief readings, and online activities can be used to supplement student textbooks and other curriculum materials. Highlights include:

- 1, 2, 3 Branches of Government and 1, 2, 3 Levels of Michigan's Judicial Branch of Government (Student Readings, Matching Cards)
- Michigan Court System: How It's Organized (Read-Aloud Book)
- State Laws and the Three Branches of Government (Online Activity)

For more details, call 517-373-7171 or visit:

<http://courts.michigan.gov/plc/resources/third/index.htm>.



In Brief: Youth Courts

Across the nation, teens participate in specialty courts, know as youth courts, teen courts, or peer courts. Although specific procedures vary, most youth courts involve respondents (offenders), ages 11–17, being sentenced by trained youth volunteers, ages 13–18. Typically, youth courts accept first-time offenders for misdemeanor, non-violent cases. Respondents must admit to the charges and voluntarily participate with parental consent.

Youth courts offer advantages to respondents and their peers. Teens telling teens that their behavior is not acceptable sends a positive peer pressure message to respondents, who learn to resolve problems and to make better choices through classes, community service, and other sentencing options. Youth volunteers see first-hand the importance of fulfilling their civic responsibility of jury service.

In Ingham County, Lansing Teen Court provides first-time juvenile respondents the opportunity to take personal responsibility for a criminal offense without establishing a formal juvenile record. Once the respondent has completed his or her disposition (sentence), the offense is completely dismissed.

In partnership with Lansing Teen Court, the Learning Center offers a teen court webcast for middle school and high school students. Lesson plans demonstrate how the webcast can be used in the classroom.

Teen Court Simulation Webcast with Lesson Plans

courts.michigan.gov/plc/



Teens serving on a peer jury.

Youth Courts and Schools

Youth courts are used in many counties throughout Michigan. Often, youth courts partner with teachers to recruit and train teen volunteers. To learn more about a program near you, contact Mike Botke, teencourt Lansing@cooley.edu, Michigan Leader for the National Association of Youth Courts and Director of Lansing Teen Court.



High school participants practicing oral arguments.

Exploring Careers in the Law 2010

Summer Programs for 7th–9th/10th–12 Grade Students

Do you know students interested in becoming lawyers or judges? To learn about the legal field, they can attend Exploring Careers in the Law at the Michigan Hall of Justice, Lansing. Applications will be available March 1.

- **7th–9th grade** students explore a range of law-related careers. They meet with judges, lawyers, and other legal professionals, and observe proceedings at Lansing's District Court 54A. *July 19–23*
- **10th–12th grade** students prepare and present a moot court, similar to arguments before the Michigan Supreme Court. They serve as attorneys, justices, and other major players. Participants meet with justices, lawyers, and other legal professionals to help them prepare the case. *June 21–25*

For more information, visit <http://courts.mi.gov/plc/resources/programs.htm> or contact Rachael L. Drenovsky at 517-373-5027 or drenovskyr@courts.mi.gov.