

Just Law

Community ♦ Courts ♦ Education

A program to educate
students in grades 6 - 9
about the U.S. legal system.



J.U.S.T. L.A.W. is a collaborative effort to help students in grades 6 - 9 in the Rochester City School District better understand the law and our country's legal system.

The program explores the following topics:

- The concept of legal literacy
- The importance of school attendance
- The value of developing strong writing skills
- The significance of the written word in the court system
- Ways to express concerns, questions, desires and expectations relating to the court system
- An overview of the U.S. Judicial System
- Career opportunities within the courts

J.U.S.T. stands for Justice, Understanding, and Societal Trust, and is a community outreach program initiated by Supreme Court Justice Craig Doran, the administrative judge in the 7th Judicial District.

Judges will visit participating schools in the RCSD, where they will explain how the justice system works, as well as the role it plays in the Rochester community. Students will then have an opportunity to share their own perspectives on - - and experiences with - - the justice system.

L.A.W. stands for Literacy, Attendance and Writing.

This component of the program was initiated by Mr. Andre Langston, Owner and General Manager of radio station WDKX, and uses these three concepts to help improve student understanding of the court system. The goal is for participating youth to develop research and analysis skills, gain a better understanding of the power of the written word and acquire a deeper appreciation for the value of education. School attendance will also be stressed.

How the Contest Works:

- Virtual visits are arranged and judges/attorneys make presentations to the students.
- After the presentation, students in the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grades will be asked to write a 250 word essay on the topic, "What Justice means to me..."
- Attendance is an important component of the program. J.U.S.T. LAW requires a 90% average attendance rate for participants. This may be waived at the request of school administrators and/or if special circumstances exist.
- Prizes for the winners may include a tablet, gift cards, cash, certificates and more.

■ Essay winners will have an opportunity to take part in three special events:

- 1) A possible tour of the Hall of Justice to meet judges, clerks and deputies, attorneys and visit the Law Library;
- 2) A special "Meet and Greet" for students and parents where they will be matched with their RBBA mentors; and
- 3) A special virtual awards ceremony in May or June where they will be recognized and have an opportunity to present their essays in front of a panel of judges and court staff, as well as parents, teachers, school personnel, local law enforcement and members of the media.

How can schools help?

- Each school is unique. It is helpful if principals and staff take the lead and advise J.U.S.T. LAW program coordinators how their school's visit should be structured (for example, the number of students that should attend and the best location to hold the event). Schools should complete the information sheet as soon as possible, but no later than January 15, 2021. Included should be two potential dates for the visit and the name of a contact person.

- Parental consent forms, as well as media release forms, must be obtained from all student participants. Teachers can be very helpful in supporting efforts to obtain the necessary paperwork, so that all youth who want to take part in the program will be allowed to do so.
- At the end of the program, you will be provided with an evaluation form. Please be sure to complete this form and give us your honest feedback. We want this to be a positive and effective experience for students and teachers.

If you are interested in having your school participate, contact Liliana Ruiz at (585) 428-6588 or email: Liliana.Ruiz@cityofrochester.gov. Please send us the name and email address of a school contact person to receive program updates and schedule visits.

Collaborating partners include the City of Rochester, 103.9 FM WDKX, the Rochester Black Bar Association, the Rochester City School District and the 7th Judicial District.

TIMELINE



February 4 - March 28, 2022

Judge & RCSD representative
Virtual school visits



April 14, 2022

Essays due



May 20, 2022

WDKX to announce winners



To Be Determined

Tour of the Hall of Justice



June, 2022

Virtual Award Ceremony