

LAW SIGNATURE SCHOOL CRITERIA

A Law Signature School is defined as a comprehensive program offering multiple elective and non-elective courses at each grade level, in a sequential manner, concentrating on aspects of the law and legal processes for students in grades 9-12. It is typically created by school district administrations to offer students the unique enrichment that a concentration of law-related education courses and experiences can provide.

SCHOOL PROFILE

A Law Signature School has a two and four year college preparatory program. It includes extracurricular activities such as mock trials and simulated congressional hearings, community service, participation in local Teen Court programs and educational field trips. It enlists law related education professionals (lawyers, law-enforcement professionals, judges, scholars, for example) from the community as human resources for in-class and out-of-class instruction. It articulates with local colleges and law schools. It is designed specifically to strengthen the confidence level, college preparatory skills and positive attitude necessary for the successful movement into the world of work, college and effective active citizenship.

GOALS

Cultivate certain attitudes, beliefs and values, such as a commitment to constitutional democracy, dedication to the ideal of justice in society, informed, active and responsible participation in civic life, respect for fundamental dignity and rights of humans and appreciation for legitimately resolving societal conflicts and differences.

Promote the understanding of the law to the extent that students are able to take legal studies/cases and relate them to current events and combine them with law concepts, job readiness and college preparatory skills.

Provide a means for young men and women to explore career options in the field of law.

Promote written and verbal communication skill development with the objective to increase students' effectiveness in expressing ideas accurately and creatively.

To engage in teaching strategies that enable students to identify fundamental values in conflict and emphasize the higher-level thinking skills required for students to grapple successfully with controversial issues.

Provide structured opportunity for students to offer services and skills to the local community.

MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASSIFICATION OF LAW SIGNATURE SCHOOLS

In addition to the minimum goal requirements provided by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, Law Signature Schools must encourage students to meet higher standards.

Law Signatures Schools must provide course offerings which would allow students to complete a minimum of four semesters of law signature electives.

Law Signatures Schools must require specific hours of community service dedicated to Teen Court where available or other law related public assisted agencies, i.e. senior citizen centers, 4-H clubs, Special Olympics, Habitat for Humanity.

EXAMPLE OF COURSES OFFERED IN A LAW SIGNATURE SCHOOL

Freshman:

World of Law and Literature, Legal Ethics & Behavior, Health, Keyboarding, Court Interpreting, Trial Procedures, Chemistry/Physics and the Law, Algebra and the Law

Sophomore:

English Writing & the Law, American Legal System, Keyboarding, Court Interpreting, Mediation, Trial Procedures, Biology or Earth Science, Chemistry, Algebra

Junior:

American Literature & the Law, U.S. History & the Law, Business Law, Criminalistics, Paralegal/Legal Secretary Training, Court Interpreting, Mediation

Senior:

Global Literature & the Law, Our Living Institution, Business Law, Criminalistics, Paralegal Legal Secretarial Training, Court Interpreting, Mediation, Law & Public Service Practicum, Chemistry or Physics, Free Enterprise

RECOGNIZED LAW SIGNATURE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

American History	Local/State Government	Sports and the Law
Civics	Business Law	Introduction to Law
Global Issues	Forensic Science and Criminology	Law and Literature
World History	International Law	Mediation
Constitutional Law	Law Enforcement	Entertainment Law

American Legal History	Philosophy of law, the effect of case precedent on modern decisions
Business Law	Laws that impact the business community such as contracts, consumer credit, partnerships, corporate law
Civil Law	Contracts, torts, real estate, wills
Constitutional Law	Examination of the workings of the U.S. government through Supreme Court cases
Court Interpreting	Duties, ethics, and responsibilities of the interpreter in a judicial setting; intense study of grammar and vocabulary appropriate to the field of legal interpreting
Criminal Justice	Jurisdiction, courts, search, arrest, theory, criminal procedure
Criminalities	Analysis of crime scene evidence, crime laboratory techniques, human anatomy and physiology
Family Law	Prenuptial agreements, marriage, separation, divorce, custody, parent-child responsibilities
Global Studies	Analysis of systems of law in ancient and modern societies
Government	Nature of government and our political process, including elections
Introduction to Law	Roots of American law and justice, authority, responsibility, components of the legal system
Law Enforcement	Preparation for police officer, correctional officer careers
Law and Literature	Literature's examples of legal strategies, oral arguments, rules of evidence, the criminal mind, crime detection
Legal Ethics and Behavior	Study of topics such as the ethics in attorney-client relationships, ethical litigation, and judicial ethics
Legal Skills	Paralegal preparation, e.g., composition of legal documents, organization of litigation files, techniques of interviewing clients/ witnesses
Mediation	Alternative dispute resolution methods, personal problem-solving skills, and conflict management techniques; preparation for peer mediation
Sports and the Law	Contracts, negotiations, business application, rules
Trial Advocacy and Tactics	Examination of trial procedures using mock trial
Youth and the Law	Effects of crime on young people; crime prevention

