



LCLCE Joins Forces with Louisiana Supreme Court's Judges in the Classroom Program

Shortly after John L. Weimer became the 26th Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice, he announced the formation of the “Judges Imparting Knowledge, Education and Skills Task Force.” The Task Force is composed of, among others, members of the Louisiana Board of Elementary & Secondary Education, the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education (LCLCE), the Louisiana District Judges Association (LDJA) and members of the judiciary.

The Task Force is focusing on the “Judges in the Classroom/Students in the Courtroom” program in a campaign to reach thousands of youth with in-person visits this year.

On May 21, Chief Justice Weimer addressed the Louisiana Commission on Civic Education on the Task Force's strategy to encourage Louisiana's judges to visit elementary, middle and high schools to present civic instruction. During his presentation, he mentioned retired 4th Judicial District Judge Benjamin Jones, who, while he was the 2001 president of the LDJA, developed a Louisiana “Judges in the Classroom” program. Judge Jones currently serves on the 2021 Task Force.

As a former teacher of law and ethics at Nicholls State University, Chief Justice Weimer spoke about how interactions in his community had made a difference in his life and he encouraged others to go out into their communities to engage with current students.

Programming about the Task Force's “Judges in the Classroom” initiative was

The more time judges spend in classrooms instructing young people about the consequences of inappropriate behavior, the importance of personal responsibility, the value of education, and how all are equal in a court of justice, the less time judges will have to spend in the courtroom, which is beneficial to society.

– Chief Justice
John L. Weimer



attorneys also received training on Louisiana Supreme Court Associate Justice Scott J. Crichton's dynamic “Crime, Consequences and the Power of Choice” program which offers Power Point slides with video clips that are available for use by members of the judiciary in their classroom or school assembly presentations.

Judges often schedule student visits to their courtroom for Constitution Day (September 17) and Law Day (May 1). Chief Justice Weimer is encouraging judges to further engage in their local school systems. He is building on the initial program by asking judges to not only invite students to their courtrooms once or twice a year, but also to visit schools in their districts and invite students to state courthouses year-round.

The role of the LCLCE in this initiative is to coordinate the in-class presentations between the legal volunteers and the classroom. Attorneys and judges are encouraged to complete and submit a volunteer form (see page 158 of this issue of the *Louisiana Bar Journal*). Volunteers will be contacted when a classroom presentation request for an in-person visit has been received for their area. The LCLCE will assist with everything from what topic to present to where to park! For more information, email peggy.cotogno@LSBA.org or call (504)566-1600, ext. 134.

included in a recent judicial education training seminar. An informative video was filmed for use at judicial trainings. Footage includes Louisiana judges instructing students and the impact of that engagement on students. Judges and