



August / September 2014



**ILLINOIS STATE
BAR ASSOCIATION**

LAW-RELATED EDUCATION

The Newsletter of the ISBA's Committee on Law-Related Education

The Illinois State Bar Association's Law-Related Education Newsletter is provided free of charge on a quarterly basis during the school year. We are dedicated to promoting law-related education resources and discussion topics appropriate for use in classroom or community settings. If you do NOT wish to receive this complimentary newsletter, please reply and indicate in the message line that you wish to be removed from our mailing list. Statements, expressions of opinion or comments appearing herein are those of the editors or contributors, and not necessarily those of the Association or the Committee.

In this issue:

Mock Trial Chair's Column

How Fairs Are A Chance To Learn About The Law

In Review: The Report of the Illinois Task Force on Civic Education

Someone You Should Know: Tim Coughlan

Constitution Day



Mock Trial Chair's Column – By Sarah Taylor

The 2014 ISBA High School Mock Trial Invitational was held on March 8 and 9, 2014, at the University of Illinois' College of Law in Champaign. Forty-two schools from across Illinois participated in the event. The winning team was St. Charles North High School, which went on to place tenth in the National High School Mock Trials in Madison, Wisconsin.

This was the first year the event was hosted by the College of Law. The new location was well-received by participants and volunteers. Moreover, the College of Law welcomed the event, recognizing that hosting the program and establishing a cooperative relationship could mutually benefit everyone involved.

The 2014 Invitational was successful due to the hard work of the ISBA's Standing Committee on Law-Related Education, Mock Trial Coordinator, Marley Nelson, and the many judges, attorneys, law students, undergraduate students, and others who generously volunteered their time to assist with the program. The program was also made possible by the sponsorship of the ISBA, Illinois LEARN, the Illinois Trial Team, and the Diversity Scholarship Foundation of Chicago, and by the generous support of many others. The ISBA's Standing Committee on Law-Related Education appreciates all of these supporters and invites any attorney, judges, or other legal professionals to join us next year for the 2015 ISBA High School Mock Trial Invitational at the University of Illinois' College of Law in Champaign on March 14 and 15, 2015.

A full list of participating schools, sponsors, and volunteers, information about volunteering, and general information about the 2015 Mock Trial Invitational, as it becomes available, can be found at: <http://www.isba.org/teachers/mocktrial>.

How Fairs Are A Chance To Learn About The Law – By Suzanne Schmitz

Editor's note: A special thank you to Suzanne Schmitz, a former member of the committee for her permission to use this article in this newsletter.

Once again, the Carbondale IL Middle School Students won the performance category of the IL History Fair in May 2014. They did so with a legal issue. Eighth graders from the Middle School chose the Nazi March on Skokie as their topic. They did most of their research from newspaper accounts.



The students wrote an original script, used minimal props and quick costume changes to present the legal and political arguments from the Nazi leaders, city leaders, and the ACLU Lawyer. They also presented the judge's ruling.

While studying about the holocaust in Germany, the students were surprised to learn about Nazi sympathizers in the U.S. They wanted to know more and their investigation led to the Skokie case of 1977.

The students report that they now understand the importance of the First Amendment right to free speech.

Jasmyn Taylor, Alexis Jones, and Arezou Esmaeeli worked every weekend from February to May to perfect their winning performance.

A team of sixth graders from Carbondale Middle School also won in the performance category. The sixth graders presented the life Alexander Lane, born a slave in Mississippi. Lane was the first African American to graduate from Southern Illinois University, worked as a teacher and principal in Carbondale, before becoming a medical doctor. He was one of the first few legislators in the Illinois General Assembly.

Both Carbondale Middle School teams traveled to Maryland to represent Illinois in the national competition. The students worked with Betsy Brown of Lewis School.

The history fair is an opportunity for students to learn about a person, event or issue involving the law in Illinois. They can bring that history to life through a ten minute performance. Teachers can learn more at <http://state.il.us/hpa/illinoishistoryfair.htm>

Teachers may use the fair concept in their school and local community to encourage students to make history come alive. The law presents many opportunities for research and study.

In Review: Illinois Task Force on Civic Education Report – By Pablo Eves

The Illinois Task Force on Civic Education Report (“Report”) was issued in May 2014. The Illinois Task Force on Civic Education (“Task Force”) was authorized by Public Act 98-0301 to analyze the current state of civic education in this State; to analyze current civic education in other jurisdictions, both mandated



and permissive; to identify best practices in civic education in other jurisdictions; to make recommendations to the General Assembly focused on substantially increasing civic literacy and the capacity of youth to obtain the requisite knowledge, skills, and practices to be civically informed members of the public; and to make funding recommendations if the Task Force's recommendations to the General Assembly would require a fiscal commitment.

The Report is available at: <http://www.isbe.net/reports/il-civic-ed-task-force2014.pdf>.

Readers can view the entire Public Act 98-0301 at: <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=098-0301&GA=98>

Generally, the report delineates various findings and recommendations pursuant to Public Act 98-0301. Recommendations for civic education in Illinois include:

- Require a civic education in high school
- Revise Illinois Social Studies Standards
- Require a service learning project in middle and high school
- Align licensure and certification requirements for pre-service teachers with best practices
- Provide access to professional development aligned to best practices
- Involve students in the election process
- Extend the task force to gather public input through public hearings

More specifically, the second recommendation of the Task Force is that “Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science (K–12) should be revised to address skills—including news literacy—in addition to content. The Task Force recommends that the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013) be consulted as guidance for the revision of the state’s social studies standards. Civic learning experts and advocates should be included in the revision process. In addition, the Task Force wishes to emphasize that, although the state should adopt better standards, districts, schools, and classroom teachers should retain control over the local curriculum.” *The College, Career, and Civil Life (C3) Framework for Social State Standards Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History*, at 8-9, 43-44.

What is the C3 Framework?



The full name of the “C3 Framework” is “The College, Career, and Civil Life (C3) Framework for Social State Standards Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History”. The aim of the C3 Framework is to support states in creating standards that prepare young people for effective and successful participation in college, careers, and civic life. *Id.*, at 6.

The C3 Framework provides guidance to states on upgrading state social studies standards to include the application of knowledge within the disciplines of civics, economics, geography, and history as students develop questions and plan inquiries; apply disciplinary concepts and tools; evaluate and use evidence; and communicate conclusions and take informed action. *Id.* The C3 Framework was conceptualized by individual state leaders in social studies education and supported by fifteen professional organizations representing four core social studies content areas: civics, education, geography, and history. *Id.*, at 7. It was written by experts in the academic disciplines and social studies education in collaboration with classroom teachers, state social studies education leaders, and representatives of professional organizations. *Id.*

Caveats of the C3 Framework

The caveats of the C3 Framework will play a part in the determination of the appropriate upgrades to civics education in Illinois. The C3 Framework is intended to serve as a resource for states to consider as they upgrade their existing state social studies standards. *Id.*, at 14. The Framework provides guidance on the key concepts and skills students should develop through a robust social studies program of study, but intentionally does not address all of the elements states will need to consider in developing and upgrading standards. *Id.* There are three main areas not addressed by the framework:

- Content necessary for a rigorous social studies program
- Other disciplines beyond civics, economics, geography, and history
- The different abilities children bring to their schooling

Id., at 14 – 15.

It is clear that the above caveats will require full consideration by the General Assembly as it crafts appropriate changes to civics education programs in Illinois. The Illinois State Board of Education has been contacted as to the status of the assessment of social studies standards in Illinois, to what extent the C3 Framework principles will be incorporated, and what, if any, funding has been set aside to further the Task Force’s recommendations.



For more information on the C3 Framework, go to:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>.

Someone You Should Know: Tim Coughlan – By Pablo Eves

Tim Coughlan, originally from Crystal Lake, Illinois, received his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in History and an emphasis in Secondary Education and English from Northern Illinois University – DeKalb in 2003. He taught at Joliet Township High School for 4 (four) years and has been teaching freshman English and History at Bloomington High School since 2007.

Coughlan prefers a “vertical approach” to teaching, that is, to reach beyond the traditional classroom approach in a manner that is more akin to parenting than teaching. This allows him to achieve his over-all goal of moving more students into regular (as opposed to remedial) classes, and upward from there.

A list of his extracurricular activities as a teacher evidences this approach. For one, Coughlan has served as a mentor for several years in the “Raiders 101 Program”, a high school transition program for incoming 8th-graders intended to acclimate the new students to the greater variety of high school expectations. Freshmen tend to have more problems than other grade levels for obvious reasons and their involvement in the Raiders 101 Program can help them make friends earlier and lead to overall better adjustment. Coughlan has served as the team coach of the Scholastic Bowl Team. This is an academic team competition covering all areas of subjects covered in high school such as social studies, current events, politics, law, religion, visual arts, music, math, and science. In the 2013 – 2014 academic year, with Coughlan as coach, the Bloomington High School Scholastic Bowl team was quite active, competing in around 150 matches against other schools throughout the state and nation. The team was nationally ranked 48th at the end of the season. Coughlan coaches approximately 20 – 30 students, from Freshman to Senior levels. The Scholastic Bowl season starts in the Fall semester under IHSA rules and ends in the Spring. Coughlan has also sponsored the LARP (Live-Action Role-Playing) club and has a goal to initiate a Model United Nations program for the students.

Coughlan has now set his eyes on fielding a team to participate in the ISBA high school mock trial program – the Standing Committee on Law Related Education’s



own event. Two years ago Coughlan organized a lesson plan for his Honors English classes. With the encouragement of school administration, and a connection through the local bar association, Coughlan became acquainted with ISBA members (including this reporter) who helped him . Coughlan’s students separated into teams and prepared the prosecution and defense cases for two separate trials of certain characters found in William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. This activity again proved Coughlan’s dedication to finding different ways to deliver curriculum to his students. Despite the other extracurricular activities Coughlan and his students are involved in, the fond memory of the trials held at the McLean County Law & Justice Center have stayed with the students, many of whom are now upperclassmen. With those students, and with other students also interested, Coughlan looks to expand his vertical teaching methods into the territory of the Standing Committee on Law-Related Education in the 2014-15 mock trial year.

The Standing Committee on Law Related Education is proud to have helped plant the seed that will hopefully culminate in the founding of a new high school mock trial team at Bloomington High School. Tim is truly someone you should know and draw inspiration from.

Constitution Day

Constitution Day is a federal day of observance that commemorates the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787, recognizing all who are born in the U.S. or have become U.S. citizens.

The Constitution Day Website states as follows: “In honor of Constitution Day, all educational institutions receiving federal funding are required to hold an educational program pertaining to the U.S. Constitution; this year, a special focus of Constitution Day will be the celebration of the signing of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.”

More information on Constitution Day including education resources such as lesson plans, a link to the new episode of their web-based video series, and a free-to-download Pocket Constitution Application for iPhone may be found at <http://constitutioncenter.org/constitution-day>.



Illinois State Bar Association
2014 – 2015 Standing Committee on Law-Related Education

Hon. Michael J. Chmiel, Chair
Raquel G. Martinez, Vice-Chair
Zeophus J. Williams, Secretary
Sarah J. Taylor, Ex Officio
Penelope N. Bach
Jessica A. Baer
Hon. Rosemary Collins
Lauren E. DeJong
Stephen D. Iden
Marylou L. Kent

Kateah M. McMasters
Todd C. Miller
Thomas Murray
Desiree Anna Shiffler Martin
Sandra L. Sweeney
Hon. Jessica A. O'Brien, Board
Liaison
Kimberly A. Furr, Staff Liaison
Pablo A. Eves, Newsletter Editor

Illinois State Bar Association
Standing Committee on Law-Related Education for the Public



ILLINOIS STATE
BAR ASSOCIATION

424 South Second Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701
•217.525.1760 •800.252.8908 •Fax: 217.525.9063
www.isba.org

