

Love the Law! Southeast Idaho Event
April 26, 2018

Event Summary

Event Title: Bingham County Courthouse Hearing Observation and Question & Answer

Date & Time: April 26, 2018 8:30 a.m – 1:00 p.m.

Location: 501 N. Maple, Blackfoot, Idaho 83221 (Bingham County Courthouse)

Number of Students: 5 students and 2 chaperones

Participating School: Shoshone Bannock Jr./Sr. High School, Ft. Hall, Idaho

Summary of Events: The students arrived at the courthouse close to 8:30 a.m. I met them at the top of the stairwell and handed each student an accordion folder containing a legal pad, a pen, a pencil, a highlighter, a sticky-note pad, an agenda, a docket sheet, a flow chart for the criminal justice system, forms for small claims court and a no contact order, blank job applications for Burger King and Bingham County, and a 3-page evaluation form. We entered the courtroom to observe preliminary hearings before Magistrate Judge James Barrett. During the 2½ hour session, the students observed defendants waiving their preliminary hearing, a misdemeanor plea and sentencing, and part of a contested preliminary hearing. Three disturbances were handled by law enforcement and the Bailiff. We left the courtroom at approximately 10:30 a.m. because I had other speakers for the students to hear.

We proceeded to Courtroom 4. I answered the students' and teachers' questions about what they had just observed. At 11:00, Captain Cowley of the Bingham County Sheriff's Office, arrived and spoke to the students about the booking procedure in Bingham County. After Captain Cowley left, the students had more questions about the criminal justice system.

We then took a short courthouse tour and went into Jury Room 2 for pizza. During lunch, Bailiff Carlos Mercado spoke briefly about the contested preliminary hearing, which was still in progress. I then spoke to the students about interviewing for jobs and about the course of study required for lawyers.

In the last few minutes, I asked the students to fill out the evaluation forms, if they were willing.

At approximately 1:00 p.m., the chaperones and students left the courthouse.

Student Profiles: All 5 of the students filled out LTL! Evaluation form and 4 filled out the LTL! Background Information form.

Background Information.

Of the 4 students who completed the Background Information form, 1 identified as male and 3 identified as female. Two of the students were 16 years of age and two were 17 years of age. One student is a sophomore, two were juniors, and one was a senior. One student identified as disabled. Three students reported that English was their native language and one student did not answer the question. All four students identified as being “Native American/Alaska Native/Inuit.” Religious affiliations ranged from “none” (2 students) to “Christianity” (1 student), to “other” (1 student). Three students reported they are heterosexual and one student did not answer the question. With regard to political ideology, 1 student reported being liberal, 2 students reported being unsure or questioning, and 1 student did not answer the question. Parental education ranged from “did not earn a high school education” to “earned a 2-year associate’s degree.”

On the evaluation forms, the overwhelming favorite part of the event was the contested preliminary hearing. Students had a myriad of dislikes, from wishing they could have seen more, to stating that they liked everything about the experience. One student commented that the interaction between the judge and the defendants at the preliminary hearings was too short. Another student would have liked to see additional contested hearings. And one student would have liked to hear from other employees in the courthouse (we were not able to hear from several of the scheduled speakers because the students wanted to listen longer to the contested preliminary hearing).

Background Information and event Evaluations will be submitted to the LTL! Chair for filing/reference. I will keep the originals for future reference.

Costs Associated with Event:

Pizza from Mr. Pizza:	\$ 70.20
Tip:	<u>\$ 14.80</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 85.00

A receipt for the pizza will be submitted to the Love the Law! Subcommittee for reimbursement. Legal pads, sticky-note pads, pens, pencils, highlighters, water, and candy were supported by private donation. Bingham County donated accordion folders.

Lauren Murdoch