

Love the Law! Southeast Idaho Event
November 2, 2017

Event Summary

Event Title: Bingham County Courthouse Hearing Observation and Job Descriptions

Date & Time: November 2, 2017 8:30 a.m – 1:00 p.m.

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

Number of Students: 16 students and 3 chaperones

Participating School: Independence Alternative High School, Blackfoot, Idaho

Summary of Events: The students arrived at the courthouse close to 8:30 a.m. I met them at the door to Courtroom 1 and handed each student an accordion folder containing a legal pad, a pen, a pencil, a highlighter, a sticky-note pad, an agenda, blank job applications for McDonalds and Bingham County, and a 3-page evaluation form. We entered the courtroom to observe preliminary hearings before Magistrate Judge James Barrett. During the 1½ hour session, the students observed defendants waiving their preliminary hearing, a misdemeanor plea and sentencing, a *pro se* defendant's status conference, and part of a contested preliminary hearing. We left the courtroom at approximately 9:55 a.m. because students were becoming restless.

We proceeded to Courtroom 4. I answered the students' and teachers' questions about what they had just observed. At 10:15, Kristi Williams, one of the Bingham County Information Technology clerks, arrived and spoke to the students about jobs, qualifications, and salaries in the I.T. field. District Judge Darren Simpson arrived and spoke about qualifications and pay scales for the Idaho Judiciary.

At 10:30, Court Reporter Dan Williams came and showed the students a court reporting machine and a picture of the key board. He explained what court reporters do, what training is necessary to be a court reporter, and relevant pay scales in various states.

At 10:45, Sheri Landon spoke to the students about judicial clerk job opportunities, pay scales, qualifications, and tasks. She told the students her story about taking a job as a clerk assistant in high school and working her way to a clerk manager position.

Carlos Mercado, one of our Bingham County bailiffs, jumped into the discussion at 11:00. He explained his duties, qualifications, and job requirements. The students were interested in his stories about some of the most difficult occurrences on the job.

Captain Mark Cowley of the Bingham County Sheriff's Office took the floor at 11:15. He spoke to the students about jobs in law enforcement. He then took the students on a tour of the Bingham County Jail, beginning with the sally port. Students observed the booking room, the laundry room, a holding cell, the stretcher and the chair used for unruly arrestees, a jail house meal, the camera system, and the jail conference room.

We then went to the upstairs break room and ate pizza, pop, and candy for lunch. During lunch, Bailiff Carlos Mercado showed the students some typical job applications and talked about the importance of the questions asked on the forms. He discussed the interview process, tips for dressing for an interview, and typical questions asked by an interviewer. He explained what interviewers look for in a job candidate.

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: Of the 16 students who participated, 13 filled out LTL! Evaluation forms and 8 filled out the LTL! Background Information forms.

Background Information.

Of the 8 students who completed the Background Information forms, 6 identified as male and 2 identified as female. The students' ages ranged from "14 or younger" to 17. The majority were "14 or younger." None of the students identified as disabled. Two of 8 students reported that English was not their native language. Five students identified as "White/Caucasian," 2 students identified as "Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina" and 1 student reported being "Native American/Alaska Native/Inuit." Religious affiliations ranged from 1 student who identified as Christian, 2 students affiliated with Catholicism, 1 student identifying an affiliation with "other," and 4 students reporting no religious affiliation. Six students reported they are heterosexual. One student self-identified as being "Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender," one student wrote "I'm straight," and one student chose not to answer the "sexual orientation" question. With regard to political ideology, 1 student reported being moderate, 1 student reported being unsure or questioning, 4 students checked the box for "None of these," and 2 students did not answer the question. Parental education ranged from "did not earn a high school education" to "earned a master's degree," with one student not answering the question.

On the evaluation forms, the overwhelming favorite was the jail tour. One student also mentioned the preliminary hearings. Students liked “all the talking” least. Three students liked the preliminary hearings the least. Two students would have liked to stay longer at the preliminary hearings. Several students asked for more interaction between the speakers and the students. One student said the event made him fall asleep. One student wanted to taste the jail food. Others thought the event should last longer.

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

Costs Associated with Event:

Pizza and Sodas from Mr. Pizza:	\$120.00
Tip:	<u>\$ 25.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$145.00

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

Lauren Murdoch